

THE LIFE
LETTERS AND LITERARY REMAINS
OF
EDWARD BULWER, LORD LYTTON

BY
HIS SON

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

VOL. I.



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YRABUJ OROBAT

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P R E F A C E.

MY FATHER'S WISHES on the subject of his unpublished manuscripts were conveyed to me in a letter opened after his death. It expressed a hope that the story of his life, which in one of those manuscripts he had left half told, might perhaps be completed by his son. But only in that case was the imperfect record to be published : and it was his desire that by no one else should any biography of him be written.

For the illustration of his life (if I wrote it) I was authorised to employ such of his literary remains as might appear to me suitable for that purpose. I was also at liberty to publish by themselves any others found sufficiently complete for posthumous publication in a separate form. He wished that all unfinished compositions not reserved for either of these uses should be destroyed.

This letter came to me from the grave, with the last and tenderest expressions of an affection which had been the mainstay of my life. It imposed on me no positive obligation except in the contingencies I have mentioned. But the sanctity of a parental injunction was not needed to ensure my devotion to the known wishes of my dearest friend and benefactor.

The unpublished manuscripts bequeathed me by my father (in addition to his private correspondence and note-books) consist of several dramas completely finished ; an entire volume of his ' History of Athens ' never published ; a few sketches made for some other historical works ; and an immense number of unfinished novels, plays, poems, and essays.

Some of these compositions are the produce of the earliest, others of the intermediate, and others again of the very latest, period of his literary life. For, although his life was passed in writing for the public, the fact is abundantly attested by his manuscripts and note-books, that at every period of it he read more than he wrote, and wrote more than he published.

Great as it is, the number of his unpublished writings is not greater than their variety. They are the fragments of more than half a century of assiduous authorship, accompanied by assiduous study, in almost every department of literature: and, notwithstanding their fragmentary character, they constitute, taken together, a tolerably complete expression of their author's personal feelings, his literary theories, and his peculiar methods of imaginative art, at each successive stage of his intellectual development.

Two only of the original compositions left incomplete by him (the unfinished historical romance of 'Pausanias,' and four acts of a play called 'Darnley') were published after his death. All the other manuscripts have been reserved as materials for the present work: and the nature of the materials employed has prescribed the plan adopted.

The most interesting and instructive realities of my father's life were interwoven with his work as an imaginative author. Had he been known to the world only through his connection with politics, there would have been nothing exceptional in his career, and the story of it might have been shortly told. But rarely has a writer of fiction inspired in a wider circle of readers a more legitimately eager curiosity about his inner life and its relation to his outer circumstances.

Traces of the emotions, the sentiments, the passions and affections, the studies and meditations—the excitements of personal action, and the varieties of individual experience—which in turn affected the character, and promoted or retarded

the growth, of his genius, are more or less apparent in all his works. For no man ever wrote more directly out of his own heart. But they are apparent only as reflected lights and shadows from that hidden world into which biography is a voyage of discovery.

The main purpose, therefore, of this book is to illustrate my father's works by his life, and his life by his works. To some extent its general character is rendered different from that of an ordinary biography by the number of unpublished writings (imaginative in what they describe, but singularly biographical in what they reveal) which contribute to the execution of the plan. To prevent, at the outset, misconception on this point, I have called it—not a Life of my father—but his 'Life, Letters, and Literary Remains.'

For the length at which I have entered into details essential to any complete record of the workings of his mind and heart, or to the adequate illustration of what is indirectly autobiographical in the creations of his fancy, I make no apology, for I think that none is needed. Were it requisite to excuse these particulars, the whole book would be inexcusable. It is written in the conviction that my father's life and character present exceptional features, of peculiar interest to those who have already been interested by his works, or for whom the study of human nature has any attraction. If this conviction be unfounded, no modesty in the design, and no brevity in the execution, would atone for the intrinsic insipidity of the subject.

The individuality I have attempted to describe was many-sided. Of a life so long, so variously active and unceasingly laborious, a life touching, at so many different points, literature, society, and politics—and coupled with a character so complex and uncommon—no true picture could be given by a few rapid strokes, however skilfully applied.

It is the chronicle, rather than the history, of a life that I desire to write. In saying this I mean that my object is to place the reader, as he goes along, not so much at an historical distance from the facts narrated, as at the innermost centre of the situations to which those facts belong.

Neither in the portraiture of my father's character, nor in the record of his conduct, have I sought to reduce a single feature, or suppress a single incident, that seems to me less admirable than the rest. His character, indeed, was in all respects so peculiar, and in each so powerfully pronounced, that it would appear unnatural if its nobler attributes were presented to view without any relation to the smaller and less-attractive particulars which, though but an infinitesimal part of it, were often (and more especially in his younger days) mistaken by superficial observers for the whole man.

I have endeavoured to show, in their true proportion and right relation to each other, not only the essential elements, but also the superficial aspects, of a nature which, to a biographer thoroughly familiar with all its idiosyncrasies, affords no excuse for minimising what was little, because it leaves him no power to magnify what was great, in it.

The effort may have fallen short from want of capacity: it has not been restrained by want of candour. Lacking the skill, I have had no temptation from the desire, to paint a fancy portrait. But I am persuaded that if my father's biography is written, as I have tried to write it, honestly and faithfully, no clumsiness on the part of its writer can render it wholly uninteresting, nor even wholly uninteresting. For it is the story of a life in which all the errors were the errors of a good man, and the picture of a character in which all the virtues were those of a great one.

LYTTON.

KNEBWORTH: *November 15, 1883.*

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Errata.

Page 3, line 10, *for* seventy-six, *read* seventy-eight.
„ 158, last line, „ sixty-four „ sixty-eight.

To the
READER OF THIS AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

IN my father's relation of the first twenty-three years of his life there is a slight chronological error, which may be best corrected here. He was the youngest of three brothers, the only children of General Earle Bulwer, of Heydon in Norfolk, by his marriage with Elizabeth Barbara, the daughter and sole heiress of Richard Warburton Lytton, of Knebworth in Hertfordshire. Their father died during the childhood of his sons. William, the eldest of them, who then succeeded to the paternal estates of Heydon and Dalling in Norfolk, was born in the year 1799, and died, at the age of seventy-six, in 1877, having survived his two younger brothers. Henry, the second son (who in 1871 received the Barony, now extinct, of Dalling and Bulwer), was born in 1801, and died without issue in 1872, at the age of seventy-one. Edward, the youngest of the three, who died at the beginning of 1873 in his seventieth year, has mentioned in his Autobiography that, between his own birth and that of his brother Henry, another boy was born, who died immediately afterwards. But of the short-lived existence of this fourth brother I can find no trace in any parochial or family record.

To my father himself, the exact date of his birth was unknown; nor had he any care to know it. He says of it, in his Autobiography, 'If some curious impertinents are anxious to know in what year of Our Lord that event took place, let

them find it out for themselves.' And, when questioned about it, he would laughingly reply, 'It is a Cretan mystery.' The mystery, however, is resolved, and partly explained, by reference to the register of the parish church of St. Mary-le-bone, Middlesex; which records the fact that Edward George Earle Lytton Bulwer was born on the 25th of May in the year 1803. But it appears from the register that he was not baptised till the 15th of March, 1810, when he was nearly seven years old.

It is not surprising that a child who was seven years old at the time of his baptism should have regarded the date of his birth as a mystery. But to a child of that age the baptismal ceremony must have been, one would suppose, a memorable event; and it is curious that no mention of it is made in his Autobiography, which minutely describes all the other occurrences of his childhood. His ignorance, however, of the exact date of his birth, coupled with the fact that to the last day of his life he looked, and felt, considerably younger than he really was, accounts for the impression under which he lived, and under which his Autobiography was written, that his age was a year or two less than it is shown to have been by the entry in the register of Marylebone Parish. If incurious of the year, he was not indifferent to the month, of his birth. It pleased him to associate his love of spring and youth with the reflection that he was born in May; although it was not among the rural charms ascribed by the courtesy of poets to that generally inclement season that the child's eyes first opened on a world wherein the Maytime of his life was destined to come and go prematurely. The birthplace of Edward Bulwer, Lord Lytton, is in London; and the little house where he was born, No. 81 Baker Street, is now occupied by a milliner's shop. This house, however, lacks the interest common to the birthplaces of eminent men. It represents nothing distinguishable in the local influences which

helped to shape the character, and nourish the imagination, of the infant born beneath its roof. The strongest, if not the earliest, impressions made upon his mind by the scenes of his childhood were formed among the sylvan solitudes of the old, and much dilapidated, mansion in Hertfordshire, to which his mother retired shortly after the death of her husband.

The date at which he began to write his Autobiography is not stated on the face of it. There are allusions in it which lead me to believe that he must have written it some time between 1852 and 1855 ; though I have found among his papers a few autobiographical memoranda dated 1844, and others of apparently earlier date, showing that he had long meditated this account of his life, which carries the story of it to within a few years of his marriage. He himself called it 'Memoirs of a Literary Life:' but he did not complete the design implied by this title. The narrative ends before the literary life begins ; so that its original title is inapplicable, and, if adopted here, would raise false expectations. I have linked it to my continuation of the record it leaves unfinished, by dividing it into books, and adding headings to the chapters, but in all other respects it is here presented to the reader just as it was written. My own notes on my father's text are printed within brackets ; and whatever else I could collect, to throw light upon that portion of his life comprised within the limits of the Autobiography, is contained in the chapters headed '*supplementary*' or '*illustrative*.'

LYTTON.

BOOK I.
CHILDHOOD
1803—1811

CHAPTER I.

(*Autobiographical.*)

THE BULWERS.

ALL biographies begin by genealogy; and with reason, for many of the influences which sway the destiny that ends not with the grave are already formed before the mortal utters his first wail in the cradle. My paternal family has been settled in Norfolk since the Conquest, and my eldest brother still possesses at Wood Dalling the lands conferred on his ancestor by Aymer de Valence. The name of Bulwer attests the Scandinavian origin of the Norman soldier. For, in its earlier spelling of Bölver, or Bölverk, it occurs as that borne by Sea King and Skald in the chronicles of the Baltic, and forms one of the titles given to Odin himself. The name was, however, apparently known in England before the advent of the great Son of Rou; since, as one of our most erudite antiquarians has remarked, the place called Bulverhithe still speaks of the landing of Bulver the Dane. The county of Norfolk had, previous to the Conquest, been one of the principal establishments of the Anglo-Danish population; and a trifling circumstance connected with the cognomen of my progenitors serves to show how the earlier customs gradually prevailed over those introduced by the conquerors. During the first two or three generations the Bulvers obeyed the Norman fashion, and distinguished themselves by the title of the lands which they held in fief—'de Dalling;' but by the fourth generation at latest, though they still held the same

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lands, they dropped the French designation derived from their territorial possessions, and returned to the rough name of their Scandinavian fathers, which they have retained to this day.

It may here be observed that the case appears to have been common in those parts of England held before the Conquest by an Anglo-Danish proprietary, where we still find that the oldest families have Scandinavian, not Norman, names.

The heirs and descendants of the first Bolver de Dalling subsided by natural degrees into obscure and peaceful squire-



HEYDON HALL.

archs. From generation to generation they ate of the meat and drank of the cup, married, got children, '*et his exactis—obeunt.*'

My great-grandfather married the heiress of the Earles of Heydon Hall, which became the family residence. One of these Earles in a former generation bestowed two livings upon the learned community of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge; which livings are still usually presented to such of the founder's kin as may have received their final education at that venerable

college. Whether the quaint and erudite Dr. Bulwer, who somewhere about the reign of King James the First published the singular work called the 'Artificial Changeling,' was or was not of my family, I am unable to say. I cannot find any trace of him in the pedigree.¹

I have heard from my mother, who had seen him in her childhood, that my grandfather Bulwer was singularly handsome in person, and that he had more cultivation of mind than was usual at that day amongst country gentlemen. He had travelled abroad, had achieved 'the Grand Tour,' and his manners had the polish of the old school.² Such was the impression he made upon my mother. In the country he was chiefly known as a keen Whig politician, a hospitable *bon vivant*, and a magistrate so active and acute as to be popularly styled 'The Justice.' His union was blessed by four sons and two daughters. One of the daughters died a spinster, the other married a soldier of fortune, and vanished from the records of the family. I have heard that these ladies, in their infancy, received instruction in modern languages from the hero of a certain romance, Eugene Aram, who was at that time schoolmaster at Lynn; and I have understood that my grandfather, as the most learned personage amongst the neighbouring gentry, was partial to the society of the self-educated scholar. The late William Godwin

[¹ *Anthropo-metamorphosis, Man-transformed; or the Artificial Changeling; shewing the various ways how divers People alter the Natural Shape of some part of their Bodies* (4to, London, 1653). He also wrote several works on *Dactylology*; *Dress*; *Chirologia, or the Natural Language of the Hand*; *Chironomia, or the Art of Manual Rhetorick*; *Philosophics*, and *Pathomyotomia*. 'From Bulwer's extravagance some illustration is thrown upon one portion of the history of human knowledge. He lived in an age of great learning and of little judgment; at a time when there was a voracious appetite for information, and when fact and fiction were indiscriminately gorged and devoured by all who sought for the reputation of learning.'—*London Retrospective Review*. My cousin Colonel Bulwer, who has been at some pains to trace the genealogy of this eccentric namesake, assures me that he undoubtedly belonged to a branch of the Bulwer family.—L.]

[² See letter from Dr. Parr, Book II. chap. vii. p. 155.—L.]

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informed me also that he (then residing in Norfolk) had visited at Heydon in my grandfather's lifetime; and he retained a lively impression of the 'Justice's' genial hospitality and general accomplishments.

Of the sons of this marriage two, Austin and Edward, went into the Church; two, William and John, into the army. John was remarkable for beauty, for good-nature, and for his attachment to the bottle. He is said to have captivated the Duchess of Rutland during the famous Irish viceroyalty of the convivial Duke; but he made some sad misalliance, and died young. Austin and Edward I saw; the first in knee-breeches and shovel hat. He was tall and stately, with an aquiline countenance of great majesty, and long flowing hair. When abroad in the shovel hat, he looked every inch a dignitary of the Church. At home, by the ingle nook, with his iron-gray locks, grand features, and gaunt, warrior-like frame, he realised my ideal of a Viking. Edward was a smart, short, lively man; with manners less provincial than Austin's, and a merry laugh. No two brothers could be more unlike in appearance; but they agreed, at least, in eccentricity of character and pride of temper.

My father, William Earle Bulwer, was the eldest of these sons. He was educated at North Walsham Grammar School,¹ and went up to the family college, Pembroke Hall, as a Fellow Commoner. When I was at Cambridge, an old barber named Wagstaffe asserted that he remembered him well as a gay, wild young gentleman, little given to Minerva; to Bacchus and to Venus much. It was more astonishing to hear that at Cambridge he was almost intimate with the great William Pitt;

[¹ North Walsham is only eleven miles from Heydon. Before the facilities for travelling which have made it easy for boys from every part of England to be gathered together at a few great schools, most country gentlemen were educated at the endowed Grammar Schools of their county. The North Walsham Grammar School, founded by Sir William Paston in the reign of James I., was in excellent repute in the boyhood of General Bulwer, and for many years later. Lord Nelson was a pupil there.—L.]

for, except that they were, both, of imperious character, and perhaps at that time may have had political notions in common, there was little enough between them to warrant the association of the sober and scholarly son of Chatham with the wild and fiery heir of the Norfolk Justice. But, as friendship is often produced by similar circumstances as well as by congenial pursuits, so the secret of their intimacy (if in truth it existed) may possibly be found in the fact that they were Fellow Commoners of the same College (in which Fellow Commoners were few), and under the same tutor, Dr. Pretymann; to whom they were both warmly attached.

My father, on leaving college, entered the army, and rose with some rapidity to the rank of Colonel. If attached to the fair sex, he was not less attached to his personal liberty. Though a very ambitious man, he could not be induced to a match that would indeed have tempted ambition, uncounteracted by other interests or passions. The Earl of — had two daughters, co-heiresses to princely fortunes; and, taking a liking to the rising young soldier, frankly offered him the hand and portion of one of these young ladies.¹ My father, who had much of the bluntness of a Norfolk man, refused point blank; nor did he ever in his later and wiser days give a better reason for this folly than that he was not satisfied with the shape of her ladyship's nose.

The fact, however, was that he had contracted a romantic, if illicit, attachment to a young person of great beauty, who eloped with him from a boarding-school in which she was teacher; and, though too haughty a man to marry beneath him, he had at least justice enough to say that, while she lived, he would never marry anyone else. The end of this poor

[¹ This was probably the Earl of Buckinghamshire, whose Blickling property (noted for its beautiful Jacobean house) joined the Bulwer estates in Norfolk. There were four coheirs, and the second daughter, Lady Suffield, born in 1769, inherited Blickling on the death of her father. It may be presumed that the object of Lord Buckinghamshire in proposing the marriage was to unite the two neighbouring estates.—L.]

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young woman was tragical. She was killed by the kick of a horse.¹

In the meantime, while my father was pursuing his military career, and obeying the impulses of a very powerful, self-willed nature, wholly uncultivated by literature, but with that ability for action which takes lessons from life, a little delicate girl, with intelligent dark blue eyes—with shy, sensitive temper—passionately fond of poetry—deeply under the influences of religion—was growing up into woman.

I must open a new chapter. I am about to speak of my mother.

¹ The catastrophe (my father told me) was caused by her eager affection. General Bulwer had built for her a villa in the neighbourhood of London; and as he was driving into the yard, on his return from some military duties which had detained him longer than usual, she ran out to meet him. It was in this hurried action that she received the kick from one of his horses, and died from the effects of the injury.—L.]

2000



Richard Harborton Lytton.



Elizabeth Todrell.



Elizabeth Barbara Lytton.





Richard Richardson Lytton



Elizabeth Lytton



Richard Lytton

CHAPTER II.

(Autobiographical.)

MATERNAL GRANDFATHER AND GRANDMOTHER.

THE family from which my mother descended, and which she afterwards represented, was as ancient as that of my father, and had intermarried with houses famous in history. I shall have later to enter somewhat more into details on such venerable matter of pedigree; but at present I pause on the nearest branch of the tree, and content myself with brief mention of my mother's immediate parentage.

CHAP.
II.

Richard Warburton Lytton was among the most learned scholars of his time. He had been educated at Harrow under Dr. Parr; and the most intimate of his friends were Porter, afterwards known as the erudite Bishop of Cloyne, and the yet more eminent Sir William Jones: a modern *Mirandola*, whose marvellous comprehensiveness of intellectual acquirement Mr. Lytton almost rivalled, though without one effort at fame, and without one thought of the ambition which usually gives purpose and energy to the desire of knowledge.

In a letter I once received from Dr. Parr (who long survived his old friend and pupil), that unquestionable judge of sound learning says of Mr. Lytton—'He was the best Latin scholar of my time, inferior only to Porson in Greek, and to Sir William Jones in Hebrew and the Oriental languages.'¹

[¹ Samuel Parr (whom Macaulay, in his essay on Warren Hastings, calls the greatest scholar of his age) was born in 1747 at Harrow-on-the-Hill. He studied at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, 1765; left the University without

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He was also profoundly acquainted with the languages and literatures of Spain, Portugal, Italy, and France; and there were few of those departments of intellect which, once entered upon, usually concentrate the researches of a scholar's mind, such as History, Philology, Metaphysics, Theology, or the Positive Sciences, which he did not invade as a conqueror, though in none of them did he linger as a colonist.

At Oxford, which he entered as a gentleman commoner, I believe of Christ Church, it would appear, from some mention of him in the memoirs of his contemporary, Mr. Maurice, author of 'Indian Antiquities,' that his shyness and modesty in respect to the fair sex exposed him to the wit of his gayer friends. But, in return, his careless generosity attracted their affection; and the learning which was as ready to communicate its stores to a friend, as loth to obtrude them on the public, ensured him their respect.

Amongst his friends was Richard Paul Joddrell, a gentleman of fortune and family; known advantageously in his day as a considerable scholar in Greek, and not advantageously as the author of a very dull tragedy in English. With the sister of this gentleman, a young lady of sixteen, Mr. Lytton had the misfortune, at the age of two-and-twenty, to fall in love. By a still greater misfortune he married the object of his affections. He had come into possession of his estates on attaining his majority. The young couple took a house in Portman Square, then the most fashionable quarter; and entered into the gaiety of town life with the avidity of children. Now, as we all know, marriages where both parties are so young are

having taken any degree; was a master at Harrow School from 1767 to 1772; became in 1785 Perpetual Curate of Hatton in Warwickshire; and died, in 1825, at the age of eighty-eight. The *Bibliotheca Parriana*, 'a Catalogue of the Library of the late Reverend and Learned Samuel Parr, LL.D., Curate of Hatton, Prebendary of St. Paul's, &c.,' which was published in 1827, contains the following entry (p. 317), under the head of 'Philology and Foreign Miscellanies,'—'*Politiani (Angeli) omnia opera et alia quædam lectu digna. Folio. Venet. in æd. Aldi. 1498. Russia, gilt edges.* This beautiful copy of Politian was given to me by the learned Richard Warburton Lytton. S. P. L.]

rarely happy. But in this instance I can conceive no marriage in which dissimilarity of disposition augured results less propitious.

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II.

For in my grandfather you must imagine, not only a devoted scholar, but, as such scholars often are, a complete infant in the ways of the world. With passions ardent, as his eager pursuit of knowledge made manifest, but hitherto animated only by the delight of that grave pursuit, he was now cast for the first time amidst the temptations of a metropolis. An orphan and an only child, he had no other guide in his household circle than a young lady fresh from the nursery, who had not married him for love, but at the bidding of her parents; and who was not only from the tenderness of her years unskilled to manage, but from the temper of her mind unable to comprehend, him. My grandmother Lytton never opened a book—except (in later life, at least) the Bible.* She held book-learning in utter contempt. She was extremely lively, and fond of all fashionable amusement. Common sense she had, and to a very high degree: a common sense that was shocked at every eccentricity, and could see only the most absolute folly in those whims which are the extravagancies of the wise. After sufficient discord and unhappiness for some few stormy years, this ill-assorted pair agreed, perhaps for the first time in their lives. They agreed to separate.¹ As the world

* Once, indeed, when I was a very little boy, I lent her the *History of Jane Shore*, a pamphlet popular with housemaids, and for which I paid sixpence. That was the only work in profane literature which I can remember having at any time seen her read. It made a great impression on her mind, and she talked of it and moralised on it to the end of her life.

¹ Matrimonial felicity seems to have been a blessing unfamiliar to the Lyttons in all generations; and the family archives abound in curious records of conjugal disputes conducted with ceremonious regard to the domestic etiquette of former ages. The following quaint correspondence illustrates the relations between William Lytton (son of Sir Rowland) and his wife Mary, a daughter of Sir John Harrison of Balls.

Sir John Harrison to William Lytton.

Son Lytton,—I have hitherto forborne, as not willing to take notice of yo' unhasome usage of yo' wife, hoping y' in reasonable time you might be

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would judge, and perhaps correctly, all the essential faults were on the side of my grandfather Lytton. Nor have I ever heard his version of the story. Still, had the cause been judged by one so intimately acquainted with the peculiarities of the scholarly nature as the gentle compiler of the 'Calamities of Authors,' probably most of the husband's delinquencies would have found refining extenuation, if not absolute excuse. For my grandfather Lytton had in him a great deal of the temper of Martinus Scriblerus. The Ancients were never out of his head; and I have no doubt, judging by the worst anecdotes told of his proceedings, which are characterised by a certain infantine humour peculiar to the learned, that he fancied he was only imitating some classic orgy commemorated in Athenæus, when he was scandalising all the proprieties established by our prosaic countrymen as Dei Majores in the stately sanctuaries of Portman Square.

sensible of yo^r error. If her carriage towards you had at any time been misbeeseeming her due respects to you, I should not have spared, but in downright terms have reprehended her. But, since it hath so unhappily fallen out y^e you have suffered yo^r fury to anticipate yo^r reason, & in a coach to draw yo^r sword to affright not only yo^r wife but my Daughter Turner being great wth childe; I cannot chuse but take notice thereof, & desire yo^r p^{re}sent company here, to ye end we may discourse, & by Gods helpe quench & bury those bad humours in due time, to make way to yo^r future happinesse, & go to take yo^r wife home wth you, & not to provoke me to tell you that otherwise I must not forget to be her father, to defend her innocencie, & in her distresse to performe ye duty of a father; & so hoping to see you accordingly, I rest

Yo^r assured loving father

J. HARRISON.

Balls: ye 3d October, 1668.

Sir Rowland Lytton to Sir John Harrison.

S^r,--My Son, on friday last from ye roade, came immediately hither, to give me an account what had happened there; & since by yo^r Letter now to him, I perceive it hath been misrepresented to you, I will relate it as I had it from my Son, & his Coachman who was there present. My Son first says he entertained S^r Edmond Turner, his Lady & Company at his house wth all civilities & respects, and though he had some hints y^e ye Lady Turner intended to carry him & his wife by force to Balls, yet he tooke it in jest and believed they would never have attempted it, therefore resolved to wait on them part of their way. When he came to Stevenage he offered to give them some wine, & would have gone out wth his wife: ye Lady Turner commanded her Coachman to drive on, threatening him by force to carry him to Balls, whether he would or no; my Son being unwilling to make a bussell in ye town sat still, till he

If the fault, however, was on his side, so also was the sorrow. And, though I have said that he agreed to a separation, he, in truth, but reluctantly submitted to it. Nor that, without fierce wrestle first; followed by bitter, though not durable, resentment. Finally the alimony was settled, and the parchment signed. My grandmother removed to a small house in Upper Seymour Street, of which her mother, who was rich, made her a present. My grandfather took himself off, not to the old mansion of his forefathers in Hertfordshire (which was, indeed, at that time inhabited by the widow of his predecessor) nor to the residences in other counties which were comprised in the property he then possessed; but to some country village, where, obscure and unknown, he plunged once more into his natural element of Books. He had had enough of London and gay life. He never returned to the

had some way past it: then he cryed to ye Coachman to stand, ye Lady cryed drive on or else he should never drive her more; my Son then drew his sword, leaning out of ye Coach & struck at ye Coachman to make him stay: he then stayed: my Son went out of ye Coach & desired his wife to come out & goe into his: ye Lady commanding her Coachman again to goe on, & he attempting it, he drew his sword again, y^e he might have her Cleifs out before he went after this ye Coachman tooke his opportunities & drove a way carrying his wife in ye Coach; he called after her & desired she would not leave him; he being a foot wth out a horse & two horses only in his Coach, gave over ye pursuit. You may now judge of it, & my Son may doe what he pleases; but if any of my wife's ffriends should make me so ill a returne for an entertainment, they should never come more wth in my doors; & if my wife would goe from me contrary to my good likeing, I would never receive her again wth out a Submission. I am confident you know not how much my Son hath been a sufferer, & it would be now too tedious to enter into particulars, neither is it reasonable y^e he who hath received ye injury should seeke for an attonement. Therefore, if my Son waits not on you according to yo^r appoyntment, you will excuse him in it & me y^e I advise him to it, though I still am

Your respectfull servant, though unfortunate Brother

R. L.

The Lady Turners Nursery-maid did say at Diner before some Servants the day they went from Leachworth y^e her Lady intended to persuade my Son to goe part of ye way in ye Coach wth her, & then she would force him on: ye little Boy told my Son ye same in his Mothers hearing. As to any unhansome usage of his wife I am a Stranger, nor will I justifie him in any when I know it; abateing some small errors, I hope he can justifie him selfe.

Knebworth, October ye 7th, 1668.—L.]

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last, and his visits to the first were rare and few. The Grecian Club was his great attraction to the metropolis; and there he formed an acquaintance with Dr. Johnson, of whom, in the catalogue of his library, I have found grateful and reverent mention.

The only fruit of this union was one girl—my mother, then in the first years of infancy. In order to adjust the rival claims of the parents, this poor child was not permitted to dwell with either. She was turned off, at the age of about five, to the then celebrated school called Blackland's; and very sad was her heart, and very long seemed her exile. After some time, she was allowed, first, to visit her mother; and then her father bore her away to his learned den. At her age it was natural that all her affections should be on the mother's side. And that mother, not from malice, but from the careless free-speaking common to a bold character and a womanly tongue, certainly prejudiced her against the rival parent. My grandfather saw this at a glance, and was chilled and soured. He had not those little artifices for the winning of a child's heart which suggest themselves naturally to persons conversant with the world; and, though a benevolent, generous man, his temper was warm, and his meaning was better than his judgment. Amongst the varieties of crotchet which he admitted into his mind were the democratic Republicanism which had then put forth its ominous bud, and the systems of education with which that peculiar kind of Republicanism was interwoven. To harden the children of the rich into the physical endurance of the children of the poor—to cram them with a learning that would revolt from coarse companionship, while fostering notions of equality with gingham and frieze—were fashionable articles in the creed which the imitators of Rousseau had set up for the improvement of the coming generation. Wherefore my grandfather sent out this little girl of delicate frame, and reared in the decorums of Blackland's school, to roll in the snow, and make respectful genuflexions to the under-gardener. He only

succeeded in weakening her constitution and revolting her pride. He committed, too, the common fault of the learned with the young—viz., of setting tasks beyond the growth of his pupil's mind, and was very indignant that she did not take readily to Latin. Perplexed by the unfavourable results of his theories, he set off one winter day to consult with one of his wise friends, a notable education-monger, and no less a person than Mr. Day, author of 'Sandford and Merton'—one of the most delightful of all books to read, but a somewhat dangerous production if taken (as meant by the author) for a model of educational ethics. My grandfather carried the little Elizabeth with him. They arrived late at night at the great author's residence. Elizabeth crossed the threshold with an awe which was not lessened by the first sight of the philosopher: a tall man, with a grave and precise face, much marked with the habits of authority and the ravages of the small-pox. But Mrs. Day, an excellent, homely woman (looking up to her lord as good wives should do) put the little girl at her ease, and softened the fear of fresh lectures in Latin by a judicious liberality of cakes and caresses.

The dread of Mr. Day wore off; and one well-advised compliment that he made to the frightened child probably did more to strengthen her courage and induce her application than all the aphorisms she had yet heard, and all the scoldings she had yet received. Mr. Day had put some grave book into her hands, and he found her, half an hour afterwards, despondently poring over it. 'Sir,' said Elizabeth, 'the book is beyond my understanding.'

'My child,' said the kind author, 'I have examined your mind already, and I tell you fairly there is no book beyond your understanding, if you will but resolve to try.'

Late in life, my poor mother still remembered that compliment, and was accustomed to repeat it with a kind of bashful pride—a something between a smile and a blush (for she blushed readily to the last)—whenever she thought that

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her sons, in their wisdom, were inclined to undervalue her prudent counsels. This visit, on the whole, did good to both teacher and pupil; and my mother was less sternly dealt with on her return to the austere Penates. And now, in a critical period of her life (for few periods are more critical than solitary and sorrowing childhood with those who comprehend it not, and whom it cannot comprehend), Heaven permitted the poor girl the solace and guidance of a female friend.

Near the small house in which, with the profound and stoical disdain of his wealth and station that my grandfather ever evinced after his separation—as if he considered them a part of his married life, and in parting with his wife got rid of the other burthens imposed upon the rich—near the small house in which, lined with books from cellar to garret, my grandfather lived—stood the stately and hospitable mansion of a gentleman who had been governor of one of our colonial possessions, and who was still, according to the fashion of that day, styled Governor F——. He had a daughter of about eighteen, extremely beautiful, the *belle* of the neighbourhood, and with every charm of mind and manner that could captivate the fancy, and warm the half-frozen heart, of the Scholar's daughter. Despite the difference of their years, this young lady attached herself warmly to the little Elizabeth; she comforted her in her griefs, supported her in her struggles, and gave her such excellent advice as served to reconcile her to her home, and to correct the impulses of childhood with a sense of the duties of life. Miss F. was not long afterwards married to Mr. Sherbrooke, to whom she was fondly attached. She went to reside in another county, and my mother saw her no more. A correspondence was maintained for a few years, but died away before my mother herself grew into a woman; nor was it renewed till the little Elizabeth had become a widow. She then was the first to invite it, and letters were interchanged till the death of the younger friend. For, alas! my mother died the first. Now, in this second correspondence

between two women then grown grey with years and trial, who had never met since the childhood of one and the maiden youth of the other, there is something to me singularly touching and pathetic. It showed how much of freshness of heart was still left to both. There was a sentiment in it, than which the romance of two schoolgirls is not more innocent and tender. I remember that my poor mother used a peculiar portfolio when she wrote to Mrs. Sherbrooke—a portfolio only taken out on those occasions; and the letters she received in return were hoarded in a certain bureau, in which she had preserved the favourite relics of her childhood. It was easy enough for them to have met again, had they desired it; but both shrank from such an interview. And once when, in some wondering ignorance of the human heart, I said, 'What pleasure it would give you to see Mrs. Sherbrooke once more!' 'Ah! no,' answered my mother, sighing. 'At present she can but remember me as the child her kindness made happy, and I can only remember her as my ideal of youthful bloom and beauty. If we were to meet now we are old, how much of illusion on both sides would be destroyed!' Thus they went on, never hinting at the idea of an interview, exchanging their little household confidences, mixed with simple criticisms on books, or womanly comments on the talk of the day, till on her death-bed my mother said to me sadly, 'Answer Mrs. Sherbrooke's last letter for me!'

The reader will pardon this long digression. I return to the childhood which Miss F——'s marriage to Mr. Sherbrooke left desolate and bereaved.

Shortly after this event, a change happened in my mother's position with regard to her father, which contributed also to alter her own station in the world.

Though no one could, to all appearances, live more economically and simply than Mr. Lytton, it is astonishing what sums, to use the expression of his wife, 'he continued to muddle away.' How they went has always been a mystery in

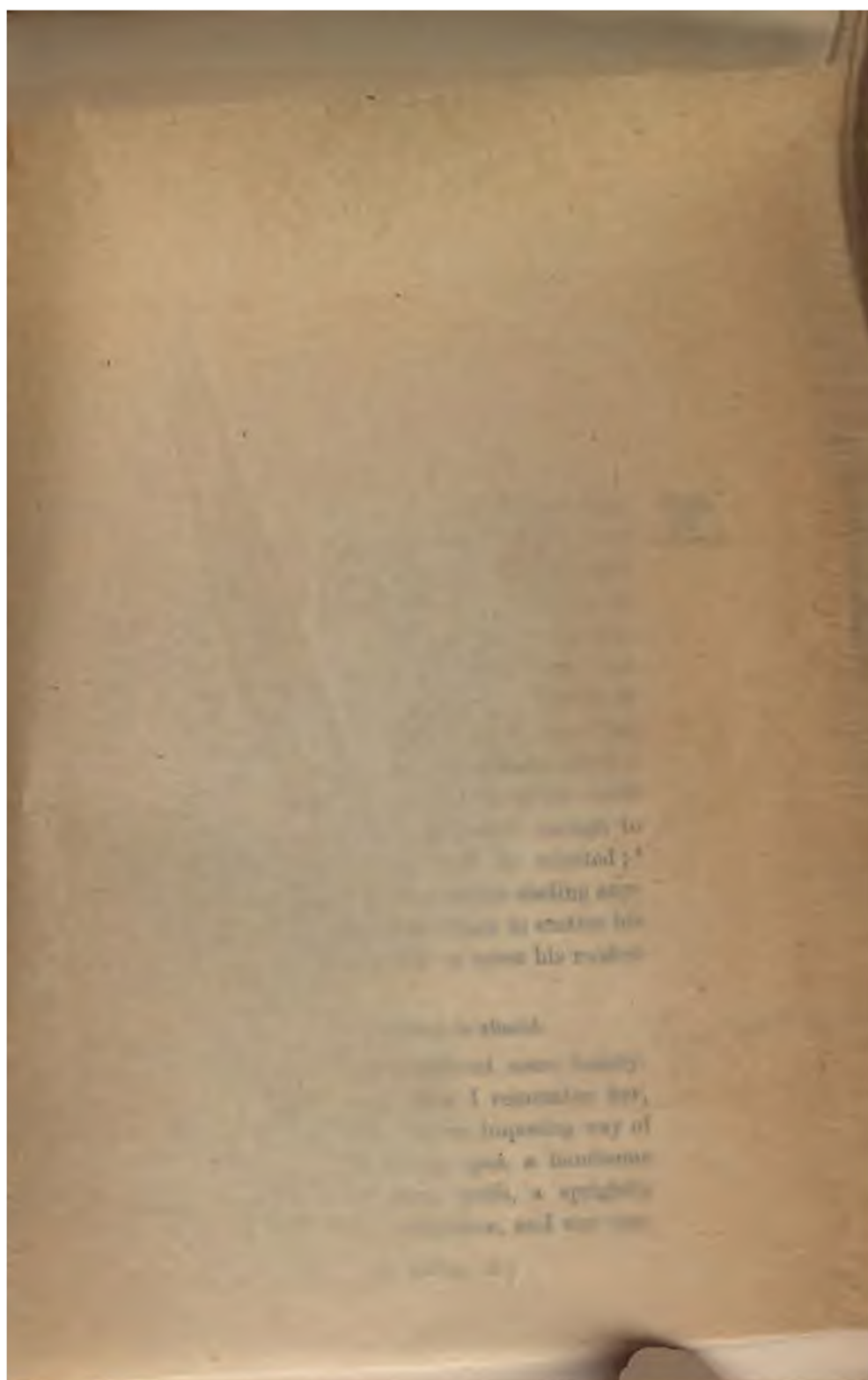
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the family. The hoardings collected during his minority vanished. The estates were stripped of timber, enough to have paid off the mortgages of an earl; then the estate in Worcestershire was sold; next the estate in Bedfordshire. Reduced to his lands in Hertfordshire, my grandfather hastened to bring them also to the *ultima linea rerum*. Three manors, in the family since the reign of Henry VII., a Church living, some four or five of the farms most coveted by his neighbours, disappeared from my grandfather's Field Book. What might have become of the rest is a matter of facile conjecture, when the trustees of the marriage settlements happily took alarm; and, on investigating my grandfather's tenure, it appeared that he had been under a mistake in supposing himself possessed of the fee simple; that the estates were strictly entailed on my mother as the only child of his marriage; and that he had not, therefore, possessed the right to dispose of a single acre which had thus been 'muddled away.' A reference to the Court of Chancery soon decided this question; and a bill, if filed, would have summoned my grandfather to repay all the sums he had received. To have done this would have been his ruin, and he appealed at once to his child, whom that sum was intended to benefit. She contrived to suspend proceedings, and afterwards, when she came of age, resigned, for her own part, all such claims. To judge somewhat by the present value of what was sold, it was in itself a noble dowry that she thus resigned. My grandfather, in grateful return, settled upon my mother, not a very adequate compensation, but probably as much as, in his ignorance of affairs and incontinence of money, he thought he could spare during his own life; and he henceforth left it to her option to reside, as she pleased, with himself or her mother. She divided the year between them; and as for the allowance settled upon her, she handed it over to the poorer parent; saying simply, 'Mother, take it all, and spend as little as you can upon myself. I have no wants.'

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*Elizabeth Lytton and her mother:
from a picture at Knebworth.*





CHAPTER III.

(Autobiographical.)

THE CHILD OF PARTED PARENTS. 1790—1800.

ELIZABETH found the house of her mother very different from that in which the unsocial and austere Scholar passed his days in objectless study. I have said that my grandmother had great common sense; she evinced it where common sense is most popularly appreciated—in the management of pecuniary affairs. She made a much greater show with her alimony than my grandfather did with his estates; kept three men-servants, when her lord was satisfied with one; two carriages, where Mr. Lytton in his rare excursions hired a fly; received hospitably; made it a point to be in the world every night except Sunday; and, after all, saved enough to bequeath a very handsome capital to the heir she selected; ¹ while my grandfather, entertaining no one, rarely visiting any-one, and without one visible hobby from which to scatter his gold, barely left enough personal property to cover his modest debts. Well may we exclaim—

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No Deity is present where Prudence is absent.

Mrs. Lytton was still young, and not without some beauty. She was small, but well-shaped; and, when I remember her, in age, had a certain air of fashion, and an imposing way of entering a room. She had dark, lovely eyes, a handsome profile, an indifferent mouth, but good teeth, a sprightly laugh, much small talk and social animation, and was pas-

[¹ Her second grandson, Lord Dalling.—L.]

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sionately fond of cards ; a taste that is almost the only thing I can say I inherit from my grandmother. The tone of society seems to have been more joyous and adventurous at that time than it is now. It was the time of Ranelagh and masked balls. The London season was ended with the birthday ; and the votaries of pleasure, unsated with gaieties so soon over, scattered themselves eagerly among the different watering-places, where they enjoyed at once the air and verdure of the country, the amusements and crowd of the town. But the young Elizabeth was as lonely in my grandmother's gay, card-playing, set as she had been in the retreat of her learned sire. As she grew up, the sorrows of her childhood impressed her character with melancholy. Long commune with her own heart had served to invigorate her understanding, and to give a tinge of romance to her affections. Nor could she, with abilities of an uncommon order, and habits of thought at once shrinking and refined, have lived with a man who, however severe in manner, was so accomplished in intellect as Mr. Lytton, without finding a sad vacuity of talk amongst the ladies and gentlemen of that society which was congenial to the sprightly fair one who despised books and adored quadrille. The young heiress, too, began to feel the sense of her station ; the more, perhaps, that both her parents were indifferent to it, and that the world was not apt to recognise it, either in the drawing-rooms of Upper Seymour Street, or in the obscure village selected by her father for his abode. Then, those Muses which had seemed so unalluring to her childhood took a softer aspect, and became the consolers of her youth. Thrown on the resources of her own mind, she strove to increase their stores ; she never, indeed, acquired much learning. And this was rather from an excellence in her nature than a defect in her understanding ; for she was in all things pre-eminently feminine ; and the learned ladies of that day, whom my poor grandfather held up to her as an example, made themselves so absurd by their pretensions and presump-

tion, that my mother conceived a great horror of a *bas bleu*—as of a being who, without conquering the province of men, entirely renounced the appanages of women. But, if she did not acquire learning, Elizabeth had far more reading than the young ladies of that time ordinarily possessed. She taught herself French and Italian; and, though she did not speak even the former language with facility, she had a competent acquaintance with the most elegant literature in both. To such literary attainments she added the accomplishments of her sex. She drew and painted with delicacy and a natural sentiment, which, under better instruction than she received, might have ranked her high amongst amateur artists.¹ In

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[¹ Curious testimony to her proficiency in this accomplishment is afforded by the following old-fashioned verses, addressed to her when she was fifteen years of age.

To my blue-eyed maid.

Were India's various wealth
To crown my wishes laid,
I'd all condemn,
Both gold and gem,
Without my blue-eyed maid.

The pride of pomp and power
How gladly I'd resign,
Content to wait
And serve, if fate
At last would make her mine!

I write, and she can paint.
We'd lend each other aid.
The Muse, my friend,
Should never end
To praise the blue-eyed maid.

Her pencil, then, might show
(Since it such art hath caught)
What words at best
Leave unexpressed,
My spirit's inmost thought.

And when this spirit fleets
Dissolved in airy shade,
To worlds above
'Twill bear a love
Pure as my blue-eyed maid.

Many of her drawings in chalk and water-colour are still preserved at Knebworth. The handling of them is masculine in its vigour and precision.---[L.]

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music her success was less decided. Her mother was a notable performer; and Elizabeth was one of those few whom, from invincible modesty, emulation does not excite but discourage. She could make her own way if left unobserved and silent; but if you placed before her a rival, she shrank back from the contest. Her favourite instrument was the guitar, for that her mother did not play. To these arts she added the one which the heart whispers to genius in youth—Poetry. Her verses might not have charmed the world, but they set her own thoughts and dreams to a music that might justly please herself. And in certain little manuscript books, treasured by me beyond all family archives, still the fine delicate Italian hand records, from early childhood to advanced age, the unknown confession of gentle thoughts and sinless griefs; the progress of a pure, sensitive, noble, and ill-comprehended spirit through the Vale of Shadow.¹

My grandfather now suddenly made overtures of reconciliation to his wife. The widow who had occupied the family seat of Knebworth was no more. The home of his ancestors was vacant. And then, perhaps, visions of some nobler and more useful life began to disturb the lethargic quiet of the solitary Scholar. At all events, he took that occasion to proffer his home, and to promise amendment, to the mother of his child.

My grandmother was so essentially a London woman that to her the dignified gloom of an old manorial pile, far from the

[¹ A little volume of her poems was printed (privately) in 1826. Some of them were written in 1800, when she was twenty-six, but the others between the ages of fourteen and seventeen. Of the earlier verses the following is a specimen :—

Short is our longest day of life,
 And soon its prospects end :
 Yet on that day's uncertain date
 Eternities depend.
 So equal to our being's aim
 The scope to virtue given ;
 And every minute saved from Earth
 Begins an age in Heaven.

Anno ætatis 17.—L.]

charms of quadrille and casino, probably presented anything but allurements. She was also a woman of that high spirit which fully enjoys the blessings of liberty and independence. She drove, with her own fair hands (I mention this as emblematic of her whole character), a tall phaeton and pair; and in this equipage transported herself, as she listed, from London to Bath, and from Bath to London. So great was her confidence in herself, that one dark evening, having to return from some excursion across Hounslow Heath—at that time infested by highwaymen—she laughed to scorn the warnings she received on the road and the terrors of her two men-servants, and in the very centre of the heath was stopped by three foot-pads. She held one a moment in parley, and threw him off his guard, flicked the other in the eye, drove gallantly over the third, and arrived in London with spirits sufficiently composed to dress for a party, and relate her adventure, in illustration of the truth that a woman with her wits about her, and the whip-hand disengaged, is a match for three men any day in the year.

My grandmother still naturally desired to keep the whip-hand disengaged.

A correspondence between the parties took place. On my grandfather's side the letters seem struck from a heart still sore and bleeding; they are not without a dignity of their own—a dignity of sorrow. Had his wife loved him, they had been eloquent; but as his wife loved him not, they were inartificial and ill adapted to the occasion.¹ On the other hand, my

[¹ *Ex una discite omnes.*

Richard Warburton Lytton to his Wife.

Blackheath: 12 November, 1789.

Madam,—Permit me to return you thanks for granting my request of a personal conference. I consider it as a favour, and hope you will not find me ungrateful. Before that event happens, and before the favour of your intended letter to me, give me leave to state a few circumstances which you may find of some use in the course of this business. Our present state is real destruction to our dear child. Therefore, of course, we should both wish some alteration

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grandmother's letters are perfect models of propriety under circumstances so painful. They begin "Sir" and end "Your most obedient Servant." They do not contain a single reproach, nor descend to one womanly complaint; on the contrary, they express a sense of the honour proposed, in language the most appropriately polite. The fact is that, on his side, the Scholar wrote without consulting a friend. On the other side, every sentence in the letters of the lady was composed by one of her brothers, Mr. Henry Jodrell, an exceedingly sensible man, who had studied at the Bar, was now a Member of Parliament, and who, from the moment he had exchanged long clothes for short, had never been known to get himself into a scrape. He lived honoured, and died wealthy. Written negotiations proving unsatisfactory, my grandfather, probably suspecting that periods so polished, and arguments so precise, never came from the hand more familiar with the card than the pen, pleaded hard for a personal interview. After much demur, the consulting brother gave it as his opinion that my

in it. I think you will agree with me that, were it possible for us to live comfortably together, that would be the best thing for our daughter. You do me the favour to speak well of me. You chiefly allege difference of disposition. Hear me. Wherever that difference arises from peculiarity of temper only, I promise you to use every endeavour to subdue it, and I doubt not but you would do the same. We are, I believe, both altered in the most discordant parts of our disposition. Let me beg of you above all things to come with as little prejudice as possible to this conference. Only hear me patiently. Give me a chance of success, and do not come predetermined against me. That will be cruel and unjust. You are very dutiful and affectionate to your mother, very tender and affectionate to your daughter. Treat me with humanity. The present situation of things, and their inevitable consequences, are so dreadful that I can no longer bear them. I entreat you by the love you bear your child, and by everything valuable to you, do not come resolved to adhere to former purposes. It will be the ruin of all three. I assure you there is nothing would make me so happy as to win your affections, and I would do more for that purpose than for all the riches and honours of the world. Do not oppress a heart made up of sensibility. Oh do not totally ruin the peace of one who would go through anything to secure yours. Remember that the present opportunity will be decisive, and that the most important consequences are suspended on your conduct. I shall await with anxiety the favour of your letter; and I am, with every wish for your happiness,

Your much obliged

RICHARD W. LYTTON.—L.]

grandmother could not, with propriety, refuse this request. But to guard against all indiscretion, and not to infringe on the deed of separation, he declared that the interview must take place in the presence of witnesses. My grandfather had no option but to submit. Man and wife met under the chilling and vigilant eyes of Lord Hawke and Mr. H. Jodrell, two most gentlemanlike men. The poor Scholar, always so shy, had not a word to say for himself. My grandmother repeated the substance of her letters, which she had committed to memory, and Mr. H. Jodrell followed on the same side, with much proper feeling and great parliamentary tact. My grandfather hemmed and stammered, looked at his wife despairingly, caught at his hat, bowed, and withdrew. But the great house wanted a mistress, and the large heart a companion. So, a few years later, my grandfather sent for his only child.

CHAP.
III.

CHAPTER IV.

(Autobiographical.)

KNEBWORTH. 1789-1812.

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THERE is a description of Knebworth in two old numbers of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, which conveys a tolerable notion of what it was at that time, though, perhaps, the writer failed to seize what may be called the poetry of the place. It was a large irregular building in the form of a quadrangle, resembling the entrance court of Knowle. The front to the east was the most ancient part, and was traditionally said to have existed as far back as the reign of Edward III. Its façade, however, had been altered long after that date. It consisted of two tall square towers, backed by a lofty watch-turret, with a deep gateway in the centre, and two wings that contained apartments known by the name of 'The Haunted Chambers.' The side to the north was occupied by a long gallery, built over a colonnade; that to the south by a gigantic range of offices and dormitories, suited to an age in which the owner lodged his retainers. The fourth side, to the west, still remaining, was said to be built, during the reign of Henry VII., by Sir Robert de Lytton, a warrior and statesman in high favour with that monarch, who conferred on him the rank of Privy Councillor and Knight of the Bath, and the offices of Treasurer of the Household and Keeper of the Great Wardrobe.

The place was memorable for other associations than those of the family to which it had passed. It had belonged

to the great Norman Chief whose rude name and designation are latinized into Eudo Dapifer, subsequently to Thomas Plantagenet de Brotherton, Earl of Norfolk, and after him to that paladin of English chivalry, Sir Walter Manny.

In the time of Sir Rowland Lytton, who, in Anne, daughter of Oliver St. John, first Lord of Bletsoe, married the kinswoman of Elizabeth, and who was himself Captain of the band of Gentlemen Pensioners, which comprised the flower



QUEEN ELIZABETH'S ROOM, KNEBWORTH.

of the English nobles, Lieutenant for Essex and Herts, and Commander of the Forces of these counties at Tilbury, it had been honoured with the visits of the Virgin Queen,¹ and, in the reign of Charles I., Sir William Lytton, member for the county, and a sincere though moderate patriot, had received Hampden, Eliot, and Pym in its halls, to consult on

[¹ The bedroom, said to have been occupied by Queen Elizabeth on those occasions, has survived the demolition, by my grandmother, of a great part of the house in 1812. An illustration of it is given above.—L.]

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the measures to be adopted at the commencement of the Long Parliament.

The character of the house was in accordance with such associations, and was in itself a romance. The long gallery was covered with faded portraits; the chambers bristled with gloomy arras. The antlers of stags, so vast that their genus seems to have vanished from our parks and forests, like things before the Ark, were ranged below the grim gothic masks that served as corbels to the beams of the lofty ceiling that domed the desolate banquet-hall. Trap-doors and hiding-places, and a kind of oubliette called 'Hell-hole,' presented themselves to the terrified respect of the young poetess.

[The aspect and associations of the place here described by my father, as he first saw it in his childhood, powerfully and permanently influenced his whole character. To be, in some way, instrumental to the revival of its fallen fortunes was the constant object of his life. In a letter, written not long after his first successes in authorship, he thus recalls the feelings with which he had wandered, when a boy, amongst its fresh woodlands and faded galleries.

Hitherto, except during rare and brief excursions, my childhood had been passed in London. My brothers were at school. I had no companions of my own age, and my rural recreations were confined to the bare, brown, rugged fields that then stretched towards Primrose Hill, innocent of the plaister palaces of the Regent's Park, and the architectural *vilainies* of Mr. Nash. But now. . . . Oh to breathe the air of the *real* country! to tread on turf where I might so easily imagine that

A gentle knight was pricking o'er the plain!

to find in dells and copses fitting scenes for the spells of Archimago or the feats of Amadis;—that was better than to read, it was to *live*, romance! You who were bred up in a town, have you ever forgotten, will you ever forget, your first escape into the country? Was it not happy? Did the days then ever seem long enough? Did you care for human companions so long as you had an old tree to climb, or a green turf to roll on? And, if you had a dog for your playfellow,

your confidant, your friend, was not his love something that makes your flesh creep, and your heart stand still, when you think of the human confidants and friends you have had since? I think it is wrong to let children have dogs. It spoils them for mankind. But was it not happy, that first noviciate of the country? When you go into the country now, do you find it the same thing? I do not. The country is a child's natural world, as a man's, perhaps, is the city. How vividly I still remember that day when we drove, towards evening, along the melancholy, neglected park, and the old



BANQUET HALL, KNEDWORTH.

house rose for the first time upon my view! My grandfather had not lived there for many years. It was a large quadrangle, with a gothic archway flanked by huge square towers, and backed by a tall watch-turret, leading into a gloomy courtyard with a cloister on one side. This pile, which Sir Walter Scott, I have heard, more than once paused to examine when he was on his way to the North, was of no architecture, or rather it was of all architectures. Uncouth, heavy, sombre, dismantled, half decayed. It was of various dates, from about the time of Henry VI. or Richard III. (the gateway still more ancient) to Charles I. It was unsuitable to modern

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comforts, and also, from its immense size, to the costliness of modern establishments. It was very much too large to be maintained out of the diminished revenues of the land still left to it. And so my mother demolished a great portion of it, and remodelled the rest. Meanwhile, during these alterations, we lived in a little Manor House at the outskirts of the park. But still it was permitted to explore (while the axe struck, and the hammer sounded, the strange recesses of that old, half-feudal, pile. I remember especially a long narrow gallery adjoining the great drawing-room (and hung with faded and grim portraits) which terminated in rooms that were called 'haunted.' They were of great antiquity, covered with gloomy tapestry, and containing huge high chimney-pieces with rude reliefs set in oak frames grotesquely carved. In another room adjoining these, and belonging to one of the square towers of the gateway, was a curious trap-door that gave access to a chamber beneath it—if chamber it can be called, which had neither doors nor windows. This place seemed constructed for no earthly object, either of habitation or convenience. Sir William Lytton, who was member for Hertfordshire during the Civil War, and one of the Commissioners sent to treat with King Charles at Oxford, had, like an honest gentleman, resisted the subsequent usurpation of Cromwell, and received the honour of being one of the Protector's prisoners in Hell-hole. From a recollection, no doubt, of that adventure, he had christened this mysterious chamber by the same euphonious name. How could I help writing romances when I had walked, trembling at my own footstep, through that long gallery, with its ghostly portraits, mused in those tapestry chambers, and peeped, with bristling hair, into the shadowy abysses of Hell-hole?

The 'haunted rooms' mentioned in this letter were pulled down in 1812;¹ but are still remembered with mingled awe and pride by a few aged inhabitants of Knebworth village.

[¹ To such venerable features of the place as have survived that event, and to its surrounding aspects, which are unchanged, my father's early letters make frequent allusion. And, even before the essay on it republished in *The Student*, Knebworth was the theme of some boyish verses written by him when he was fifteen, and published in 1820 in a little volume called *Ismael and other Poems*. These verses, beginning, in the prescribed style—

'Hail, lofty domes, hail, venerable place,
The noble dwelling of a nobler race!'

lament the change

They are minutely described in a little story called 'Jenny Spinner; or, the Ghost of Knebworth House.' This story, written in singularly pure English, with a lively simplicity of style, has never, I believe, been published; but there are a few printed copies of it at Knebworth, and a short criticism on it written by my father, after the death of his mother, led to his acquaintance with its authoress, a Miss James, who was then in her eighty-fifth year. 'She was,' he says, 'very original, a thorough gentlewoman, well informed and amusing.' Their correspondence was only ended by her death. In it, she calls herself 'a lively octogenarian;' and one of her letters to another correspondent, who has favoured me with a copy of it, thus describes the circumstances in which 'Jenny Spinner' was written:—'We were a merry Christmas party at Knebworth about 1800. Among other subjects of amusing talk was *the ghost*. We could get no information from the aged gate-keeper, or any other old person in the village, except that a ghost there certainly *was*. Our amiable host proposed that we should try our hands in writing a story about the ghost, since it could not be got to tell us its own story; and I determined to make up one as unlike what was expected of me as possible. The only interesting fact about it is that it was written on the spot, and that the old Knebworth House is most truthfully described in it.' At this time the house was let to a newly married gentleman, whose young wife, says the authoress of 'Jenny Spinner,' 'was troubled about the old

'from those old feudal hours
When minstrels' music echoed through thy towers;'

describe how

'The drooping dryads of the lone domain
In cold neglect bewail'd their ruin'd reign,
Where long the velvet moss and violet blue
In wild luxuriance o'er the pavements grew,'

until

'arose the last of all her race
Who join'd each power her native house to grace.'

And they conclude by a benediction on 'the loved possessor,' his mother.—L.]

pictures and furniture that encumbered a drawing-room she wished to make more cheerful-looking. Now it happened that frequent visits to Wilton and Long Leat had inspired me with great fondness and respect for old pictures. So I proposed that all the family and other pictures throughout the house should be collected together and placed in the long gallery that occupied one side of the quadrangle round which the mansion was built. My friend gladly embraced my proposal, and the pictures were brought there under my superintendence. I well remember some of them. Two of Lord Strafford and his mother, both of them perhaps originals; one of Lord Falk, a whole length; and four ladies, sisters, I think, all of the Lytton family. When, long afterwards, I first saw Mr. Bulwer, I was impelled to ask who he was: his peculiar delicacy of feature and complexion so vividly recalled those portraits to my recollection.' And, in a letter to my father, she says: 'I had only seen you twice in my life. Once, when you were a fair-haired, blue-eyed, delicate-complexioned little boy of four years old; and once again (the only time I had seen you since, and it was but a passing glance) at Warwick House. Yet then I recognised you at once by your likeness to the lady portraits at Knebworth. And instinct also helped me, I suppose.'

The last years of this clever and amiable old lady were passed at Bath; where she died at a very advanced age, retaining to the last all the vivacity of a bright, sensible, active spirit, and surviving her long-lived neighbour, Walter Savage Landor; to whose orphan nieces she was warmly attached.]

CHAPTER V.

(Autobiographical.)

THE LYTTONS.

By degrees, as she became habituated to the house, my mother's fancy delighted in peopling its halls with their past inhabitants. While my grandfather was employed in the only elaborate composition he ever achieved (whereof more hereafter), Elizabeth collected legend and ghost-tale; and contracted intimate friendship with her ancestors, through the medium of their dusky portraits, and the yellow pedigrees and papers which mouldered in 'The Muniment Room.' She accompanied Sir Giles, or Egideo, to the holy wars and the siege of Askalon, with her kinsman, the great Constable of Chester; or followed with the first Sir Robert the devious fortunes of the Lancastrian Duke and his mysterious, witchlike, wife; saw the second Sir Robert beside Henry of Richmond, with 'the sparkling eyes and the glittering hair,' when the princely adventurer waited the despairing charge of the last Plantagenet; or welcomed, with the handsome Sir Rowland, who, in his gilded armour and with his lance of tourney, looked from the walls 'severe in youthful beauty,' the visit of the manlike Tudor. Most of the ancient wealth of this knightly race was gone. It had at one time possessed wide lands and fair manors in twelve counties, great property in London, besides 'a fayre mansion with vamures'¹ in the once polished Quartier of the

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[¹ 'Vamure' (also called 'alure'): the walk or gangway on the top of a wall behind the parapet; which afforded a suitable place for the ladies when

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'Fleyte.'¹ About the time of Elizabeth it reached its apex of prosperity; but from that date came a great disproportion of daughters as compared with sons, and each daughter carried off an estate.

At length, in the reign of William III., the male line came to a positive close. And the last male, Sir William, bequeathed so much of his property as escaped the *auri sacra fames* of some four or five daughters, to the son of the eldest, who had married Sir George Strode. That young gentleman married a daughter of the House of Mostyn of Mostyn; and, dying without issue, left in turn his estates to his cousin, and dearest friend, William Robinson Lytton. As this gentleman was my mother's great-grandfather, and the one from whose will she derived her inheritance, and as from his race

martial exercises were exhibited in the courtyard beneath. 'A goodly mount, with towers and vamuers al gilt, with al things necessary for a fortress.' *Hall's Chronicle*. *Parker's Glossary of Architecture*, 5th edition.—L.]

[¹ Of the territorial connection of the Lyttons with Derbyshire, local evidence survives in the village (almost a little town) of Lytton, now spelt Litton, about seven miles from Buxton; where it is said to have been a place of some importance in the days of the old miners' guilds. Not far beyond Millersdale the Derbyshire Wye widens from a narrow stream into a broad expanse of water, surrounded by high rocky banks. On one of these (about a mile or more from the village of Litton) still stands Lytton, or Litton, Mill. It was lately destroyed by fire, but has been rebuilt; less picturesquely, if one may judge from old pictures of the place as it was fifty years ago. Of the neighbouring and ancient church of Tydsweil, the Lytton chapel was formerly a feature shown to visitors and noticed in guide-books. This chapel, however, has perished or been removed in the recent restoration of the church; where the only visible memorial left of the Lyttons is an old brass upon the pavement of the south transept, still bearing the effigies of Robert Lytton and his wife (*temp.* 1483). In the seventh year of the reign of Henry VII., Sir Robert Lytton purchased from Sir Thomas Bouchier the manor and estate of Knebworth; and, in the pleadings of a suit brought in 1723 by William Robinson Lytton against Sir John Statham, it is set forth by 'your orator' that 'in the reign of her late Majesty Queen Elizabeth' George Alsoppe of Tutbury purchased from Rowland Lytton, of Knebworth, the manor and estate of Lytton in the county of Derby, under covenant that 'he, the said George Alsoppe, his heirs and assigns, &c., should yearly forever thereafter pay and deliver, or cause to be paid and delivered, to the said Rowland Lytton, his heirs and assigns, &c., one pair of new gilt spurs fit to be worn on the feast day of St. John the Baptist, commonly called Midsummer Day, or within twenty days next after the said feast, at the south porch of the parish church of Knebworth aforesaid.'—L.]

she was lineally descended (while, except by very early alliances, she was only collaterally connected with the direct stock of the Lyttons), I must be pardoned some mention of his claims to her family pride. Sir William Norreys, a member of the powerful baronial house of that name, was settled in Wales at the close of the fourteenth century. He married the sister of Owen Tudor, grand-aunt to King Henry VII. Robert, the son of this Sir William, who espoused the daughter of Gryffyth, chamberlain of Wales, was a knight of so high repute that his son was popularly known by the patronymic of Rob's, or Robin's, son. According to the custom of those parts, the name thus given in honour stuck to the descendants. For a few generations they were known indiscriminately by the names of Norreys and Robinson; and, indeed, to a late period they are named Robinson *ceu* Norreys in deeds. But gradually the custom of the country prevailed over the rights of the original cognomen, and the Robinson survived the Norreys. This family, which possessed considerable property in Wales and elsewhere, intermarried with the chief Norman houses settled in the Palatinate, such as Malpas of Brereton, Warburton of Bodely, the Grosvenors of Eaton, and the Stanleys of Hooton. They brought into the scutcheon of the Lyttons no less than a hundred quarterings; and, through their Cymrian alliances, claimed descent from the darlings of the Esteffod—Roderic Mawr, Caradoc Vreichfeas Gryffyth, King of North Wales; mounting, in that line, to Cadwallader the sainted, last of the kings of Britain.

An intimacy had existed from time immemorial between this family and the Lyttons, who had formerly possessed lands in Cheshire. It was cemented by various connections. But, at the time of the Civil Wars, the head of the Lyttons embraced the party graced by the genius of Hampden, and the Colonel Robinson *ceu* Norreys of Guersylt was an enthusiastic and distinguished Cavalier. An anecdote of this latter gentleman, told, I think, in 'The History of Denbighshire,' and

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more at length in family records, is sufficiently interesting to be worth repeating. He had contributed to Charles's short-lived victory at Rowton Heath, and joined the battle of Marston Moor. He was pursued hard by the Roundheads; and, in doubling from their chase, came in front of his own mansion. Some workmen were employed there, upon alterations of the grounds, or house. The Cavalier dismounted from his horse, which was carried away and concealed, borrowed the dress of one of the labourers, and set to work with the rest. The Roundheads came up; and, after searching in vain the house and premises, addressed the workmen; informed them that a considerable sum was set on the head of the Malignant, and offered a tempting bribe for any clue to his detection. To the honour of these poor men be it said, not a word of betrayal escaped from one of them. 'It is well for your master,' said the grim captain of the Parliamentary troop, 'that we did not find him, or we would have hung him up before his own door.'

They rode off discomfited, and the Colonel escaped. He got over the seas, and joined the small knot of exiled gentry that composed the Court of Charles II. On his return, at the Restoration, the Roundhead to whom the estate had been allotted, and who had made considerable embellishments and improvements in the mansion, restored the property to him on very moderate terms.

The differences between the two families, thus enlisted on opposite sides, were ultimately reconciled by a new alliance, followed in a later generation by the friendship of the cousins to which I have before adverted.

I have often thought that a very interesting and instructive work might be compiled, having for its object the history of a private family, as a companion to the history of our kings. Papers, title-deeds and household documents, old wills, inventories of furniture, house accounts and estate books, might help, with the more general chronicle of the progress of manners, to form a complete record of all those important

minutiæ in the life of a nation which even the research and vivifying genius of a Macaulay cannot wholly comprehend in the annals of its public events. Such a work might have the interest of romance and the reality of fact. I imagine I could compile such a work from the imperfect *Collectanea Biographica* of my own ancestry.¹ And one notable and entertaining crisis in such a record would be the accession of this new dynasty of Robinson Lytton. Their predecessors of Knebworth had been a stately and decorous race, attached to public affairs, and from father to son knights of the shire. These descendants of the old Cavalier were gay, spendthrift, idle roysterers. Happily, they lasted only two generations. There they stand amidst the family portraits, beside the mail and fardingales of the earlier owners of Knebworth, rustling in the bravery of velvets, green and crimson. Even in shooting attire, the first of the dynasty has his frock all garnished with gold lace, and his trim hose rolled fashionably over his knees. Even in childhood, at the age apparently of ten, the second of that line carries his hat debonairly under his arm, wears his court-sword by his side, and his face (blooming with all roses, York and Lancastrian) smiles on posterity from under the curls of a powdered periwig; while the mother sits in state by a flowing stream, from which her daughters, in full dress, are decoying 'the silver-scaled prey;' with her snuff-box *à la Régence* open in her hand, and on the knee of her satin robe a madrigal commencing with the pastoral verse—

Blow winds, blow, and bear me to some grove.

They flourished through the reigns of George I. and George II., these Robinson Lyttons; and the fine house they bought in town, and the fine furniture they put into it, and the

[¹ The humorous sketch of the Viponts was probably suggested by this idea of a Family regarded as a continuous entity which, like a nation, preserves its typical character under the varying conditions of successive generations, and may, as such, be historically described. A reflex of the same idea appears in the family portrait of the earlier Chillinglies.—L.]

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dances and masques they gave, and the money they threw away upon singers and fiddlers (they were very musical, as your Cymrians mostly affect to be), are they not written still in the catalogues and house-steward's books, which furnish the materials of their short and flourishing reign? In Parliamentary politics they meddled not overmuch; neither father nor son took his place among the Commons. But this was owing, perhaps, to their discontent with things existing; they did not condescend to acknowledge their Germanised masters on the throne; they were still true to the faith of the Cavalier. The old spirit broke out when Charles Edward crossed the borders. Then, William Robinson Lytton buckled on the sword of his fathers, and his horse stood saddled in the stall. His wife (the lady with the snuff-box—a woman of sense and spirit), finding that all her remonstrances were in vain, pretended to yield, and accompanied her husband to the stables on pretence of seeing him depart; but no sooner had he entered, in order to see, himself, to his horse—for the peasants of that neighbourhood were not to be trusted like the old Welshmen of Guersylt—than the prudent lady turned the key in the door, and fairly locked him in. There, to his inconceivable rage, was the impatient Jacobite imprisoned for two days—food and wine silently lowered to him from the loft—till news came of the retreat of the Stuart from Derby, and the final destruction of all reasonable hope for his cause. The prisoner was then released; and if he did not thank his wife for preserving, perhaps, his head, and certainly his property, the debt of gratitude due to her has been amply paid by the blessings of her posterity.

The son of this gentleman died without issue; and the estates, again passing through the female line, came to my grandfather, the only son of the eldest sister, who had married an officer in the army—of a younger branch of the Warburtons of Ardley (settled in the Queen's County, Ireland)—and closed their entail with my mother, as his child. Meanwhile,

the male line of the family of Norreys of Guersylt (continued through the elder son) came also to an untimely end. The last male of that race was drowned in escaping from Anglesea one dark night, and his death, commemorated by a very mournful air of some Welsh bard's, left my mother ultimately the sole representative of that House, as she was of the Lyttons.

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In going through the above details of private history, I am no doubt indulging my acknowledged infirmity of family pride, and, it may be, exposing myself to the contempt of the philosophical. But I am also faithfully tracing the origin of influences which swayed the character of my mother, and, inherited from her, have had a direct effect upon my own moral nature and literary productions. For, as may readily be conceived, a girl at the age of eighteen, with tendencies at once poetical and reverential, could scarcely fail in this first introduction to the seat of her ancestors, and the memorials of their history, to contract those thoughts which invest with a kind of piety the images of the silent Lares. And such thoughts, made a permanent part of the mind by an earnest character, tenacious of its impressions, would no less naturally colour the earliest lessons bestowed upon her children.

With her, however, family pride assumed its most in-offensive and ennobling attributes. It left her proud amongst the great, never to the humble. And her sympathy with all energetic and generous action was so strong, that she had, in spite of her respect for gentle blood, a still greater admiration for all who rose by their own deeds and talents.

CHAPTER VI.

(Autobiographical.)

FIRST SUITORS. 1789.

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WHILE my mother was thus engaged, my grandfather proceeded with his great work. Imagine what it was! But that is impossible. In the first place, it was a drama. There seems nothing remarkable in that. Yes, but do not fancy that he deigned, like his unworthy grandson, to write dramas in vulgar English. It was a drama in Hebrew; and, what is more, it was intended for the stage. It is said that he afterwards burned this work in despair, when complaining to a friend that he could not find Jews sufficiently versed in Hebrew to act it. The friend pertinently observed, 'And if you did, where on earth will you find an audience sufficiently versed in Hebrew to understand it?' At all events, the work was not forthcoming amongst the Scholar's MSS. Even its title is lost. Ichabod! Ichabod!

Amongst the country neighbours of the new occupier of Knebworth was Mr. George Bowes, a younger brother of the Earl of Strathmore. He was a tall man with a long chin, and drove a curricie, in which he declared it to be the dream of his ambition to have Miss Lytton by his side. He possessed some property that nearly adjoined my grandfather's, and a very pretty old-fashioned place, with green alleys, bosquets, and statues. Lord and Lady Hawke were now on a visit at Knebworth—the latter an affected personage, who had written a very fantastic novel. She soon busied herself in endeavouring to make up a match between Mr. Bowes and

Elizabeth. She seems to have talked Mr. Bowes into her own views, and my grandfather smiled, nodded, and thought of his Hebrew drama, while her ladyship represented to him the advantages of joining the two properties, and the possibilities of Mr. Bowes succeeding to the Earldom of Strathmore. But Elizabeth, with her head full of knights and barons, Plantagenets and rulers, was still too much in love with her ancestors to spare any romance for her contemporaries.

A little time after this, her heart was in more danger. There came to the old hall a gay, handsome, dashing young Irishman, of the age in which men perhaps are most fascinating to young ladies of eighteen, viz. about thirty. He was in a fashionable regiment; he had the manners of good society, and the gallant liveliness of his nation. He easily propitiated my grandfather's favour. Mr. Lytton had known his family well, and perhaps had an *arrière-pensée* in the invitation that brought him into Hertfordshire. My grandfather let him know, in answer to some frank hints, that he had but to win the consent of Miss Lytton, in order to secure his own. So Miss Lytton now rode out with this cavalier, through the green lanes, in the soft summer evenings. And the cavalier rode so well! In her old age she still considered this gentleman the type of elegance in dress and manner, and thought our generation sadly changed for the worse. The powdered locks; the double-breasted white waistcoat, with the muslin cravat in great bows, rising over a delicate pink silk kerchief, carelessly folded to answer the purpose of our modern under-vest; the top-boots, shrunk halfway down the calf, and the broad-brimmed hat set with easy impertinence on one side the head—'That,' said my poor mother, after finishing her description, 'that is what I call being well dressed!' And I have no doubt that Captain Pigott wore the fashion with a grace;

[¹ One indication of the date at which this Autobiography was probably begun. It is, I think, more than forty years since coloured under-waistcoats were worn.—L.]

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for I knew him well when he was past sixty—a General and a Baronet—and, besides being still so handsome that he might have captivated many a young lady with a heart free to give (and I suspect that he did so, for he was a gay man), he was also a great beau, and carried off his dandyism with the airy ease of the true fine gentleman.

This incipient courtship, however, only lasted a fortnight. The Captain, accustomed to rapid conquests, committed the fatal imprudence of declaring himself both too soon and in too offhand a way. He put the question in that trenchant, positive, unpoetical form which leaves to true modesty none of its little hesitating subterfuges, but calls for a plain ‘Yes,’ or ‘No.’ And my mother, as maids so pressed, and who have not yet sounded their own minds, muttered ‘No,’ and escaped from the room. The Captain did not take the ‘No’ as a wise lover and a bold Irishman ought to have done. He was wholly discouraged and disheartened by it. It was a ‘No’ which he did not attempt to sap and mine, starve out, or blockade: it was a ‘No’ at which he raised the siege in retreat. Perhaps you will think that he was not much in love, since so soon out of heart; but if you think so, you are mistaken. For long years after, when we were riding out together, and he had no object to deceive me (indeed, he was a frank man, and had little or no deceit in him), he assured me, with serious earnestness, ‘that he had been truly and deeply enamoured; and for that reason,’ said he, ‘I was timid for the first time in my life. I felt that there was a great deal in Miss Lytton’s character very much above my deserts; and, moreover, she was a great heiress, and I then but a soldier of fortune.’

So the Captain went away the next day. Elizabeth at first was a little sad; she missed the rides, and the compliments, and the gay smile that had lighted up the old walls; but the impression was but skin-deep, and soon scarred over. ‘My dear,’ said my mother to me, in allusion to Marmontel’s pretty tale, ‘it was but the rose-coloured phial.’

CHAPTER VII.

(Autobiographical.)

THE DESERTED HOUSE. 1790.

BUT the time now came when Elizabeth was to return to her mother. Nearly a year had passed away since her arrival at Knebworth, and Mrs. Lytton grew nervous and jealous. My grandfather, in the meanwhile, had become accustomed to his daughter's society. He was better able to appreciate her intellect (though he never understood her character) than he could have been during her childhood. She accommodated herself to his ways, while her presence, almost unconsciously to herself, enlivened his studious hours. She saved him, too, all trouble in business and the household; for, in spite of her taste for poetry, she had a clear head for affairs, and had learned from her mother the womanly wisdom of economy and order. Perhaps the poor Scholar had never known so comfortable a home; and, therefore, when he saw her preparations for departure, he woke up from his Hebrew, and made a grand effort to detain her. The good man did not attempt to enforce his legal rights, and depart from the compact he had made, viz. to assure her liberty of choice as to residence with either parent. Neither did he flatter himself that he had become the first object in her affections. But he had learned from his classics that woman loves power, and is dazzled by show; and so, with awkward eloquence, he made his appeal to these feminine infirmities. 'Stay with me, Bessy,' quoth the Scholar, 'stay with me, and I'll tell you what I will do. I

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had forsworn London ; I will return to it. I will take a great house, as many servants as you think you can manage (keep them out of my way as much as you can). In the summer we will come again to Knebworth, more in state. Carriages and horses you may have—I don't care how many. As for money, somehow or other I never have too much of it ; but every sixpence I have, you shall have. You shall be presented at Court ; I will smarten myself up ; we will go into the great world, and you shall have with me—what I know you like, and what Lady Hawke calls “your proper station.” You can't have it with Mrs. Lytton. Live with me, Bessy !

My poor grandfather ! if he had then flung himself on his daughter's heart, or shed one of the tears which I am sure were swelling big at his throat, I think (I confess I hope) that he might so far have carried his point—that, on condition of seeing her mother while in London daily, Elizabeth would have consented to make her chief home with him. But my grandfather had not learned from his classics the true way to a woman's heart ; he never showed his own. He was too shy, or too proud.¹

Now, it is quite true that my mother loved power, and felt

[¹ I find among the letters of my great-grandfather Lytton one, written a year later to his daughter (April 17, 1791) which seems to renew the proposal. It shows a great craving for her companionship and (one would say) a great capacity of affection. ‘My dear girl’ (he writes)—‘I would say my dear angel girl, but that I would not be confounded with Mrs. Gunning, whom I take to be the worst writer of our language—when I receive your French letter I will answer it in that language. But in your last there is an expression which is in the language of my own heart, too seldom heard or spoken. You say it is written with all the warmth of an affectionate daughter. O my dear, how much does that expression say ! If your actions should hereafter correspond with it, I shall be one of the happiest men in the world. The circumstance for which you so strongly express your gratitude is a mere trifle, compared with what you might reasonably, and certainly, expect if you would but live with me. In that case I repeat, and I give you my honour, that I would divide my annual income fairly between us. If you can hear of a parent who is inclined to go greater lengths, I beg of you to point him out to me. If not, you will know what value to set on my affection : a value fixed by the discernment of your own good sense, and not by ignorant and prejudiced persons. I remain my dear girl's most tender and most affectionate parent,

‘RICHARD WARBURTON LYTTON. —L.]

sensibly the loss of her rightful station, and to most girls of nineteen my grandfather's offer would have been irresistible ; contrasting the prospects so opened with the card-tables in Upper Seymour Street, and a knack of 'keeping down,' which my grandmother, with her fluent talk, animal spirits, and inclination to what is vulgarly called snubbing, pre-eminently possessed. But Elizabeth, with that lynx-like penetration which belongs to those intuitively just and honest, saw that these offers were in reality a bribe to abandon the mother who was daily awaiting her return, and whom she had promised, with faithful tears, never to desert. She felt, too, that her residence with the separated wife gave to Mrs. Lytton a respectability and a position which no mere visits could bestow. In short, both her heart and her honour were on the side of the weaker party. Sometimes, leaning (it may be) towards the man, as men, they say (I think untruly), are apt to do—and fancying that my own greater knowledge of the scholarly character makes me comprehend my grandfather better than those about him could well do—sometimes, I have fancied that my mother gave to her other parent a larger share of her heart and affection than was quite just. But then, there was this in my mother which, even supposing her love to both had been equal, would have been to her father's disadvantage. Where twosides were presented to her, inclination and duty the same on each, but a great worldly sacrifice to herself on the one side, it was that side which she would have been sure to choose.

Nevertheless, I need not say that she was profoundly touched and affected by my grandfather's proposition. She attempted gratefully to soften the weeping negative she thought herself bound to give. But, when he saw that the negative was coming, he turned and left her, and never resumed the subject.

So my mother returned to Seymour Street ; and the episode of musing romance and rural dignity, which that year

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had been interwoven in the trite poem of her young life, closed upon the card-tables and the snubbing.

On his side, my grandfather had no intention of staying in the solitude to which he was left. Exposed to the incursions of troublesome tenants and frivolous visitors (no active, graceful, she-creature any longer to take them off his erudite hands), he cast a rapid eye over the furniture and chattels of the manor-house, to see if they were readily convertible into money; and, faded damasks, high-backed chairs, and Elizabethan cabinets, with bad locks and carved panels, not being then the rage, he beheld little worth the chance of an auction. There had been a library at Knebworth, but that had been bequeathed to the widow of the last Mr. Robinson Lytton; and, as my grandfather had never shown her the attentions that people who have something to leave expect as their due, that library she had willed away from him; together with certain lands which belonged to her, and which lay close to the Park pales. But the plate was left. I suspect it was an heirloom. However, that suspicion, no doubt, never occurred to my grandfather; for he was not more wasteful than he was honest. The plate! If there was a luxurious vanity in the world which more than any other my grandfather was likely to despise, it would be plate. Salvers and cups, the pride of successive generations, were hastily huddled up, and joyously hurried off. Among these I must mention, with regret, an article which seems to show that, with rich county gentlemen, there was more luxury of old in this unproductive wealth than our antiquarians would lead us to expect. It was a great table—its age unknown—of solid silver, slab and legs. O grandfather, grandfather! I have done my pious best to pass lightly over thine errors, but when I think of that table—such a relic of former magnificence—for what you or I know, the gift of some grateful king to wise counsellor or gallant knight—for surely no Lytton in his senses would have bought so heavy a gewgaw with his own money—when I think of that table, I say,

melted down into vulgar half-crowns and shillings, I declare that my gorge rises, and if my mother could have come into the world without thee, I would as lief thou hadst never been born !

These spoliations completed, my grandfather next solemnly committed all his affairs into the hands of a person well fitted to squeeze out their juices, and put off his employer with the rind : a cunning man, who had been his servant at Oxford, and whom he had elevated into the rank of his steward ; while, in order to make him feel comfortable and at home in the village, he bestowed upon this worthy's brother the living of Knebworth. How that brother—who, to judge by his sermons and the spelling of his letters, was scarce fit to be a parish clerk—ever got orders as a parson, is one of the mysteries of the last century. Thus these Adelphi may be said to have settled the property between them ; and my grandfather, having by so wise a family arrangement provided for the reduction of his income to an amount most harmonious to the wants of a sage, turned his back for ever upon the halls of his ancestors. Knebworth was let first, I believe, to the Duke of St. Albans, who resigned it with the complaint that it cost him his fortune in coals and candles. Then it was occupied by a wealthy family named Sutton, nearly related to the Archbishop of Canterbury ; and when they too left, a worthy old couple named Haggard were prevailed upon to live in some corner of it, with one or two servants, for which privilege they had even the magnanimity to pay 50*l.* a year. I think it was on leaving Hertfordshire that my grandfather betook himself to Boulogne ; where he bought a house, and no doubt shared the enthusiasm of the French for Freedom, Themistocles, and Brutus, until there came that great historical hurley-burley, from which he was so fortunate as to escape with his head on his shoulders. As for the house, and all he had spent on it, and all that he put into it, they vanished for ever from his possession, into that bottomless pit for selfish property called '*Fraternisation.*'



*Elizabeth Barbara Lytton.
from a miniature at Knobworth.*

CHAPTER VIII.

(Autobiographical.)

ELIZABETH LYTTON. 1790-97.

BOOK I. I THINK I am just arrived at that period in my mother's life
 1803-11. when she ought to sit to me for her portrait.

Elizabeth Lytton was about the middle height, rather below than above it; though, as few persons know themselves, that was one of the truths of which she could never be convinced. She considered herself a tall woman; and said, between jest and earnest, that no one had ever called that fact in question till she was seen leaning on the arms of sons so uncomfortably removed from the average stature of mankind.¹ But, if her stature was among things disputable, no one ever denied that in point of symmetry and proportion she 'was of the finest order of fine forms.' Even in old age, and in spite of an obstinate adherence to antiquated fashions of dress, not favourable to the setting off her figure, every connoisseur of female beauty was struck with the grace and lightness of her shape: the swanlike length of throat—the fall of shoulder—the waist so slender, but so rounded, which yet was never pinched by corset or stays—the elegant sweep of limb, and hands and feet of a beauty which I have never seen equalled.² Till long past the age of sixty, the exactness

[¹ The eldest of them was the only tall one.—L.]

[² My father's own hands and feet were singularly small and well-shaped. As he inherited these features from his mother, and as he had probably noticed, when a boy, that the original owners of the suits of equestrian armour which had escaped the dismantlement of Knebworth, must also



Elizabeth Barrett Browning
Portrait by Mrs. F. W. M. M. M. M.



A. Dutton, Photo. Co.

*Elizabeth Barbara Lytton.
from a miniature at Knebworth.*

of her proportions might be judged by her very step—so firm, so elastic, so gliding, as it were, and rising up from the ground it touched.

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Of the character of her countenance, I must speak, not as I remember it, when the fair clearness of the complexion was gone ; when many an illness and many a grief had hollowed the cheek and deepened the lines ; but, as I can best judge, by the portraits of her youth, and those who remembered her before marriage.

Her face was by no means critically handsome. The nose, though of very fine outline, was too aquiline for female beauty ; the mouth was too wide, and the chin not sufficiently rounded ; but, on the other hand, her eyes, if small, were the colour of the violet, and shaded by dark and very long lashes. When her mind was aroused, they were singularly intelligent ; when her heart was touched, singularly soft. The eyebrow was arched and fine, as if lined by a pencil. The hair of the richest chestnut in colour, exceedingly delicate in texture, and so redundant that, when young and released from its bondage, it reached below the knee. The head was very small, and so placed on the neck that its every turn had grace and distinction. She had the prettiest white ear in the world. Her complexion was fair and rather pale, but it varied into blushes with each emotion. And I may add that, of the many complimentary poems addressed to 'Eliza' by her flatterers or admirers, there are none which do not allude to a modest dignity that characterised her to the last. She was always among the shyest women I have known—a shyness arising from the contest between diffidence and self-esteem.

have had small hands and feet, he regarded them as transmitted tokens of continuity in the physical characteristics of his race, and was fond of ascribing the possession of them to those characters in his own works whose appearance was intended by him to exhibit the attributes of gentle birth. This was ridiculed by many critics as a sign of the author's personal vanity. Nor was the author (in his younger days) wholly free from the vanity of which they accused him. But he was more vain of his ancestry than of his person.—L.]

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She went into the world with a consciousness that people would like her better if she could make herself better known to them, and a conviction that she could never have the courage to do so.¹

Of conversational talent in mixed society she had not a scintilla. But if quite at her ease, and with one other person whom she liked and trusted, she was a most agreeable companion—with an observation extremely keen, very quick and shrewd insight into character and motive, remarks full of subtlety and *finesse*, and an innocent, delicate, vein of humour which was much more entertaining than wit. To wit she had no pretensions.

The year passed with her father at his family seat, though unattended with any ostentatious parade, or any memorable hospitality, served nevertheless to make Miss Lytton's position as an heiress better known on her return to her mother's roof; and whether in London, or at the watering-places to which Mrs. Lytton adjourned the wars of casino and quadrille, there was no lack of candidates for the hand of a young lady so favoured by nature and fortune. But my mother reached the age of two-and-twenty without having received a more lively impression from the rosy god than the faint and fading reminiscence of the handsome Captain Pigott.

The hour then arrived for that event in the history of women which, in earnest natures, stands single and alone among the joys and sorrows of the heart. In the pew opposite to that which Mrs. and Miss Lytton occupied in the chapel of Quebec Street, there sat habitually a middle-aged, respectable-looking couple; and, as at that day it was a kindly

[¹ This feeling, which he never outlived, my father also inherited from his mother. From her also he inherited her remarkable business capacity, her thrift in little things, her generosity in great; and a very strong sentiment of what is commonly called the pride of birth, though it deserves perhaps some gentler appellation when (as in his case and in hers), taking no vulgar colour from the vanities of wealth or rank, it assumes a form in which the Romans revered it as *Pietas*.—L.]

custom, after divine service, for the members of the congregation to exchange silent bows before opening the pew-doors and leaving church, so this hebdomadal and courteous recognition of each other's existence had been naturally established between the two ladies and their neighbours in the opposite pew. One Sunday there appeared with this worthy couple a third person, in the shape of a young man of about four-and-twenty; with a high forehead and fair hair, and a sweet, grave, sensible expression of countenance. When the time came for bowing, the stranger invested his salutation with an air of peculiar deference. Elizabeth thought she had never received such a bow before.

On leaving church, as they walked back to Upper Seymour Street, Mrs. Lytton said to her daughter :

'Did you observe that young man in the pew with the Rawlinses ?'

My mother blushed, and murmured an inarticulate 'Yes.'

'Ah !' said Mrs. Lytton, good-humouredly, 'I should have thought that was just the young man that no young woman could help observing.'

My mother thought the same thing, but she said nothing.

A few evenings afterwards, at a party given by one of the foreign ministers, where the eternal cards were relieved by a little dance, which the politeness of Continental manners had compassionately got up impromptu for the young people present, the hostess approached Miss Lytton, and requested leave to introduce to her as a partner Mr. Rawlins, a gentleman who had just returned from his travels. My mother walked up, and saw before her the young man whose bow had conveyed so much on the Sunday before.

At that time it was a distinction to have been abroad ; it gave to a young man a certain reputation—nay, a certain romantic interest. He was not only supposed to have acquired a right to constitute himself a judge of arts and manners, but to have gone through strange perils and wild adventures. Mr.

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Rawlins talked well on the wonders he had seen, and smiled, perhaps, at the *naïve* curiosity of his fair partner. He had been in the land of Goethe, whose first romance was then to the youth of Europe what 'Childe Harold' was afterwards. He knew the supposed original of that wondrous tale of sentiment and sorrow, which my mother in some of her prettiest drawings had illustrated. He could speak of the French Court, and described Marie Antoinette. He quoted a line from Racine, and forgot the one that followed. Elizabeth, colouring much, timidly suggested it. Then, from the French drama they got into Italian literature, and were pleased to find each other at home in Metastasio, whose homely music of verse was then the fashion. In short, they separated as those separate who are charmed at the first sight, and see paradise opening from the first meeting. The London season was nearly over: the mother and daughter went to Tunbridge Wells. Mr. Rawlins followed; they rode together in the day, and danced together at night; acquaintance ripened into intimacy, intimacy into courtship.

That lovely country in the neighbourhood of the old Spa, made classical ground by Grammont, my mother always spoke of as the Arcadia of England. But in after life she would never return to those scenes, and yet never confess why. At one time I used to go often to Tunbridge Wells, striving in fancy to re-people the deserted Pantiles with the gay Court of Charles II., or stealing away that I might dream of Sidney under the oaks of Penshurst. When I returned from such excursions, my mother was always eager to question me as to any changes in the topography of the place; then she used to sigh quietly, fall into a reverie, and was always a shade sadder the next day.

Mr. Rawlins was a younger son without fortune, and of a family very inferior to my mother's. But whatever her pride on the score of descent, it is a proof how little harshness there was in that foible, that it never influenced her when her affections were touched. Nay, in this case, it never even seemed to

occur to her ; and in her old age, when her pride was at its height, and she would speak with majestic disdain of some coroneted *roturier* who had chafed the sore point and roused the pedigree to revolt, she never alluded to Mr. Rawlins, the merchant's son, but in terms of such respect that you might have thought him descended from Charlemagne. For his sake, unlike provincial gentry in general, she viewed with reverence the whole class of merchants ; to her, they were all that poets and political economists have called them—the princely Genoese of the world ; ‘such deck a throne.’ She was never more indignant than when a town-idler, or a country squire, indulged in a sneer at commerce. If she got over any objection to her lover on the score of birth, there seemed no likelihood that one so philosophical as my grandfather, the pupil of Dr. Parr, and the admirer of republican institutions, would ever be scrupulous on a point so immaterial, and turn his back upon his own favourite motto—‘*Virtus est sola nobilitas.*’ Therefore it was with no dread of the result that, on returning to London, Mr. Rawlins was permitted to write to Mr. Lytton, state his pretensions, and entreat my grandfather’s consent.

One afternoon a gentleman knocked at the door of Upper Seymour Street, and, requesting to see Miss Lytton, was announced as Mr. Milnes Lowndes. The name was familiar to my mother as that of the nephew of one of my grandfather’s oldest, and most distinguished, friends ; but she had never seen the bearer of the name, and was much fluttered and agitated when, on entering, he drew forth a letter from my grandfather, and with an air of great gravity told her that he had been particularly requested by Mr. Lytton to place that letter in her own hands. The solemnity of this address, and the serious look of Mr. Milnes Lowndes, led Miss Lytton to fear that her father was ill, and had perhaps sent for her. She withdrew to the window to read the letter, while Mr. Lowndes seated himself at a distance.

The letter was a thunderbolt. In a few short, stern, lines my

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grandfather conveyed his peremptory rejection of Mr. Rawlins's suit, and his command to his daughter that he should hear no more on the subject. There were, I think, also some concluding sarcasms at Mrs. Lytton's talents for match-making.

My grandfather assigned no reason for his austere determination, and at the first glance it was not easy to detect one. It is true that few fathers in Mr. Lytton's position would have thought Mr. Rawlins a suitable match in point of family and connections; but I am persuaded that this was the last idea which occurred to my grandfather. I suspect his reasons were twofold: first, he could not but see that his consent to such a marriage would oblige him to make a suitable pecuniary provision for the young couple, and he never had a shilling to spare; secondly, he wished that any husband bestowed on his daughter should be rather chosen by himself than approved of by his wife. He might still have a yearning for his child's society, and in that case could not but believe that much would depend upon the degree of sympathy which her husband would experience for himself *versus* Mrs. Lytton.

And that this last reason—excusable by the jealousy of parental affection—did influence him, seems to me the more probable when I consider that he had committed his letter to Mr. Milnes Lowndes, a young man not related to him, and wholly a stranger to his daughter. Such a proceeding on the part of a man with the slightest knowledge of the world would have been singularly indecorous and indelicate. But I am sure that the poor Scholar thought it a master-stroke. The young heroines in the Greek tragedians speak in the bitterest terms of the privation, not so much of this husband or of that, as of any husband at all. Now, in depriving his daughter of Mr. Rawlins, my grandfather compassionately deemed it just to provide a substitute—a husband of his own choice. Indeed, he had already half explained his intentions to Mr. Milnes Lowndes, whom he liked for his own sake, and his uncle's. He had said, 'Why should not our families be allied? You

ought to marry ; there is my daughter—an heiress, you know, and a good-looking girl ; no fool, though she would never learn Latin. Her mother wants to marry her to some fellow in London, so that I may never see her again. I have put a stop to that scheme. You are going to town ; take this letter to my daughter, give it into her hands, or Mrs. Lytton may throw it into the fire. Afterwards, win her heart. You see, if she would marry this man, why, of course, she would marry you ; and then we can contrive, perhaps, to live all together.'

Mr. Milnes Lowndes, then, was aware, not of the exact contents of the letter, but of its general purport ; and though he did not suspect, from my grandfather's conversation, that Miss Lytton's affections were seriously engaged, he was still struck with admiration of her self-command, when she turned from the window and addressed to him a few words of inquiry as to her father's health. After which he had the tact and good breeding to withdraw.

Alas ! what he had supposed self-command was but the calm stun that follows a great blow, before the reaction of thought brings the agony. My grandmother, as may be supposed from her antecedents, was not inclined to consider the commands of her husband as an indisputable authority. She revolted against him on behalf of her child, as she had done for herself. Despite some levity and worldliness of character, she was a virtuous woman, and strictly correct in her conduct ; more than a negative merit, considering the temptations to which she had been exposed ; but she had not a high and habitual sense of duty, as she proved in this case. She advised and encouraged her daughter to set aside a command enforced by no argument, and fatal to her happiness.

'You are of age,' she said. 'You are independent of your father by law, and will, if you survive, be equally independent by fortune ; and for the present I have saved money. Mr. Rawlins is not extravagant ; he has great abilities, which will ensure him success in a profession, or in some public employment

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that our friends may obtain for him. Meanwhile, you can both live with me, and share what I possess.'

But my mother did not listen to so tempting a counselor, nor to the one more dangerous at her own heart. With her, Duty had become so interwoven with all her feelings and motives for action, that it had obtained the strength of an instinct.

And so, with a trembling hand, she wrote to Mr. Rawlins, cited, in softening it, her father's letter, and closed the dream of her life.

She remembered every word of her own letter, and I once coaxed her into copying it for me. It was a notable contrast to the despairing farewells of Romance, or to the headlong passionate expressions which rush from the pen of young ladies in these our modern days. It began 'Sir;' it was comprised in two sides of a sheet of note-paper. Yet, through the formal style and the brief sentences, there was a latent depth of feeling, an unconscious sigh from the whole simple, modest, breaking heart, which a poet (but perhaps your true poet only) would have found more pathetic than his most burning verse, or than all the epistolary effusions he might have received from some female enthusiast who, adoring the genius, believed that she loved the man.

But Mr. Rawlins was no poet. A man of a proud and very exacting temper, somewhat spoiled, perhaps, by former conquests, and thinking that is not true love which submits to the control of duty (a common error with both sexes), he received his dismissal with haughty and mute resentment, increased by learning from Mrs. Lytton her own advice, and her own offer to smooth all obstacles of a pecuniary nature.

He made no reply to the letter. Some time later he met Miss Lytton in society. He was leaning against the door as she passed—gave one look of bitter disdain—and left the room.

Shortly afterwards he went to India; and the resentment which proved the keenness, but not the generosity, of his

attachment remained unchanged. For when, after the lapse of years, he heard from a friend of both parties that Miss Lytton was married, and, it was feared, not happy in marriage, he said vindictively, 'It is as she deserves. She preferred wealth to affection.' Words which the same kind friend repeated to the woman they wronged so cruelly.¹

CHAP.
VIII.

[¹ The last time Miss Lytton ever saw Mr. Rawlins was on the occasion mentioned here by my father, when not a word was exchanged between them. This was four years before her marriage. Two years after that event she received intelligence of his death. It occurred in India, whence he never returned to England.—L.]

CHAPTER IX.

(Autobiographical.)

LAST SUITORS. 1797.

BOOK
I.
1803-11

‘You were very unhappy after this?’ said I once to my mother.

‘Oh, very; but as there was no help for it, I struggled against it.’

‘That is easy to say.’

‘And not so hard to do, when it was so plainly my duty.’

Duty again! That was my mother all over.

While this silent struggle went on, Mr. Milnes Lowndes had contrived to establish himself in favour with my grandmother. He became a frequent visitor; at last, what the French call *l'ami de la maison*.

His attentions to Miss Lytton were silent and unobtrusive. She did not guess that he understood her situation, but he seemed intuitively to respect it.

Mr. Milnes Lowndes was a fair scholar, very accomplished; of manners somewhat formal, but dignified; of habits of life regular and decorous, and his character stood deservedly high. He pleased my grandmother by the figure he made in the world. He was of a family which pretended to rank amongst the most ancient, had himself a good fortune, and was the elder son of a man of large estates. His age was about thirty; and, while free from the vices of fashion, a considerable elegance of taste made him readily accommodate himself to its forms and shows.

More than a year had passed since Mr. Rawlins had wholly vanished from the scene, before Mr. Milnes Lowndes took courage and proposed. This offer took my mother by surprise, and pained her deeply. For she had taken a sisterly liking to the quiet and somewhat melancholy man, with his refined manners, and tastes in literature very much assimilating to her own; and when he told her how long he had silently loved her, and, delicately implying his knowledge of her prior attachment, pressed not for more of love than his own regard might ultimately obtain, she was startled to think how immense an interval there is between liking and loving. She answered him by as soothing and gentle a refusal as she could convey: a refusal so gentle, though meant to be firm, that he readily believed my grandmother, when she told him not to be disheartened. For Mrs. Lytton, as became a lady of social temperament, began to wish to see her daughter settled in life.

Unluckily perhaps for himself, however, Mr. Milnes Lowndes thought it best to bring my grandfather also more visibly on his side; and, by way of expediting matters, confided the whole to his father. That gentleman, who was almost as great an oddity as Mr. Lytton himself, jumped at the idea, and, without saying a word to his son, sat down and wrote a long letter to my grandfather: a letter taking the thing for granted; plunging at once into business (for Mr. Lowndes Senior was a prudent man), coming slap-dash upon the questions of settlement and provision, dower and jointure; raising turbulent queries as to whether, if Mrs. Lytton died, my grandfather would feel inclined to marry again; for, if so, he might have a son, and then, as sons took precedence of daughters in the entail, what would become of Miss Lytton's inheritance? This should be provided for. Would my grandfather insure his life for the benefit of Miss Lytton, in case of such marriage and male issue? In short, just the sort of letter to frighten my grandfather out of his wits, and make

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all the parasites, hangers-on, and money-leeches—by whom he had now surrounded himself, and from whom he had no secrets—set up one indignant chorus of warning. Was he going to suffer himself to be imposed upon—robbed—plundered—impoverished? Provision for his daughter—that meant a princely allowance! Why, this was worse than Mr. Rawlins, who had not hinted at such a thing, and who would have been contented with very little. Questions whether he would marry again? What impertinence! Whether, if so, he would bind himself to insure his life? What cold-blooded calculation on his death!

All these, and many other outcries, similar and dissimilar, were screeched into his ears. My grandfather seized his pen, and replied by a letter composed on the epic principle of beginning, middle, and end. He began with declarations of astonishment, proceeded with protestations that he would bind himself to nothing, and concluded with his favourite and pathetic peroration in all manner of affairs: to wit, ‘that he begged to be troubled no more upon the business.’ The receipt of this letter threw Mr. Lowndes senior into a paroxysm of fury. He sent for his son, and exploded into anathemas on the head of the lover if he presumed to think any further of his mistress.

Mr. Milnes Lowndes, though a quiet man, and hitherto an obedient and good son, felt that his fate at the age of thirty could not be thus rocked to the base by the breath of an angry lip; and his own resentment rose high at his father’s indiscreet mode of dealing with one who required to be managed with such adroitness as Mr. Lytton. Clumsy, indeed, had been the diplomacy which converted his first auxiliary—nay, the instigator to his suit—into an unexpected and formidable opponent. After a stormy scene between father and son, Mr. Milnes Lowndes left the house in great disorder, and hastened to Miss Lytton. He was naturally fearful lest her father might have written to her; and it was due to her,

though exceedingly mortifying and embarrassing to himself, to explain the false position in which the unauthorised letter of Mr. Lowndes senior had placed both parties.

Though Miss Lytton could not but be exceedingly wounded, in both her pride and her modesty, that Mr. Lowndes should have conceived her hand at the disposal of his son after her own rejection of his suit, and addressed her father upon pecuniary matters (which, since the affair of Mr. Rawlins, would have been, even had she consented to the suit of Mr. Lowndes, the very subject upon which she would have stipulated for absolute avoidance), she could not but be moved by the extreme distress of her unfortunate lover.

But when, emboldened by her gentleness and pardon, he ventured to represent that he possessed a competent fortune independent of his father, and that he did not doubt but what he could obtain the assent of her own, it may be easy to conjecture her answer. Even had she been in love with Mr. Milnes Lowndes (loved him even as she had loved Mr. Rawlins), I am sure that she would not have been satisfied with the acquiescence of her own parents. She would never have made breach between father and son, nor entered into any family without its offering a hearty welcome. Mr. Milnes Lowndes left her in that despair which is deepest in still natures. A few days after, his only brother called upon Miss Lytton. A word on this brother.

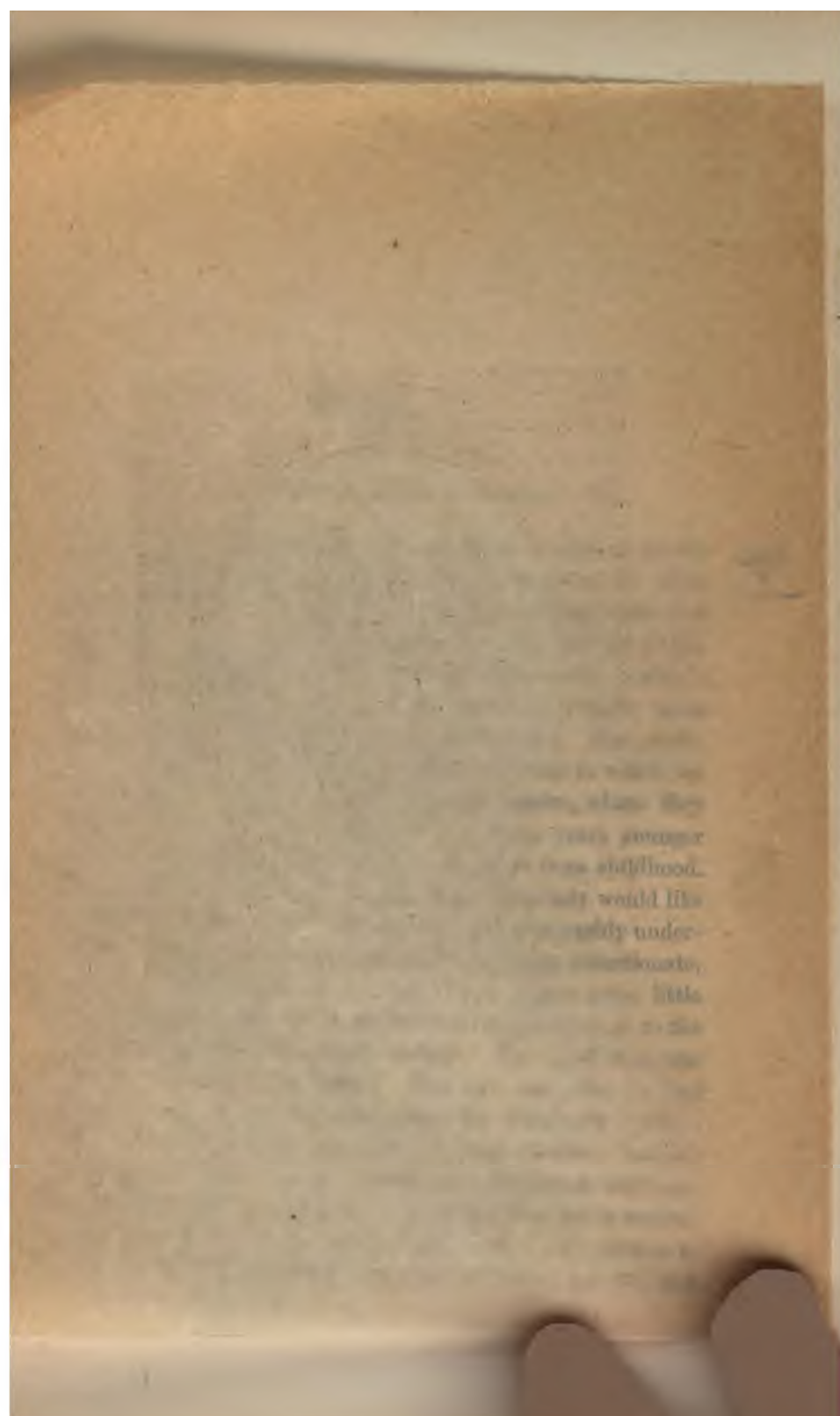
Tom Lowndes was in all respects the contrast to Milnes. Milnes was tall and slender; Tom was rather short and stout. Milnes had a long thoughtful face; Tom a round and a merry one. Milnes was refined to preciseness; Tom blunt and rough to vulgarity. Milnes was one of those men who, except when under the influence of deep and rare passions, have too much dignity to show their foibles; Tom was a sharp, rattling, talkative fellow, with just enough cleverness to be a great fool. He wrote the worst verses I ever read, and printed them. But Tom had an excellent heart, a profound love and reverence for

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his brother, whom he considered the first of mankind ; and, when he witnessed poor Milnes' grief and despondency, it flashed across his coarse, generous, mind that all affairs in life can be settled by money ; that he had a very good fortune of his own ; and that he had never had occasion to spend half of it. So he came to Miss Lytton, and offered to settle the other moiety upon his brother if she would consent to marry him. To his great astonishment, he found that this offer did not smooth matters as he had expected ; but there was something so rare in the generosity he exhibited, and so touching in the friendship between the brothers, that Tom naturally established a kindly and familiar acquaintance with one whom he did his best to convert into a sister-in-law : an acquaintance which afterwards occasioned my mother some trouble. Poor Mr. Milnes Lowndes crept away into the country, and was heard of no more. I confess that, of all the candidates for my mother's hand, he was the one who most inspires my sympathy ; the one with whom, I think, she would have been the most happy, could she have returned his affection.

When, some two years later, a carriage stood at the door of a fashionable London church, when a bride passed from the porch, and the curious bystanders pressed forwards to gaze, a low exclamation made her lift her downcast eyes, and my mother—that bride—saw amidst the crowd the mournful face of Milnes Lowndes. A year after her marriage he died of a decline.

ORANGE COUNTY





William Pitt, Prime Minister
of Great Britain

CHAPTER X.

(Autobiographical.)

MISS LYTTON MARRIES COLONEL BULWER. 1798.

AMONGST the occasional, but always welcome, visitors at my grandmother's house in Seymour Street, had been for some years a gentleman who now began to call more frequently, and stay longer when he called. He had never paid any particular attention to Miss Lytton, who regarded him as her mother's counsellor and friend. Some ladies generally require some such male adjutant in their cares and troubles. The gentleman in question was of the same county as that in which my grandmother's family formerly possessed estates, where they chiefly resided. He was about two or three years younger than herself, and they had known each other from childhood. He was the man, above all others, that a lone lady would like to consult, for he was fond of business, and thoroughly understood it; the very person to settle with a bullying, extortionate, tradesman, advise with on a point of law, adjust some little social quarrel, or give the most judicious suggestions as to the safest investment for the yearly savings. This gentleman was destined to become my father. The fact was, that he had always conceived a quiet admiration for Elizabeth Lytton; while the nature of the connection he had elsewhere formed, and which, as I have said, he considered as binding as marriage, did not permit him to encourage that admiration into a warmer sentiment. But now the melancholy death of the woman to whom he had been faithfully attached for many years left him

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1808-11

free; and his very grief for her loss, and the blank that it left in his existence, made him yearn for the solace of a home, and turned his thoughts towards marriage. His father, too, was dead; he had come into one portion of his property; and his mother (with whom rested the disposal of the rest, which she afterwards bequeathed to him) was extremely anxious to see the son of whom she was most fond and proud, settled in life.

Therefore, some months after the events which terminated the unprosperous courtship of Mr. Milnes Lowndes, Colonel Bulwer began to revisit the long familiar house in Upper Seymour Street, with what are called serious intentions. He was not a man who could appreciate the rarer qualities of Miss Lytton. Her intellectual tastes, and those secret virtues which lay deep from common observation in her woman's heart, would not have found in him sympathising comprehension or tender culture. But the elegance of her manners satisfied his pride; her domestic habits gave him promise of a peaceful home; and not only the graces of her person, but the very fault in her features, attracted the idiosyncrasies of his fancy. He liked small eyes, so long as they were blue. He was wont to say that large black eyes were the signs of a shrew. He liked an aquiline nose. A nose that turned up the least little bit would have disgusted him with a Venus. A woman with a turned-up nose, he would say dogmatically, is invariably a coquette.

Thus, his eye and his judgment both pleased, Colonel Bulwer wrote to his mother that he had seen much of Miss Lytton; that she was rather paler and graver than she used to be, but he thought such change became her; he had a great mind to propose. This good resolve no doubt his anxious correspondent properly encouraged. And so he told his tale.

My poor mother had often and often told herself that she had quite overcome her attachment to Mr. Rawlins; but at any proposal to give him a successor the image proved that it

was not dead, if it slept. It rose again, to haunt her thoughts and claim her fidelity. She therefore declined the Colonel's proposals, as she had done those of Mr. Milnes Lowndes.

Now, my father was one of those men who have a right, when a lady refuses them, to inquire respectfully 'why?' He was what is called an unexceptionable match in person, character, property, and station. There was a little disparity in years, but not, perhaps, more than there ought to be between man and wife. Still, as that was the only objection that occurred to himself as possible, he asked frankly if there were any other—any that it was in his power to obviate.

The long family acquaintance with Colonel Bulwer, the confidence shown to him by her mother, and the respect that she herself felt for his name and character, seemed to Miss Lytton to call for a reply as frank as the question. She therefore told him that she had known a previous attachment, which, though over, had made her feel that she could never know another, and that it was her intention not to marry.

The Colonel repaid this confidence by a manly letter; which showed more feeling than might be expected from one who had always been accustomed to have his own way, and who was generally no less annoyed than indignant when any obstacle arose between his will and its triumph. He expressed great gratitude for the trust placed in him: a trust so candid that it raised Miss Lytton, if possible, still higher in his esteem. He uttered some commonplaces, very well turned, as to the effect of time upon all human reminiscences of past emotion; and, without venturing on the presumption of hope, let it just be understood that he could not consent to despair.

He left this letter to produce what effect it might, and went down to Norfolk. Shortly afterwards his mother died. When he reappeared in London he was in deep mourning, and under great dejection of spirits. Woman is so naturally the Consoler, that his sorrow became the most eloquent pleader in his favour. My grandmother began to be importunate and urgent

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on his behalf; and, though it was very slowly that my mother consented to resign her single state, and the memories that still haunted it, yet, after more than a year's courtship from first to last, the consent was wrung from her at length. This time, my grandfather interposed no obstacle; for the Colonel gave him no trouble, and asked for no dower. Even the settlements were drawn up by his own lawyer and Mrs. Lytton's; and my grandfather, in amaze that his daughter could be married with so little fatigue to him, and thinking from the Colonel's character that he was not likely to be ruled by a mother-in-law to the prejudice of male rights and claims, bestowed his hearty benediction upon the nuptials.

Thus, after heroically burning the letters of Mr. Rawlins, and consigning to the care of her mother (sealed up and never reopened till her widowhood) some slight innocent tokens of the old romance, Elizabeth Lytton passed to the marriage altar; perhaps with a foreboding heart, but with a firm resolve to discharge the new duties the new situation called for.¹

I end this chapter with a brief sketch of my father at that time: partly from his picture by Cosway, partly from oral descriptions.

He was about forty years of age, with dark-brown hair and light-blue eyes, which were large, well opened, and could be very stern and very soft. He had a very good forehead, high and unwrinkled, not showing much thought, but bold in its expression, and with the organs of perception strongly marked; for the rest, his face, without being handsome, was what may fairly be called comely and good-looking. He was of the middle stature, with an erect military mien; and, though to appearance rather slender than thick-set, he had an extraordinary strength of nerve or muscle, which gave him fame in many an athletic feat.

Had his natural abilities been properly trained and duly cultivated, I have no doubt that he would have been a very

¹ June 1, 1798.

eminent man. For he had most of those moral qualities which ensure success to mental effort; a will of iron, a combative temper that nothing daunted and nothing deterred; a love of command, and a promptness of judgment that enforced obedience; a stubborn and a patient ambition.¹ But my grandmother's distaste to reading was not greater than his. His efforts at that operation were confined to the newspaper, which he read from the first advertisement down to the printer's name.

Once, in the honeymoon year of marriage, he found my poor mother looking into Thomson's 'Seasons.' The page happened to be opened at the hackneyed but very beautiful passage commemorative of wedded bliss, beginning—

Oh happy they, the happiest of their kind, &c.

So, as he took the book, she asked him smilingly to read aloud. My father, with his accustomed boldness, unterrified by the novelty of the undertaking, put himself into a martial attitude, and thundered out the verse. Had he been at the head of his regiment, indulging in classic fashion in some animated harangue to his soldiers, he could not have given a louder and more truculent emphasis to those poor pastoral, peaceable, numbers. My mother, when she had recovered the first shock, made a snatch at the book; and, failing in the attempt, ran fairly out of the room.

¹ Strength of will, pertinacity of purpose, promptness of judgment, ambition, and the love of command, which were also strongly marked in my father's character, he probably inherited from his military sire. But the General's combative spirit was less forcibly transmitted to his son; in whom this quality, though not deficient, had little spontaneous activity. He was not argumentative, and loved not disputation or conflict for their own sake. Hot-tempered, and quick-witted, he could say, in anger, many bitter things; and in discussion, when it was forced upon him, his retorts were sometimes keenly satirical and stinging. But the sensitiveness of his own feelings made him habitually shrink from hurting the feelings of others; and he never did so gratuitously. The conditions of his early struggle with the world were of a peculiarly combative character. But he was not combative unless provoked. One reason, perhaps, for his dislike of political life, after he had experienced the conditions of it.—L.]

CHAPTER XI.

(Autobiographical.)

BIRTH OF WILLIAM, HENRY, AND EDWARD BULWER. 1803.

BOOK
I.

1803-11

My brother William came into the world a remarkably fine child, as he has since grown up into a remarkably fine man.¹

My brother Henry came second;² and my grandmother, missing her daughter sadly (though she had done her best to get rid of her), implored hard to have the charge of him. My father, concentrating all his philoprogenitiveness upon his eldest son, and not unpleased to think one of the younger might, without incumbrance to his estates, be handsomely provided for (he knew that Mrs. Lytton had a very pretty sum in the funds), gave full consent. It was the greatest sacrifice my mother could then make to the parent for whom no sacrifice seemed too great: and so she made it. Another boy was born, and died. Afterwards came myself.

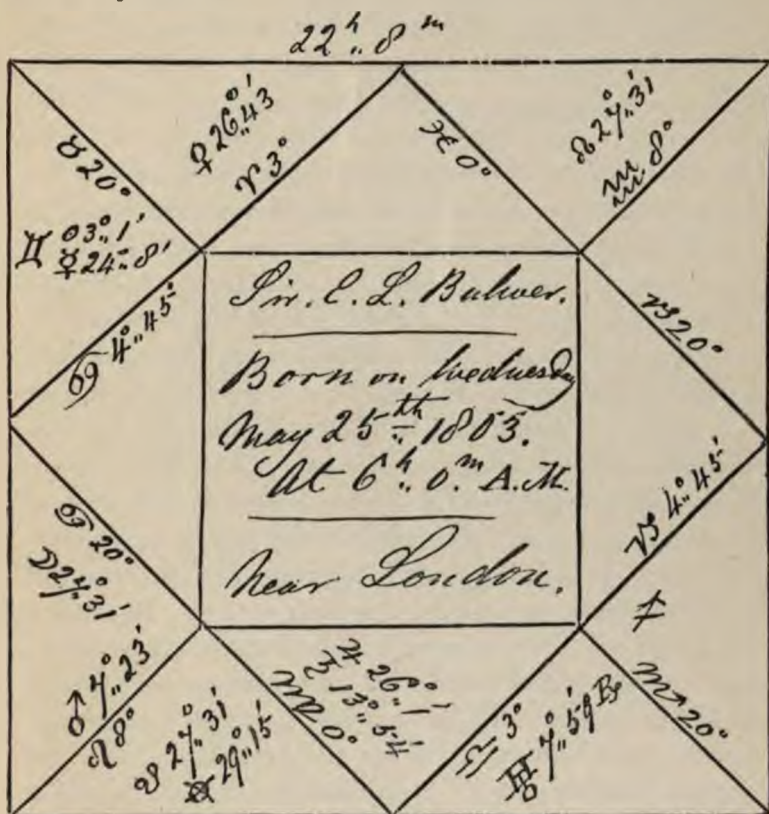
I was born on a certain twenty-fifth of May,³ about eight o'clock in the morning, and in Baker Street, Portman Square, No. 31. If some curious impertinents are anxious to know in what year of our Lord that event took place, let them find out for themselves. For my own part, I have never had the least wish to know at what age any man, whose life or writings inspired me with the least interest, entered and left this bustling planet. Nay, on the contrary, I always shun that knowledge, and, if it be forced upon me, try to forget it. I form my own idea of a man's age, and am not disposed to change it at the

[¹ Born April 28, 1799.—L.] [² Born February 13, 1801.—L.] [³ 1803.—L.]

whim of a chronologist. It is in vain to tell me that Voltaire was once young Arouet; to me he is always the old man with the crutch-cane, and the wrinkled visage, sharp with a thousand sneers. It is in vain to tell me that Petrarch died at sixty-eight; I see him only as he first saw Laura—at the golden age of twenty-seven.

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XI.

Pt. 1

FACSIMILE OF HOROSCOPE.¹

[¹ 1803. In the year 1854 my father's horoscope was cast by an astrologer on the assumption that 'the native' had been born at 6 A.M. Wednesday, May 25, 1803, near London. But the astrologer's authority for these data is unknown to me. The figure of the nativity is subjoined as a curiosity. The year and the day of the month are correctly stated in it. The day of the week and the hour of the day may possibly be correct also. But my father was undoubtedly born in London, not near it.—L.]

CHAPTER XII.

(Autobiographical.)

ELIZABETH'S MARRIED LIFE. 1803-1804.

BOOK

I.

1803-11

I was born just at the time when my mother's married life was saddest. For in unions, however ill-assorted, so long as there are good qualities on either side, it takes some few years before one can part with hope. And at first, though my father's temper was of the roughest, yet he was very much in love ; and love has a good-humour of its own. But gradually the temper rose superior to the love ; and gout, to which from early youth my father had been occasionally subjected, now suddenly fixed upon him premature and almost habitual residence. He bore pain with the fierce impatience common to the strong when they suffer ; and it exasperated all the passions which, even in health and happiness, that powerful and fiery organisation could but imperfectly control. My father, too, was of a jealous nature ; and, having no one else to be jealous of, the jealousy fell upon his mother-in-law. That is too frequent a fault with husbands to be much wondered at. But one great inducement to his wife in marrying him had been the thought that he appreciated and cordially liked her mother ; and she had pleased herself in picturing the welcome she should give to that mother at her own home, till the home and the parent became clasped in the same chain of associations.

Perhaps she showed too unwarily the pleasure she conceived from this idea, and made too warm and joyous the welcome she had yearned to give. At all events, my father frowned and growled ; and, finally, with his usual promptness

of decision, he spoke out his mind so plainly to Mrs. Lytton that she could never set foot in his house again. This was tearing at the roots of the strongest affection in my mother's heart, and her sorrow thereat was a new offence to jealousy: a lasting offence, for it never ceased.

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XII.

Æt. 1-4

What with secret grief, and what with terror (for she had been little accustomed to the loud voice and the lowering brow), my mother's constitution, always delicate, began to give way; the nerves were shattered. One or two severe feverish illnesses, which endangered her life, and from which she recovered but slowly, assisted to break her spirits; and to the dejected mind was added the enfeebled frame. You might see, in her old age, that she had passed through some crisis of great fear and great sorrow. At the least surprise or alarm a passing, painful, twitching of the nerves altered the features of the face; there was on her brow the weight of the old anxiety, and round the corners of her mouth those lines which are never ploughed but by grief.

My eldest brother was less of a tie between both parents than children usually are. My father considered the heir to his name as his special property not to be encroached upon. He regarded the mother's right as a privilege of temporary sufferance; the nursery was not her empire; it was a delegation. Henry was gone from her; his first words were for another's ear, his first caresses solaced another's heart. And, therefore, when a child was born to her, in her darkest hour—a child all her own—a child weakly and delicate, that claimed all her care—a child not destined to the heritage of Heydon, and therefore left undisputed to the government in which woman most desires to reign alone,—with the birth of it joy seemed born again, and the dreams that had deserted her own life gathered round the cradle of her infant.

It was not long before, from an object of indifference to my father, I became one of positive dislike. It may be that I shared in the same jealousy which had enveloped my grand-

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mother. But I think that my father had also another cause for the scowls with which he greeted my unconscious aspect. The lands of Lytton, if ever they devolved on my mother, would be at her own disposal: and he must have known enough of my mother's family pride to suspect that she would have a strong desire to keep the distinct representation of her own line apart from that of the Bulwers. William would inherit Heydon; Henry, in all probability, the fortune of his grandmother. It was possible that my mother would think that justice might allow her to select her own heir and representative in me. That was an idea that would have been eminently offensive to my father; who, an eldest son himself, naturally venerated the sanctity of primogeniture; and would gladly have seen every acre in Knebworth under the hammer of the auctioneer, in order that the proceeds might enable him to add to the hereditary domains in Norfolk. Norfolk men are fond of their natal soil. And my father was accustomed to say that he would rather have a rood in Norfolk than an estate in any other county.¹

Naturally enough, my father's aversion to me, whatever its cause, made my mother cling to me the more fondly.

[¹ There is no class of the English community in which local sentiment is to this day stronger or more tenacious than the landed gentry; and no part of the country in which it is stronger than in Norfolk. The isolation of that county, before the days of steam, rendered Norfolk families dependent for social intercourse mainly on their own immediate neighbourhood. Generation after generation they had made intermarriages between themselves which strengthened their attachment to their own county. Thus, mixing much with each other, and little with the rest of the world, they contracted a strong provincial patriotism: and from the following letter it would appear that even the first day of my grandmother's married life required from her a surrender of sentiment, arising out of the rival claims of Knebworth and Heydon. 'Colonel Bulwer presents his compliments to Mr. Price, with the assurance that he would have felt much pleasure in requesting Mr. Price to officiate on a late occasion; particularly as it was so much the wish of the person he holds most dear. But, the Dean of Norwich having been Colonel Bulwer's tutor, she was good enough to give up her desire to the fulfilment of a promise of long standing made to the Dean. Colonel Bulwer hopes that Mr. Price will give him a proof of having excused this arrangement by doing him the honour to accept, as a remembrance of the event, a token he has taken the liberty of sending by the Stevenage coach.'—L.]

A few months after my birth (whilst still in very infirm health), she was ordered to Brighton : and here she met with an unexpected annoyance from the brother of her old lover, Mr. Milnes Lowndes.

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XII.
Æt. 1-4

Tom had continued a familiar acquaintance with my grandmother ; and, blunt-spoken as she was, and with her causes of resentment against my father, she had the indiscretion to confess to him that her daughter was far from blessed in her marriage. This discovery inspired Tom with great compassion ; and from compassion his gallant nature extracted a softer sentiment. He followed my mother to Brighton, and offered the consolations of that dangerous friendship called Platonic love, in preliminary copies of verses which would have steeled against him any ear that had ever been attuned to music. A brief reply, that ought to have converted a Platonist into a Stoic, had no effect on his love and his Muse. He continued to pour in his poetry till, finding no answer returned, and the door closed upon him, he took to sentimental perambulations in the street : loitering by the threshold, like Tibullus—looking up at the windows, like the Knight of Toggenburg—while these proceedings kept their victim a close prisoner within doors.

My father joined his wife in a very ill-humour, for Brighton was not at all to his taste ; and her alarm may be well conceived, lest he should behold from the window (at which he usually placed himself in his arm-chair to read the newspaper) the sauntering figure of the gallant Tom. Nay, as she had been sufficiently unfashionable not to keep any letters she received private and apart from her husband, the postman might at any time bring one of Tom's poetical effusions, to set fire to materials which a much slighter spark would explode. To have told the Colonel—or rather the General, for that was then his rank—the persecutions of her undiscourageable innamorato, would have been cutting the Gordian knot with a vengeance. The General would not have stormed : no, he would have chucked her under the chin and called her ' good girl ; '


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1808-11

but, as there was not a better shot, nor a cooler hand at the touch of a trigger, in the service of his Majesty, Tom—unless carried off by Venus in a cloud—would have been a shade beside the Styx within twenty-four hours.

In this dilemma, my mother took the best course she could adopt. She wrote to Mrs. Lytton; who, in her virtual widowhood, had had more experience in getting rid of illicit and unwelcome wooers than she, poor woman, could pretend to, and begged her to see Mr. Thomas Lowndes, and put a stop to such impertinent and continued annoyance.

My grandmother was just the person for that diplomatic commission. She wrote to Mr. Lowndes to come to town, and, on seeing him, took him soundly to task. Tom was, at first, smiling, *débonnaire*, and obdurate, till my grandmother (who did not tilt with blunt lances) smote him straight in the centre of his *amour propre*. She told him that my mother found his verses detestable; and, added she, 'I tell you fairly, Mr. Lowndes, that if ever my daughter is inclined to go wrong (which I don't think probable), she bade me tell you that you are the last person on earth that would tempt her.' Tom rose, furious, and exclaiming 'I wish Mrs. Bulwer joy of her taste in men and poetry!' *evasisit, erupit!* From that time, the disciple of Plato left my mother in peace, under the protection of Juno.

It has happened to me in the course of my life to be honoured with the confidence of fashionable ladies exposed to similar persecutions; and, when they have made their complaints and wished they could get rid of their troublesome admirers, I have generally told them the above anecdote, and offered my services for their delivery from their plagues—provided I might employ the same brisk means as those which Mrs. Lytton employed upon the self-love of Tom. But the kind creatures were usually too much disinclined to inflict such pain on the feelings of the poor men, to avail themselves of my friendly proposition.



CHAPTER XIII.

(Autobiographical.)

GENERAL BULWER. 1804-1807. Æt. 1-4.

I HAVE said that my father was ambitious; and 'that last infirmity of noble minds' increased upon him as he advanced in his career. It must be owned that it was not without the aliment of success. Shortly after his marriage (although he was then at an age early for such promotion, and un-recommended by conformity with the political opinions of the Government) his reputation as an officer stood so high that he was appointed one of the four Generals to whom, in case of invasion, the internal defence of the kingdom was confided.

CHAP.
XIII.
Æt. 1-4

The military district over which my father presided had its head quarters at Preston, in Lancashire: and in this post, which, as the centre of an irritable manufacturing population, was not without difficulties, the General obtained credit for the strict discipline in which he kept his men; as well as popularity for large bounty to the poor, and munificent hospitality to the rich.

Raised so high while yet in the prime of manhood, and with the anticipation of being called to command in a larger sphere of action on the Continent, a less aspiring man than General Bulwer might have found it difficult to limit his expectations in the future. And, even in case of peace, or of such inroads of his domestic enemy the gout as to incapacitate the body for due obedience to the energetic mind,

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1803-11

it was not likely that he could retire to the ease of his Hall ungraced by the dignity of the peerage. He had raised two regiments for the service of his country at his own expense ; and his general claims, both of ancient family and personal repute, were higher at least than the average of Mr. Pitt's peers. He had set his heart upon being Lord South Erpingham—the name of the district in which his property was situated ; and, as he had never failed in anything on which that resolute heart had been set, so I have no doubt but that, if his life had been spared, Lord South Erpingham he would have been.¹

Meanwhile, and in due preparation for such honours, he sought to enlarge his paternal possessions to a territorial domain suited to the inheritance of the ermined representatives of our great landed aristocracy. He bought largely, and bought dearly, whatever lands were to be sold in the neighbourhood of his estates ; and, as he never consulted his 'womankind' upon such masculine matters as his pecuniary affairs, so my mother naturally supposed such purchases to be made either from the ready money that came to him from his

[¹ The following occurs in a contemporary account of 'The Defence of the County of Norfolk : '—

'Colonel Bulwer of Heydon Hall commands the 3rd, or Midland Regiment.' (The Western was commanded by Lord Townshend, and the Eastern by Major-General Money.) 'This gentleman, during the late war, when the exigencies of the State demanded an increase of force, made an offer to Government to raise a regiment of infantry. His offer was graciously accepted by His Majesty ; and in a short time he formed, in the County of Norfolk only, a regiment of fine young men. These he brought to so high a state of discipline that, when they came to be inspected, the General declared he had never seen a finer body of men, or any who went through their evolutions in a more correct manner. This regiment was called the 106th, or Norfolk Rangers, of which Colonel Bulwer was Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant. It was destined to the West Indies, and was one of those which experienced the fury of the elements under the late Admiral Christian. In private life Colonel Bulwer is revered by his tenants as a kind landlord ; and those who have the pleasure of being particularly acquainted with him will join in the just praise of his hospitality, which he dispenses with a liberal hand.'—*The Globe*, Wednesday, February 4, 1804.—L.]

parents, or from what he could spare of his rental and his official emoluments.

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XIII.

ÆT. 1-4

Mors sola fatetur
Quantula sint hominum corpuscula.

In the midst of these dreams and acquisitions, Death smote the aspiring man.¹

He was at Heydon at the time. He had been suffering some days under one of his attacks of gout, and had taken to his bed, in which he lay amongst hoops that suspended from his body the touch of the clothes; for he could not bear even that pressure. No danger, however, was apprehended, even by himself. For my mother telling him, on the day of his death, that the doctor had ordered William to take wine, he said half jestingly, half peevishly, 'that he hoped the doctor had not recommended his own favourite old Madeira, for the bin was low, and would not last two or three years longer.' Thus saying, he turned to the wall, and asked for some tea. My mother went to prepare it, and when she returned he was in a gentle sleep. She stole from the room softly, not to disturb him. But from that sleep he never woke; within an hour from the time she left him he was no more. His favourite little spaniel, who sate on his pillow, would not quit his remains, and when they were placed out of sight in the coffin, it crept under the pall, and died.

Peace to thy dust, O my father! Faults thou hadst, but those rather of temper than of heart—of deficient education and the manlike hardness of imperious will, than of ungenerous disposition or Epicurean corruption. If thou didst fail to give happiness to the woman whom thou didst love, many a good man is guilty of a similar failure. It had been otherwise, I sincerely believe, hadst thou chosen a partner of intellectual cultivation more akin to thine own; of hardier nerve and coarser fibre; one whom thy wrath would less have

[¹ July 7, 1807.—L.]

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I
1803-11 terrified, whom thy converse would have more charmed ; of
less moral spirit, and more physical courage. Nor do I think
thou wast aware of the unhappiness thou didst occasion ;
but, on the whole contented thyself, didst want nothing but
the delicate tact to perceive that in marriage content is not
always reciprocal. For the rest, thy courage was without
question, and thine honour without stain ; and thy tomb
closed over a true Englishman ; who, had the invader come,
would have planted a patriot's foot on the Saxon soil, or
hallowed with a patriot's blood the turf of some glorious
field.

CHAPTER XIV.

(Autobiographical.)

THE OLD SCHOLAR. 1807-1809. Æt. 4-6.

THE executors appointed by my father's will did not find his affairs in that flourishing state which might have been expected from the style in which he lived, and the lands he had purchased. In fact, those ambitious additions to his patrimony had augmented its acreage to the sad diminution of its income. Fatal and frequent fault that, of landed proprietors! How many families have gone to the dogs because one daring ancestor has borrowed at five per cent. in order to buy farms which yield two and a half! Would that my father had read more: read Roman history, and learned that the dying recommendation of the wise Augustus to his successor was to beware of increasing the limits of the empire: a counsel as applicable to the Squire as to the Cæsar.

I don't doubt but that my father himself, in his acquisitions, had a soldierly eye to all the fair chances of emancipating the estate from the great debt which they laid on it. First, in case of military appointment abroad, with all its certain and contingent emoluments; next, in the probability of his surviving his father-in-law, when, if my mother should refuse absolutely to sell Knebworth, her generosity might be induced to transfer to that property a considerable share of the mortgage on Heydon. Lastly, if misgivings as to the duration of his own life crossed him, his heir might have a long minority, during which a large portion of the

CHAP.
XIV.

Æt. 4-6

BOOK
I.
1803-11

incumbrances might be disposed of. With this eye to the future, some part of the debt was made to annul in terminable annuities, and for the rest a sinking fund was provided.

My mother did as others in similar circumstances. She consulted the male friends of her family; and, acting on their advice, obtained from the Court of Chancery an order assigning to her the guardianship of her children, with an adequate allowance for their education.

The widow then settled in London, to be near her mother. William went to a famous preparatory school; Henry remained with Mrs. Lytton; so I was alone with my mother. She took a house in Montague Square, which she afterwards exchanged for one in Nottingham Place. For the purchase of her house my grandfather, who never showed himself so kind and generous to her as in that friendless epoch, made her an unexpected present of three thousand pounds. From that time, a very affectionate understanding continued between father and child, and my mother spent with Mr. Lytton a great part of every year.

The earliest of my infant reminiscences worth treasuring dates from one of these visits, and associates itself with the Scholar and his home.

My grandfather at that time lived in a house at St. Lawrence, near Ramsgate: a house of no ostentatious pretensions, but of fair size for the neighbourhood of a watering-place; a patch of garden in front, and a much larger garden behind. I should know the house well, for it was afterwards tenanted by a gentleman with whom I passed several months as a pupil. My recollection of the place, however, as it was in my grandfather's time, is indistinct. I have a confused perception of a vast number of books—of books that haunted me in every room I entered. I think they even lined the landing-place or the staircase. I cannot disentangle my recollection of the house from the presence of the books. Beyond these, I have a vague recollection of green sward and lilac boughs; no doubt

the attributes of the back garden. Types are these reminiscences of the tastes of my after life : a passion for books, and a passion for the green sward and the blossom on the bough, even though in the confines of a back garden.

CHAP.
XIV.

ÆT. 4-6

Of my grandfather himself, I can just recall the visions of a short and rather stout man in black. He had been very slight in youth, but expanded in the indolence of after years. Besides the black dress, which was neat and formal, I have also an awful impression of a dignified shovel hat. I can remember, moreover, that my grandfather ate very fast, with a book beside him on the table ;¹ that he was extremely short-sighted ; that he sate in a quaint, queer-looking, and mightily uncomfortable arm-chair (which I have now), and that in his immediate vicinity there were generally two great globes on mahogany stands.

At that time, I believe, this erudite Scholar had pretty well exhausted such learning as he thought worth the achieving, and that he had become a great novel-reader ; but I think the novels were not in English. I rather fancy they were Spanish. He had a collection of books of chivalry which might have satisfied Don Quixote, and for these he had Don Quixote's partiality.

There lived then with my grandfather (who was much past sixty), and in the capacity of housekeeper, companion, *dame de ménage*, a lady at least middle-aged. I heard, when residing in that neighbourhood, that this co-residence had caused a little scandal among the gossips. I feel sure that nothing could be more unjust. And, indeed, none of the uneducated can conjecture what an indispensable necessity it is to a bookman to have some female creature about him, elevated above the rank of a mere servant ; whom he can trust with his money and his papers ; who knows in what shelf to search for a book ; who has sufficient education for an occasional interchange of idea ; and who can cheer and nurse him in those

[¹ So did his grandson in after years.—L.]

BOOK
I.
1803-11

illnesses familiar to the race of bookmen even at the time of Celsus. And if none but the brotherhood can conjecture how necessary is such companionship to the learned man, it is probably only the pure who can conceive how very innocent it may be.

As for my mother, she was pleased to think that her father would be so well attended to when she was absent; and no coarse suspicion ever chilled her friendly politeness to Miss M.

Of this lady, who, by the way, was singularly plain, I have a grateful recollection, for she gave me a very handsome domino box; whereas my grandfather gave me nothing but—hold! what he gave me shall be told later.

I suppose there was something in my mother which made those connected with her set a very high value on her affection, for she never could escape from the compliment of a jealous desire to monopolise it. Through me she was still tormented, and on me the consequences of that jealousy retributively fell.

Out of jealousy for my mother's love, my father had positively disliked me; for the same cause my grandmother took me into open aversion—an aversion unsoftened to her dying day; and my grandfather, who ought, if conscious of the future, to have welcomed and petted me, as the one of his grandsons destined to live the most amongst books, did not suffer me to be four-and-twenty hours in the house before he solemnly assured his daughter 'that I should break her heart, and (what was worse) that I should never know my A B C.' He maintained this ill opinion of my disposition and talents with the obstinacy which he carried into most of his articles of belief; and I cannot call to mind ever having received from him a caress or a kind word.

What I did receive from him the next chapter shall relate.

CHAPTER XV.

(Autobiographical.)

THE FIRST TEMPTATION. 1809. Æt. 6.

My mother was called to town for two or three days on some business or other, and she left me with my grandfather; specially recommending me to his tender protection.

CHAP
XV.

Æt. 6

During her absence a young midshipman came to dine with Mr. Lytton. I peeped from the staircase when they went in to dinner, and greatly admired the midshipman's smart uniform. I saw that he deposited something on the slab without the door, as he went into the parlour—something that glittered. My infant curiosity was aroused; so, when the place was clear, I stole down and approached the slab. O Mars! I remember still how thy fierce inspiration shot through my heart when I beheld the prettiest weapon—dirk, cutlass, or miniature sword, I know not what to call it—with its gleaming hilt of mother-of-pearl and gold. I hesitated not a moment; I seized the weapon and ran off with it. Whether I absolutely meant feloniously to steal it, I cannot say. Most probably. But my senses were in such delicious and delirious confusion that my memory cannot metaphysically analyse the ideas of that tumultuous hour! All I know is, that I ran off with the instrument designed for the destruction of the enemies of my country, and instinctively hid it. I cannot even recollect where I hid it. Hide it I did. Neither know I how, nor in what dreams and visions, I passed the hours (musing on that treasure, and wondering if the time could come when I might

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wear it openly by my side) until the midshipman took his leave, and searched for his weapon. No weapon forthcoming. What on earth had become of it? Was it in the dining-room? in the library? in the entrance-hall, with the hats and cloaks? No, the midshipman was certain he had left it on the slab. The servants were questioned in vain.

‘If there were a magpie in the house,’ began my grandfather.

‘Please your honour,’ said the grim man-servant, an austere man, of a sanctified turn of mind, who had neither little ones nor bowels for them, ‘Please your honour, there is a child.’

At that answer my grandfather bounded. He hurried to the room in which I was already in bed, but not asleep. Asleep, indeed, when that dagger was dangling before my eyes, and murdering sleep! He hurried in, and caught me by the throat.

‘Little wretch!’ cried my grandfather, ‘have you stolen Mr. Somebody’s cutlass?’

Now, I did not know what the word ‘stolen’ meant, though practically I might have done the thing. Extremely frightened by the grip at my throat and the roar in my ears, that instinct of truth which Dr. Reid asserts to be innate in the unsophisticated human mind entirely vanished, and I answered ‘No.’ Blush for me, O compassionate Reader! My grandfather recoiled, and at that moment a cry rose up from the menial chorus below stairs,—

‘Sir, it is found; the cutlass is found!’

My grandfather said not a word more, but left the room—‘to darkness and to me.’ I was very sorry to hear the cutlass was found, for it was clear from that moment that the property I had established in the cutlass—and fondly hoped might be a perpetual property in the cutlass—was gone. But since it was found, there I supposed that the matter would end, and that, to use my grandfather’s favourite phrase, I should be ‘troubled no more in the business.’ So I went to sleep as

soundly as if I had the clearest conscience in the world. I woke earlier than usual, and, the thought of my lost and dear cutlass returning to me, felt restless and mournful. The maid-servant not coming in to dress me, I rose of my own accord, opened the door, and peeped out to see if the house was yet astir. My grandfather's bedroom was opposite the one I occupied (which was, indeed, the one assigned to my mother), and as I peeped I saw that said grim, sanctimonious man-servant (I remember that the brute wore drab breeches, and never servant of mine has been permitted—nor, please the saints, ever shall be permitted—to wear inexpressibles of that carnificient and hang-dog complexion),—I saw that MAN about to enter his master's room. His right hand was on the handle of the door; in his left was something covered by his apron. The menial monster turned at the noise I made, his eye resting with horrid significance upon mine, and smiled! Smiled, I aver it!

CHAP.
XV.

ÆT. 6

'Master Teddy,' quoth he, 'I have something here in store for you.'

Thinking, in the credulous goodness of my own heart, that my grandfather was about to make it up to me for the loss of my beloved cutlass, by some toy of a peculiarly fascinating nature, I cried joyfully, 'What is it? Show it to me!'

The wretch smiled again; and, withdrawing the folds of the concealing apron, held up to my sight a thing I had never seen before: a thing composed of brown horrent sprigs and twigs; a thing 'ugly and venomous!'

'But,' said I, recoiling and doubtfully, 'is that really for me? I don't think it is at all pretty. It is very like a broom. It must be for Sarah.' Sarah was the housemaid.

'It is for you, Master Teddy,' said the infernal and execrable man (O, that I could remember his name—to transmit it to the just indignation of posterity!) 'It is for you, and much good may it do you!'

So saying, he entered my grandfather's room, and closed the door.

CHAPTER XVI.

(Autobiographical.)

PRACTICAL ETHICS. 1809. Æt. 6.

BOOK
I.

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I RETURNED to my bed, 'much meditating,' as my Lord Brougham is wont classically to express himself. The toy I had seen was displeasing to the eye, but it might have in it some secret virtues. I had an indefinite idea that my grandfather was a rich and a wise man; and, as he had never given me anything yet, surely what he would now give (especially as a set-off to my beautiful cutlass) would be proportioned to the means of the donor, and the recent loss of the recipient. Nevertheless, though a child may never before have seen a birch-rod, never have tasted of its qualities, never even heard that such an instrument of torture had been invented by the barbarity of men, there is a secret, indefinable, voice at his heart, when that infernal sight is first presented to him, which is not propitiatory and dulcet, but ominous and warning. And, in spite of all my attempts to take a favourable retrospective view of the phenomenon I had beheld, instinct prophesied and nature shuddered.

Wearied with unsatisfactory and gloomy cogitations, I had just fallen into that sweet sound sleep wherein dreams are brightest and the bedclothes warmest, when I suddenly felt a sensation of cold; started, rubbed my eyes; saw all the coverings on the floor, and my grandfather bending over me, with that grisly phenomenon in his hand suspended high in the air.

The rest of my recollections vanish in pain. '*Cur infandum renovare dolorem?*'

CHAP.
XVI.

Æt. 6

The extraordinary part of the operation I then underwent was the perfect silence with which the operator accompanied it. My grandfather did not condescend to the slightest explanation why or wherefore that new and bewildering agony descended on me. That the rose should be the emblem of Harpocrates—well, 'Kiss, and tell no tales;' but that the birch should be also dedicated to the silent god, my dear grandfather, I find no classical authority for *that*!

When I was once more alone, and had recovered the shock which my nervous system had sustained, the feeling that was strongest in me, prevailing over all sense of pain, was astonishment. Why that fate had befallen me, for what sin ancestral or my own, I knew no more than the man in the moon; nor did my grandfather subsequently elucidate the mystery—to me. When my mother returned, he had the satisfaction of informing her of the verification of his prediction as to my perverseness of character, and as to the judicious—but, alas! he feared, unavailing—means he had taken to arrest me in my evil courses. It might be yet time; I was not yet five years old.¹ Heaven grant it! But Heaven requires human agencies. He recommended the birch.

I don't know how my mother took the intelligence of my misdeeds, and their penance; but I felt my mind extremely relieved when she delivered it from the weight of its amaze—and explained to me that I had been punished because I had taken the goods of my neighbour and told a fib. The moral elucidations which succeeded to that chastisement were, no doubt, made more impressive by the remembrance of the chastisement itself. But for them, I am sure that I should have purloined the cutlass the next time I saw it, and taken care to hide it in a much safer place. Wherefore, O ye parents! take

[¹ He was six.—L.]

BOOK

I

1803-11

care to impress what you want to convey to your children at both ends. Heads as well as tails, if you please.

I don't know, Reader, whether you will think that I have been too prolix in the recital of my infant affliction. Not too prolix if you look at it philosophically, and judge of its probable effect on my after life. For it was not only the first, but the only, flogging I ever received. And that solitary experience associates itself with the elementary principles of *meum* and *tuum*. If the rod had something to say in the respect which I venture to think I entertain for honesty and truth, I ought not to slur over too rapidly the only thing I ever received at thy hands, O my grandfather!

CHAPTER XVII.

(Autobiographical.)

REMINISCENCES OF CHILDHOOD. 1810. Æt. 7.

BEFORE I pass to what I consider the most memorable and critical event (not excepting the aforementioned flagellation) in mine infant history, I should commemorate the first glimmerings of whatever light I may have caught from the Muse. I must have learned to read, and with facility, at an age unusually early; for I remember no time in my life in which reading was not familiar to me. It was otherwise with the art of writing; my primary initiation into which I distinctly recall. And labour dire it was, and weary woe. Very much like my ideal of the Yellow Dwarf, only older, uglier, and more malignant than that unamiable fiend, was my conductor, through the fantastic brambles of pothooks, into the wide common of round text. He was very short, he was very withered, he had a tawny complexion and a rusty wig, with vindictive eyes. His hands were never without a ruler, and my knuckles never without a rap. Odious to gods and the children of men, his garments were snuff-brown, and his name was Walker.

But at least I resembled Homer in one respect. I did not find it necessary to write in order to compose; for, before the gross materialism of pothooks, mine airy soul had hovered over Hippocrene, strayed through Corycian caverns, and inhaled the fragrance of the blossoms that fell from the garlands of the vine.

O Infancy, thou Imitator! Verse fell from my mother's

CHAP.
XVII.

Æt. 7

BOOK
I.
1803-11

lips as the diamond and rose from the lips of her in the fairy tale. I marvelled, and I mimicked. I heard 'The tale of Troy divine,' the deeds and death of Hector, and my soul was on fire. What though the Homer appeared to me as the Jove to Danae, not clothed with the lightning, and Lord of the Ægis, but in the soft showers into which his translator, Mr. Pope, hath melted his Olympian terrors; still the showers were gold. What could Homer have been to me if my grandfather had bellowed his *ἔπεα πτερόεντα* in Greek?

My mother's memory was rich, too, in Goldsmith and Gray, and the ringing melodies of our grand old ballads. She recited well; with a voice sweet in pathos, and not without its swell of Calliope, its *longum melos*, when the theme grew sublime with the lofty thought, or the line rolled large with the heroic deed. Nor think that the effect of these chants limited itself in childhood to the mere emulation of the sound: small would be their worth to the world, slight their influence on mankind, if they increased but the herd of poetasters and rhymsters. No, it is the ideas which they call into movement, the thoughts they wake, and the actions they guide; it is not merely the ear which they attune to the sound; it is the character which they form into a comprehension of the substances of Poetry—the Sublime and the Beautiful, to which the poet gives but the voice.

But I am soaring into the clouds, as if, Horace-like, I would strike my front against the stars, when I ought to show you a little boy seated on a stool—his own special throne—with a tapestry cover worked by maternal hands (the stool is extant still, and the designs on the tapestry still fresh¹)—a little boy there seated at his mother's knee, and looking up into her face while he murmurs out his doggerel—ah, such doggerel, doubtless! I remember that the first of my attacks on 'Gods and Columns' was in praise of King Henry V. and Agincourt. The second was of the erotic character, and

[¹ It is preserved at Knebworth.—L.]

upon the charms of a certain Miss Rose T., who was a year or two older than myself. Poets fall in love precociously; but in that poetic privilege I was a match for the best of them. At six years old, Cupid and I were already playfellows; and I declare gravely that love it was, just the love poets sing of; so timid and so happy when I sate near her; and once at blindman's buff, when she ran into my arms, I thought that the earth was gone from my feet, that we were both snatched up into the heavens. With what a beating heart I set out one day, after she went to school, to pay her a visit! and what fine things I fancied I should say when I saw her! and when we met in the cold formal parlour of the prim school, how awkward and shy I was! We stood opposite to each other, both looking down. At last she opened her pretty lips, called me Master Edward, and hoped my mamma was well. I could have beat her; but, when I got out, I was much more inclined to beat myself.

My poem, however, carefully transcribed by my mother, was sent to Mrs. T., as a paper homage to the charms of the little maid, and a token of the genius of her troubadour.¹ Mrs. T. flattered my vanity by grave compliments; and, thus encouraged, I soon learned to rhyme with the facility of an improvisatore. I regaled the ears of the maids who gathered round me in the nursery with ballads on all conceivable subjects, and they in turn sang their favourite songs to me. I remember that the lady's-maid in especial had a pretty voice, and used to say with pride that she had a sister on the stage. She taught me to sing a most lugubrious ditty, which contained these two lines (the only ones I remember):—

When wreck'd in sight of port, behold
A hapless cabin boy!

As Nature never intended me to sing, no discord, I should imagine, could have been more grating and doleful than this

[¹ See Book II. chap. ii. p. 125.—L.]

BOOK

I.

1808-11

elegiac lay, screeched out in the most mournful tones that my treble could bestow upon it.

Nevertheless, lady's-maid and all the lesser lights of the female household thought me a prodigy; and as I lay in my little crib, and they sate at work around me like the weird sisters, I used to hear them prophesy in low tones of the brilliant futurity of Master Edward. There was one legend concerning me that always came out in these vaticinations, and I repeat it because it had probably its lasting effect on my mind, and therefore reacted on my fate. Once, when I was yet in arms, a man with a wild air abruptly stopped my nurse in the streets, and, looking upon me strangely, asked whose son I was. The nurse replied that I was the son of General Bulwer.

The stranger then, with much solemnity, took me in his arms, and uttered a prophecy to the purport that I was to be greater than my father, and something remarkable. Then, hurriedly looking round him, he threw me back to the awe-stricken nurse, and darted off with such rapidity that, in telling her story in after times, she may probably have said that he 'vanished.' Poor fellow! he was mad, and had escaped from his keeper. Within half an hour afterwards, he had drowned himself. Considering he had had me in his clutches, he might have uttered a different prophecy as to my fate, and enjoyed the satisfaction, permitted to few prophets, of fulfilling his own prediction.

In all countries there is a vague belief in the second sight conceded both to the insane and to those who are on the threshold of death; so that this story, which I have sought to reduce to the primitive elements of its mythic import, passed on from nursemaid to nursemaid with all superstitious exaggerations in the transmission, till at last it settled into a kind of oracle that might have suited the infancy of a Cæsar or Napoleon. But, hummed and droned as it was into my ears as I lay, between sleeping and waking, in the little crib, per-

haps the prophecy stirred into early action my organs of Self-esteem and Ideality. For, as I never remember a time when I could not read, so I never remember a time when I had not a calm and intimate persuasion that, one day or other, I was to be somebody, or do something. It was no feverish desire of fame that preyed upon me, such as disturbs the childhood of the ambitious: it was a confidence in the days to come, which was attended with small curiosity, and never troubled by the modesty of a doubt.

CHAP.
XVII.

ÆT. 7

Assuredly I have never been the great man whose image rested on the serene mirror of my childish faith. But I might have been a much smaller one if the poor maniac had never pythonised of my future in my nurse's arms. For when manhood brought me better acquainted with my powers, their scope, and their limit, the infantine belief passed into a conviction that my life had been entrusted with a mission to the hearts of beings unborn, and that in the long chain of thought connecting age with age my own being would hereafter be recognised as a visible link. Yet so acutely sensitive was my original nature that, without firm, if credulous, faith in myself and my destiny, I might long since have shrunk from a war in which the wounds were so galling, and the success so denied. With strong tendencies to indolence, with vivid capacities of joy, I might have had little of that endurance or industry which has made my career one attempt to bring into culture all such faculties of my mind as gave the faintest promise of harvest. Wherefore I must thank the prophecy; though, in exaggerating the image of my fate, it may have fostered that fault which has been commonly ascribed to me, viz. too high an opinion of myself.

CHAPTER XVIII.

(Autobiographical.)

THE SCHOLAR'S DEATH. 1810. ÆT. 7.

BOOK

I.

1808-11

BUT now comes the great cardinal event of my infancy, and, like most new epochs in history, it dates from a death.

One morning there arrived at my mother's house a grave, funereal-looking man, draped in black. I was in the hall at the time; and I heard, after the muttered colloquy between the man and the servant, the words, 'An express from St. Lawrence!'

'An express!' The word struck me as awful, it was said so dismally; and, foreboding something fearful, I stood gazing on the man in black, till my mother came hurriedly down and beckoned him into the parlour; which she had fitted up as a library, and made her usual sitting-room. Then, I saw him come close up to my mother and whisper something; and my mother fell back against the wall, and clasped her hands, and seemed in a speechless agony.

I was led, I know not by whom, from the room, in a state of mysterious terror. I escaped an hour or two afterwards, as I saw my grandmother's carriage at the door, and, creeping downstairs, entered the room behind her, unobserved. I did not hear what passed, so low were the words, until my grandmother in a clear voice said, 'My dear, you wish to break it to me by degrees, but I see it all. Poor Mr. Lytton is dead!'

My mother started back with a look of wistful reproach,

[¹ He died on December 30, 1810.—L.]

then turned away, bowed her head, and burst into a passion of tears.

CHAP.
XVIII.

Yes, my grandfather was dead. He had died suddenly, of an apoplectic seizure.

Æt. 7

His character may perhaps be guessed at by the acute, from the preceding pages; and if not more fully bodied forth, it is that the materials to judge of it which are afforded to me are scanty and imperfect. Of his extraordinary learning, there was never a doubt amongst the best scholars of his day. Of the degree of intellect which accompanied that learning, there may be a reasonable question. I should think that his abilities were good, but not first-rate. He was not without energy and passion; or he would scarcely have taken so ardent, though silent, an interest in politics. In youth he was a Utopian, and remained to the last much more than a 'Whig.' That neither in public life nor in letters did he ever give active demonstration of what was in him, may be accounted for without disparagement to his talents, granting them to be below that order which no circumstance can obscure. A small cloud can conceal a star.¹

[¹ His grandson says of him elsewhere:—'He loved learning for learning's self. He disentangled himself from the world; from pleasure, from ambition, from all the usual aspirations of a man who unites knowledge and talent to wealth and station. The image of his life was like a statue, cold in its complete repose, and shattered into fragments on his tomb. Nothing remains of it—nothing but a few notes and comments scattered here and there through remote regions and dim recesses of that silent world in which he lived unseen. Yet to me, his grandson, who with my poor acquirements, snatched from perturbed studies in the intervals of an active and unquiet life, have so boldly ventured out upon the stormy sea of popular authorship, in search of that distant haven which so few of the ships of time (as books were called by Bacon) ever reach;—to me, amidst the hum and buzz that accompanies the feeblest fame, the most fleeting celebrity,—there is something unspeakably impressive in the oblivion to which this solitary scholar carried with him all the spoils and trophies of his vast research. I shrink back from it, startled and abashed. I feel that, had I been as wise as my grandfather, I had also been as silent. I feel that there is something infinitely nobler and more august in this mute disdainful passage of the full river to the unknown deep, than in all the fretful noise with which we shallow streams go babbling over the pebbles that obstruct our course. It is greater to live for knowledge, than to live by it.'—*Letter to a friend.*—L.]

BOOK
I.

1808-11

In the first place, coming when of age into a fortune so far exceeding all his wants that his main care was rather to reduce than increase it, he wanted that spur which goads on to distinction the large majority of literary men—Poverty. And the same philosophical temper which made him despise all show and parade, and worldly learning, made him indifferent to Fame. He was a singularly shy man, and his object through life was to escape from the notice which your coveter of distinction pursues. In the next place, he was soured and depressed by the consequences of his early and ill-assorted marriage. He fled back to the world of his books, as the changeling of the Fairies to Elfin Land. The still walls opened at his touch, to close on his entrance; and in the busy haunts of men he was seen no more.

His temper, though hasty and choleric, was perhaps not originally severe; but, like a greater pedant than himself—douce King Jamie—he had high notions of discipline and prerogative, and wished to Spartanise his household. To strangers, however, he was generous, and to distress most pitiful. I have heard from those who lived in the neighbourhood of the home in which his age wore away, that he could accommodate his conversation to the average intelligence of the country squires around, and the unpretending colonisers of a watering-place, and that the conversation was most agreeable and fascinating. Therefore, though considered a great oddity, he was popular with his acquaintances, as he was beloved by the poor. Despite his early inclination to what may be called revolutionary politics, he had never any sympathy with the free-thinking philosophers of France; he was always, like his friends Parr and Sir William Jones, a sincere and firm believer in the Christian faith; and in his later years he belonged to that section of our Church which is called Evangelical. He left behind him no manuscripts to attest his erudition; no foot-track told where that eager mind had travelled across the vast wilderness of books. A few letters on private matters,

written in the slow and large characters of a hand which has taken patient notes—not rushed athwart foolscap with the haste of impromptu composition ; a few copies of verses, neat and correct, but composed on the principle of modern Latin versification—that is, the avoidance of all phrases not warranted by the best authority ; and some spare comments upon writers on the margins of his library catalogue, are all that on earth survive the dust and shade of the great Scholar.

CHAP.
XVIII.

Æt. 7

But his books were removed to London. Wain and van rolled up the streets of Marylebone, and startled the doze of dowagers in Nottingham Place. You might have thought you saw ‘the carts of Zagathai laden with houses—a great city travelling towards you.’* They came, the mighty Nomads—the grand, restless race—the disturbers of all antique landmarks—the convulsers and conquerors of the globe. They came, the Souls of the Dead, file and rank, in the armament of Books !

* Rubruquis.

CHAPTER XIX.

(Autobiographical.)

THE ARRIVAL OF THE BOOKS. 1811. Æt. 7-8.

BOOK I.
1808-11

BEHOLD the great event of my infant life—my Siege of Troy, my Persian Invasion, my Gallic Revolution—the Arrival of my Grandfather's Books!

The learned Deluge flowed into that calm still world of Home; it mounted the stairs, it rolled on, floor upon floor; the trim face of drawing-rooms vanished before it; no attic, the loftiest, escaped from the flood.

Piscium et summa genus hæsit ulmo,
Nota quæ sedes fuerat columbis;
Et superjecto pavidæ natarunt

Æquore damæ.

But the grand reservoir, the Lake Mæris of the whole inundation, was the great dining-room; and there, when the flood settled, I rested mine infant ark.

My mother then spent her days almost entirely either with Mrs. Lytton, who perhaps she still fancied needed soothing and comfort, or with lawyers. So the house, with all its new treasures, was given up to me. Having duly visited all the lesser, if loftier, settlements of the immigration, I finally, as I before said, settled myself habitually in the dining-room, which I regarded as the central camp of the invading hordes. Words cannot paint the sensations of awe, of curiosity, of wonder, of delight, with which I dwelt in that City of the Dead. Even now, when I think of them, I am in a fever, and grope

darkly at my meaning through all confusion and change of metaphor, and vague big words, which crumble away as I clutch at them in despair. Books I had known familiarly before; but they had been given me with reserve—taken, one by one at a time, from mahogany cases under lock and key, with cautions not to dog-ear, and an infinity of troublesome restrictions. But here I was a chartered libertine. I might throw the handkerchief as I liked. I was not married to a single volume, in a humdrum-monogynical connection. I was Solomon in all his glory, and surrounded by all his seraglio. Those Greek, and Hebrew, and Oriental, Beauties!—I lifted up their veils; but, reading nothing in their passionless faces that returned my ardour, and coaxing no reply from their lips in an intelligible tongue, I shook my head and passed on. I lingered longer with the importations from Latium; for Mr. Walker, in addition to the art of caligraphy, had taught me to decline *Musa*, and conjugate *amo*; so I thought I should know something of Latin, and tried hard to flirt with the daughters of Romulus. It was in vain; not a nymph among them warmed from her marble. I was forced to limit my amours to the children of my native land.

CHAP.
XIX.

Æt. 7-8

[The following extract from a letter written by my father, when he was still a very young man, contains a somewhat fuller account of this episode in his childhood.

Many of these books (he says) were in strange tongues, which excited in me a deep and wistful reverence. They seemed filled with wierd hieroglyphics and unearthly characters. But at length I fell upon others which I could understand: a race with which I had common speech. As he grew older, this great scholar, apparently satiated with abstract learning, had collected around him works of imagination and romance. And perhaps from his favourite book of that class, which he had read and re-read in the original (the immortal masterpiece of Cervantes), he had acquired a taste for that sort of literature which the Knight of La Mancha sought to convert into action. In his collection were numerous works upon knight-

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I.

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errantry, witchcraft, and faëry-land. Of these, the one which specially caught my fancy was Amadis of Gaul, in Southey's translation. There was much in it, no doubt, that I could not understand; but perhaps the very dimness of my comprehension increased the charm of it. Never can I forget the hours of rapt and intense enjoyment passed in what then seemed to me the large London parlour, gloat-ing over the wild feats and perilous adventures of this fabulous hero. My own enthusiasm I afterwards communicated to my brothers, when we met in the thick woods of Hertfordshire. And there we used often to perform mimic dramas of the adventures that fired our young fancies. Another book which at the same time made a great impression on me was Spenser's 'Faëry Queen.' I could not appreciate the poetry of it, and much of its wording bewildered me strangely. But it then gave me a more exquisite pleasure than I can now find in the perusal even of those passages of it which most captivate my taste. And all this time I was a child, an infant, so otherwise uninformed that I could scarcely scribble a pothook. But the seed was sown which, in a soil more fertile, might have sprung to less perishable fruit. I had learned, not only to delight in reading, but *to imagine the reality of the things I read.* It is to this early and adventurous cast of study that I ascribe the passion which has long haunted me, and haunts me still. All the romances I have written are but wild and imperfect attempts to satisfy the longings of that passion: longings which the circumstances of my life forbid me to satisfy in practice by the prosecution of a military career.

Neither the precarious health which has been my customary lot, nor sedentary habits, nor that false philosophy which sees nothing but crime in war (a philosophy whose specious dogmas I once struggled to believe), have ever out-rooted from my nature this passion for the soldier's calling. All my aspirations in boyhood turned from every other ideal of fame to this, which I was destined never to achieve. As soon as I was of age I bought a commission in the army; and, had I not married immediately afterwards, I should have sought action in foreign service. But my grandfather's library was to be sold. There came intruders on my domains. With what silent resentment did I watch them irreverently handling my mysterious treasures! Quasimodo could not have felt more acutely the insult of interference with the darling bells he was scarcely able to hear, than I felt the impertinence of abstracting the precious tomes I was scarcely able to read. Amadis and the Faëry Queen were spared; but I missed the unknown characters, the wizard pages. The island remained to me, but Caliban and Ariel were gone.]

CHAPTER XX.

(Autobiographical)

THE CHILD'S INTERCOURSE WITH THEM. 1811. Æt. 7-8.

FANCY me, again I say, fancy me alone in that vast collection, a little boy of six years or so, already consumed with the insatiable desire of knowledge, though guessing not at the nature of the desire.¹ Where I found a book in English it sufficed for me, no matter how dry and how far above my reason; I still looked and lingered—read and wondered. All variety of dim ideas thus met and mingled in my brain. Many an atom of knowledge, chipped off from the block and stored up unconsciously in the mind, was whirled into movement in later years, in the golden dance of those sunbeams, our thoughts.

I must, in this way, have blundered through many defiles of Bookland, deep and abstruse. I remember that I was specially interested in a work upon calculation, which was accompanied and illustrated by a little wooden machine with round balls. I dare say I should make less of it now than I did then. I must certainly have got ankle-deep in the great slough of Metaphysics; for I remember, as if it were yesterday, after sitting long silent and musing, I addressed to my mother the following simple and childlike question:—

‘Pray, mamma, are you not sometimes overcome by the sense of your own identity?’

A hard word, identity; and a subtle sense in my question; yet sure I am that I understood both.

The sense of one's own identity! Where is the thoughtful

[¹ He must have then been between seven and eight.—L.]

CHAP.
XX.

Æt. 7-8

**BOOK
I.**

1808-11

child that has not revolved Fichte's problem of the Grand Absolute 'I'? That one isolated life in the midst of the swarming universe, which it seems so impossible to annihilate—that life which embraces in its speck the universe itself. For if you destroy my life, my identity, you destroy, for me, all creation. I know it but as I exist. Not only *Ego cogito, ergo sum*, but *Ego sum, ergo omnia sunt*.

My mother looked up at me in amazed alarm. Quoth she, 'It is high time you should go to school, Teddy.' And so it was; that I might enter into the healthfulness of scholastic Duncedom.

That life in my grandfather's library was but as a vision of Khubla Khan—a glimpse of fountain and pillar, palm-tree and purple, that came and went.

But what came with it went not with it also away. That yearning of the soul for something beyond the range of the senses—that escape into the Immaterial, which we call the Desire of Knowledge—books thus created in me: but it did not with me, as with my grandfather, seek nurture and refreshment from books alone. Circumstance, that leaves the master desire undiminished, modifies its form, and varies its ends. To me, knowledge has come somewhat from books, but far more from the hearts of men. To unravel motive, to analyse the passions and affections, searching out the hidden springs of human conduct, and the remote sources of human character: these have been the aims which, pursued it may be with success or effort wholly vain, have at least rendered attractive to myself the paths of action as well as study, by connecting both study and action with an interest, a curiosity, an allurement, reaching far beyond the scope of either.

Dicite, ô miseri, et causas cognoscite rerum,
Quid sumus, et quidnam vecturi gignimur : ordo
Quis datus ; aut metæ quam mollis flexus et undæ :
. patriæ, carisque propinquis
Quantum elargiri deceat ; quem te deus esse
Jussit, et humanâ quâ parte locatus es in re.

And even in my wanderings from the plain *vestigia hominum* into bypaths lonely and obscure, still the knowledge I have sought has been directly related to the noblest thing I have known—the human Man with the eternal Soul. Fain would I trace his ascent in the scale of spirit, when he passes from my sight, but not from my search, behind the portals of the grave. Hour upon hour, day upon day, do I sit alone amidst my thoughts, as when, a child, I sate alone amidst the books; still, as then, absorbed in the desire to know. Still, the question that perplexed the infant occupies the man: still, in that sense of identity which comprises the perception of all things living, and with which, were it perishable, all things would perish, I find the same mystery, and receive from it the same revelation.

CHAP.
XX.

ÆT. 7-8

CHAPTER XXI.

*(Autobiographical.)*THE DEPARTURE OF THE BOOKS. 1811. *Æt.* 7-8.

BOOK
I.
 1808-11

THERE came a precise, cold-blooded man, who took up the books, glanced at their title-pages, and laid them down again without saying a word. I looked at him with savage eyes; I felt instinctively that his visits would end in my spoliation. And so it was. One morning my mother and I got into the carriage; we were absent two or three days, and when we returned the books had vanished.

My grandfather had left debts to be defrayed. Everyone, Heaven knows, who comes into possession of an estate long neglected, and a great country-house half tumbling down, wants ready money to begin with. So my mother sold my grandfather's library. It was said to have cost him a vast sum: it sold for a small one. The books were mostly in a bad condition; shabby and torn. Mr. Lytton seemed to have the same dislike as Dr. Johnson to a well-bound book. Moreover, volumes were missing in many of the most valuable works; and, as my poor mother could perhaps ill appreciate the worth of things whose appearance was so much against them, doubtless the bookseller who purchased got them a bargain.

A few only were retained, either as pleasant to look at, or entertaining to read: amongst them Southey's translation of 'Amadis of Gaul,' which long made the *delicæ* of myself and my brothers. Out of the classical works in dead languages,

my mother only reserved one; and why she reserved that I cannot form the slightest conjecture. It was a very good copy of the 'Lives of the Philosophers,' by Diogenes Laertius, in the native Greek; and this book, amongst others, is settled as an heirloom on the future owners of Knebworth. Probably my mother had a subtle and wise notion that a man plagued with a property in land had need make acquaintance with philosophers.

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Æt. 7-8

But we set out in the carriage, while that precise cold-blooded man cleared the rooms in Nottingham Place of their poor tenants, whose time there was so short; and we arrived at Knebworth.

The house with its long outwalls, that seemed to me measureless, emerged on my view as we drove through the park. For the rest, I can only recall broken reminiscences of a deep gloomy archway, of a long gallery covered with portraits, and chambers in which the tapestry seemed rotting on the walls. More distinct than any other recollection is that of a frightened peep down a trap-door into 'Hell-hole.'

When I again saw Knebworth, the work of demolition was begun. My mother had resolved to pull down three sides of the great quadrangle, and confine the house to the fourth side, which, indeed, was sufficiently capacious for estates so diminished by former proprietors.

BOOK II.
S C H O O L
1812—1821

CHAPTER I.
(*Autobiographical.*)

FIRST EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL LIFE. 1812-1817. *Æt.* 9.

THE first school I went to was at Fulham, kept by Dr. Rud-dock, and a Mrs. Bowen, who had more especially charge of the younger children. My mother took me down to this 'Preparatory Institution.' How my heart sank within me when she gave me her parting kiss, and I stood, on the strange floor, striving to stifle my tears and catch the last sound of the receding wheels! Mrs. Bowen goodnaturedly sent for two boys, not much older than myself, to spend the rest of the evening with me in the parlour, and explain the nature of the place. These boys seemed to me like fiends. Infants though they were, their language was filthily obscene, and my ignorance of its meaning excited their contempt; which they vented in vague threats and mocking jeers. The school-mistress, wishing to leave us to ourselves to make friends, sat at the other end of the room out of hearing, till at last we were sent to bed. Once in my little crib, I thought I was safe; but scarcely had I cried myself into an unquiet doze, when I was suddenly seized, dragged from bed in the dark, and carried away in the dark, gagged and bound. I knew not what was to happen to me, but had a dim idea that I was to be murdered. I was borne thus into the open air, on a cold winter's night; and, two of my tormentors laying hold of my arms, and two of my legs, I was swung against the trunk of a tree in the playground, to undergo the undulatory operation

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termed bumping. I do not remember whether I was much hurt; but if I had been, mere bodily pain would have been scarcely felt amidst the storm of terror, and shame, and rage, which made a revolution of my whole moral being. Whatever the alleged cruelties of public schools at that day, I cannot believe that they equalled the atrocity of a genteel preparatory establishment; in which the smallest boy was given up, without any check from the bigger, to the mercies of boys less small, who were yet of the age when it is a delight to mangle flies and spin cockchafers.

[In a short sketch of his earliest reminiscences, written before he began this Autobiography, my father has more fully described his impressions of what he calls 'that horrible initiation (for horrible it was to me) into the meanness, the tyranny, the obscene talk, the sordid passions, of the real world.'

For school (he adds) is the real world, only it is the worst part of it. Oh, that first night, when my mother was gone, the last kiss given, the door closed, and I alone with the little mocking fiends to whom my anguish was such glee! I was an especial and singular diversion to them, not having been brought up with other boys. My utter ignorance of their low gross slang, the disgust with which their language, their habits, their very looks, inspired me—all this was excellent sport to them. I believe I was the youngest boy in the school. At least, I was the smallest. But I had not read 'Amadis of Gaul' for nothing; and I cuffed and scratched in return for cuffs and scratches. The school hours were to me hours of relief; for I was quick and docile, and my master could find no fault with me. But when the school broke up, that hour of release, so dear to others, was regarded by me with unutterable terror. Then the lesser boys would come round me to taunt the griefs which they themselves, I suppose, must once have felt. They had nothing of which to accuse me, except that I was homesick. But in the eyes of schoolboys that is the worst offence. There I learnt betimes that, with the unfeeling, feeling is a crime: and there betimes I sought the refuge of dissimulation. To put a good face on the matter, to laugh with those who laughed, to pretend that a day or

two had sufficed to cure all longing for my mother and my home: this was my only policy. And the attempt to practise it cost me more pain than all the tears with which, when I could steal away unobserved, I gave vent to my first sorrows. I remember now, with gratitude, one tall handsome boy who, indignant at my persecution, came up one day to disperse my tormentors. I recollect that, when he had done so, I was particularly anxious to convince him that my sufferings did not arise from fear of my tyrants. 'You see,' said I, 'that I cannot fight them all. But make one of them come out from the rest (any one of them), and let me fight him.' The boy smiled, and seemed to consider a little. At last he, very wisely, agreed to my proposal. My tormentors, however, so brave when united, were, like most bullies, no heroes when taken singly; and, with some difficulty, a boy half a head taller than myself was induced to become the representative of the rest. I remember that I was dreadfully beaten. But I did not give in, and that was something. Unfortunately for me, my protector was high in the school, and seldom at hand; so that his interference only increased the malice of my foes.

At last my homesickness became apparent to the good school-mistress. She was some relation to the master; not his wife. She sent for me, and accosted me with great kindness.

'My dear,' said she (I see her now—a comely plump matron in a stone-coloured silk gown)—'my dear, life consists of perpetual separations from those we love. You pine for your mother. But you will soon see her again. Think how much harder is my fate than yours. I have lost a beloved husband. He is dead. I shall never see him more. But you see I am resigned and comfortable.'

'How long ago is it since you last saw him, ma'am?' said I.

'More than twenty years,' said the lady.

'That is a very long time,' said I, thoughtfully, 'and when I have been twenty years at school, I dare say I shall feel as resigned and comfortable as you do at the loss of your husband.'

The good lady never attempted to comfort me again.]

I did not remain in that school above a fortnight. My misery was so great that it affected my health; and my mother, coming to see me, was so shocked at my appearance, and at my narrations, that she took me away. But the experience I had undergone, short though it was, had no trivial effect on my character. It long damped my spirits, and chilled that

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yearning for childish friendships which is an instinct with childhood. On the other hand, it left on my mind a hatred of cruelty and oppression which, I trust, has never faded away.

I was next sent to a school at which my brother Henry was also a pupil : Dr. Curtis's, of Sunbury.¹ It was a very bad school in all ways ; and there I wasted two years in learning marbles, and trying to learn the Latin grammar. My brother, being two years older than myself, was scarcely my companion, and I did not there form a single friendship. By the advice of a medical man, I was then removed, for the benefit of sea air, to Brighton—a Mr. Dempster's, on the Grand Parade. I have no recollection of any educational benefit derived from that establishment, but I grew in health and strength.² Thence I was removed to Dr. Hooker's, of Rotten-dean ; one of the most celebrated academies in England for the rank of the pupils, the comforts of the school, and the superiority of its training for the great public institutions of Eton or Harrow. Here I made a leap. The place was congenial to me. The habits of the boys were those of gentlemen. I conceived a liking for the master. I applied myself willingly to his lessons. For the first time, at school, I obtained the reputation of cleverness. My early taste for English literature began to reappear. In company with other boys, I started a kind of weekly magazine for the receptacle of poetic effusions ; and mine were considered the best, and looked forward to with

[¹ Some memoranda, made by my father (in 1844) for this Autobiography, contain the following references to his school life at Sunbury :—'Curtis—Games there—Prince Bulwing—Fight with Munday—Its effects—Shame and pride—Describe this school well—Playground—Habets—Haughton Codes, &c.—Carry—Sentimentality—Learning nothing—Forgetting English poetry, &c.' 'Prince Bulwing' was probably a name given him by his schoolfellows, and 'the Haughton Codes' may, perhaps, have had some reference to their games ; but to 'Carry' (whoever she was) I can find no other reference in any of his recorded reminiscences.—L.]

[² Mr. Dempster's school is thus referred to in the same memoranda :—'Dempster's—playing with town boys in the square—the consequences of this—Learning nothing—Describe it—and him, in his tights and watchchains.'—L.]

interest by the school. There, I first read Scott and Byron ; greatly admiring the first, and conceding to the last a very limited approbation. I became also fond of athletic pursuits, and was esteemed the best pugilist of the school ; though I only fought once, a boy somewhat bigger than myself, named Augustus Moreton. My victory was an easy one. During my last six months at this school, however, I suffered greatly in spirits from a dislike, then unaccountable, which Dr. Hooker had taken to me.¹ I found afterwards that Mrs. Hooker had said I lampooned her, which was not true ; but she had a son by a former marriage, who was the biggest boy of the school, and who was my personal enemy ; though I never gave him any other cause than that of saying I would not take a licking from him. Dr. Hooker wrote to my mother, advising her to withdraw me from his seminary and place me at Eton. He said, in one of these letters, 'Your son has exhausted all I can profess to teach him. His energy is extraordinary. He has a vital power which demands a large field. He has it in him to become a very remarkable man.'

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I.

Æt. 9

[¹ The memoranda of 1844 also contain this mention of the Rottendean School:—'Hooker's—here an era—Leap in my life—calumny—its effect—my rage at Hooker—exploded at my mother's when I left.'—L.]

CHAPTER II.

(Illustrative.)

SCHOOLMASTER AND SCHOOLBOY. 1818. Æt. 15.

BOOK
II.

1812-21

DR. HOOKER's letters to Mrs. Bulwer Lytton on the subject of her son's character at this time, certainly entitle the writer of them to the appellation of 'the Judicious Hooker;' and I am induced by their biographical interest to print some of them here, without any alteration of their spelling, which is opulent in capital letters.¹

[¹ The profuse indulgence in this orthographical luxury which afterwards became habitual to the style of his distinguished pupil may have been due perhaps to a taste formed in the first instance from example rather than precept, under the scholastic roof at Rottendean. Dr. Hooker's use of capital letters appears to be arbitrary; for there is no apparent reason why he should spell 'time' with a big 'T,' and 'mind' with a little 'm.' But it was upon an invariable principle that my father employed capital initials to distinguish the definite from the indefinite use of common nouns (*e.g.* the People, the Aristocracy), or the use of such nouns as proper names (*e.g.* Man, Mind, Matter), or for adjectives used in the sense of substantives after the definite article, as, for instance, 'the Good,' 'the True,' 'the Beautiful,' 'the Sublime;' terms of which the meaning is not expressed by the words 'goodness,' 'truth,' 'beauty,' 'sublimity.' Orthography has ever been regulated by fashion rather than principle; but I could never perceive a reasonable objection to the principle followed by my father in his use of capital letters. It is of obvious convenience to any reader not prejudiced against it. When I see adjectives spelt without capitals I am led by the printing of them to suppose they are employed for the qualification of substantives, and not as terms denoting the embodiment or personification of qualities in the abstract. My eye searches the sentence in which they occur to find the noun to which they belong. The beautiful or sublime what? Is it a man, a monument, or a mountain? The practice of the old writers, who began all substantives with capital letters, was not without advantage to their readers: and I think there is something to be urged against the modern fashion, which deprives all substantives (except proper names) of

Dr. Hooker to Mrs. Bulwer Lytton.

Rottingdean; ' September 18, 1818.

My Dr. Madam,—I received your long Letter, as you call it: I say, interesting one. I did not answer it because I agree with you that there is plenty of Time for you to make up your mind on the Subject.

Your Son is as well, and as strong, and in as good Spirits, as any Boy in England. But every Day convinces me more and more that any Private School (whether mine or any other) will be perfect Ruin to him.

He has a mind of very extraordinary Compass. He has an Emulation rarely found, and an Anxiety and Attention, and Care about his Business, very uncommon. He has a physique, Force and Spirit, which defy all competition here; and all these things, so desirable, and so fitting him for a Public School, are ruin to him Here.

No Boy can controul him; and there is no comparative Emulation in a Private School, or any Improvement from other Boys,

that distinction. Benjamin Franklin, who witnessed, and disapproved, the beginning of this fashion, has made some observations upon it which are still suggestive. They occur in a published letter addressed by him (Philadelphia, December 26, 1789) to Noah Webster (the lexicographer) 'upon innovations in language and printing.' 'In examining the English books' (he says) 'which were printed between the Restoration and the accession of George the Second, we may observe that all the substantives were begun with a capital, in which we imitated our mother tongue, the German. This was more particularly useful to those who were not well acquainted with the English; there being such a prodigious number of our words that are both verbs and substantives, and spelt in the same manner, though often accented differently in pronunciation. This method has, by the fancy of printers, of late years been entirely laid aside, from an idea that suppressing the capitals shows the character to greater advantage; those letters prominent above the line disturbing its even, regular appearance. The effect of this change is so considerable that a learned man of France, who used to read our books, though not perfectly acquainted with our language, in conversation with me on the subject of our authors, attributed the greater obscurity he found in our modern books, compared with those of the period above mentioned, to a change of style for the worse in our writers; of which mistake I convinced him by marking for him each substantive with a capital in a paragraph; he then easily understood, though before he could not comprehend it. This shows the inconvenience of that pretended improvement.'—L.]

[Old spelling for Rottendeau.—L.]

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II.

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which he could so well digest and be benefitted by in a Public one. Whoever lives to see him a man, will find his mind employed—not in the minor Elegancies of Life—but in the Higher Branches of Occupation and Ambition. He can, and he will, if led on by a Public School, highly distinguish himself there, and in after life. He is capable of extraordinary Exertion and Self Denial also, for any Object in which he is interested. But such an Object he will not find at a Private School. And, without it, his high Spirits, his Eagerness for Pleasure, and keen enjoyment of it, may prove the ruin of his character. I have, however, no more to say on this Subject, but to assure you my advice is the best I know how to give, and the most calculated for his ultimate advantage. Neither do I see anything that can properly militate against it.

I am, Dear Madam, with much gratitude for all your kind attentions.

Your obed^t. serv^t.,

T. R. HOOKER.

In a subsequent letter, he adds :—

‘I hope you will be induced to follow the Plan I have recommended. He will find at a Public School the exertion he requires, and the Opportunity of improving those abilities with which it has pleased God to bless him. Properly managed, they will make him a great, and a good man. But, if unrestrained, they will produce unhappiness to himself and misery to all around him.’

It is obvious that Master Edward was an obstreperous and somewhat unmanageable boy. In one of the hitherto unpublished fictions of his later life, which will be found (unfinished alas !) in a subsequent chapter of this book,¹ he has painted, from memory, his own portrait as a schoolboy ; and the fidelity of that portrait is attested by its close resemblance to his schoolmaster’s sketch of him in the foregoing letters. The boy’s own letters, written to his mother between the ages of fourteen and fifteen, while he was still under the tuition of Dr. Hooker, are not without character ; and the following specimens of them may perhaps be read with interest.

[¹ Book II. chap. xi. p. 176.—L.]

Edward Bulwer to his Mother.

Rottingdean: October 22, 1817.

My dearest Mama,—I rec^d. your last letter to-day, which I am very much obliged to you for. I wrote 2 or 3 days ago, directing to Knebworth, but, as they may not send it, I write again. I can easily guess your anxiety about my Brother, as you have always been so good a mother to me, and *sincerely hope* he is better, *both for his sake and your own*. Pray, my dearest Mama, take care of yourself. I am so afraid you will catch William's fever. Pray, *pray* write soon, and tell me how you are. I am *quite well*. Pray write directly, as I shall be in Torture till I hear from you. Give my *kindest love* to my Brother, and *sincerely hoping this will find you well*,

I remain, my dear Mama,
Your most affectionate son,
E. G. BULWER.

For Mrs. Bulwer Lytton,
Upper Seymour Street, Portman Square, London.

The Same to the Same.

Rottingdean: November 2, 1818.

My dearest Mama,—I take up my Pen to acknowledge the receipt of your Kind Letter. Believe me, when I say that I truly feel for your Situation! My poor Grand Mother! I shed tears for her. For, although she certainly has not been a good Parent to me, Yet at such a time Everything is forgotten, and only her Good Qualities remembered. But I hope and trust in the Mercy of God to restore her to health. 'While there is Life, there is Hope,' and I hope everything is not so bad as you imagine. Affection (like Jealousy) has an 100 eyes, and no doubt y^r filial love for my G. M. has led you to see things in a worse Light than they really are. May the Almighty grant it thus! And when I return Home for the Holidays, may I see her, *and you*, in perfect Health! I am pretty well. My Cold has gone off. I have got a pair of Corderoi breeches and a p^r of black cloth, as the Dr. said I had better have two pair. Were I not aware of the importance of your Time, I would send you a small Ode I have composed in

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imitation of Milton's 'Allegro,' upon a Poker. I will, however, no longer intrude upon Time so precious, and shall only add that I am, and always shall remain,

Y^r most affect^d Son,

Where shall I be next Holidays ?

E. G. BULWER.

To Mrs. Bulwer Lytton,
Upper Seymour Street.

The Ode to the Poker was published, not many years after the date of this letter, in a little volume, of which more anon.

The Same to the Same.

Rottingdean (undated).

My dear Mama,—I received your very kind parcel of Fruit quite safe, and am exceedingly obliged to you for it. Indeed, my dear Mama, I do not know how to return your very great kindness. The grapes, peaches, &c., are Excellent, and so, indeed, is every thing which comes from you. I am very much rejoiced to hear my G. Mother is better, and (believe me) sincerely hope she will in a short time be restored to Health. Pray take care of your own Health. Mrs. Lake is at Brighton and is much better.¹ The T.'s come to Brighton on the 16th. They know a Boy here, and are going to take him Home of a Saturday till Monday. This fellow told them I was here, but I don't know if they are going to take me. I am very much obliged to you for your kind advice, which I assure you I will follow. I must now conclude with saying that I am, and always shall remain,

Your dutiful and affectionate Son,

E. G. BULWER.

The Miss R. T. mentioned in a preceding chapter² as the young lady Master Edward fell in love with when he was six years old, appears to have died about this time. For a letter written by the boy to his mother in 1819 ends thus:—

[¹ My father mentions, in his correspondence, that he was at school with Sir James Lake; whose promise was, he says, 'in boyhood, brilliant, but it came to nothing.' I gather from some of this gentleman's letters to my father, that when my uncle, Henry Bulwer, was Minister at Madrid, he was on the point of joining him there in the capacity of private secretary, but this also 'came to nothing.'—L.]

[² Book I. chap. xvii. p. 97.—L.]

I have no more room on this sheet, as I am going to favour
you with my verses, than to say how truly I am your most affect^e
son,

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E. G. LYTTON BULWER.

On the Death of Miss R. T.

Why check the tear for her, whose op'ning bloom
Glow'd like the flow'r that blossoms o'er the tomb ?
Like that, the fragrant loveliness it gave
Shew'd but how near is Beauty to the grave.
Why check the tear for her ? and why deny
The rightful tribute of the pitying sigh ?
Mourn'st thou not her who, had'st thou died as she,
Would, in her gentleness, have mourn'd for thee ?
Mourn'st thou not her, who died while yet the hand
Of Hope was pointing to the Future's land,
And shewing blessings brightly pictured there,
That faithless Fancy woo'd her soul to share ?
And well on her might every blessing fall,
Who, in her purity, deserved them all !
Mourn'st thou not her ? No ! rather mourn for those
Who trac'd her life of Beauty to its close,
Who fondly mark'd, from childhood's earliest hour,
Each bud of Virtue bursting into flow'r,
And, when they hoped those virtues might repay
Their anxious culture, mark'd them swept away.
Ay, weep for those alone ! or wherefore weep
That toilful life has melted into sleep ?
To sleep ? To death ! It boots not which, to her
Whose angel soul scarce knew the way to err.
To us that soul in that fair form was given
Like the bright dewdrop that descends from heaven :
Shrined in the bosom of the blushing rose,
To the young sun awhile its splendour glows,
But as advance the waning hours of morn
Up to that heaven again, exhal'd, 'tis borne. E. G. L. B.

You see, my dear Mother, that there are two or three little im-
perfections in it, which want the last polish. But from the very
short time in which it must have been written, the head could not
have corrected what flowed so immediately from the heart. Adieu.
E. G. L. B.]

CHAPTER III.

*(Autobiographical.)*LAST EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOL LIFE. 1818. *Æt.* 15.BOOK
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I QUITTED Dr. Hooker's school, and it now became a question whether or not I should go to Eton. For my part, being older in mind and appearance than my years, I considered myself too much of a man to go to any school whatever. I had formed in my head the much more agreeable picture of a domicile with a private tutor ; where one might leap at once from Master into Mister, from the big boy into the young man, dine out in the neighbourhood, and find a Beatrice or a Laura in some young beauty capable of appreciating my precocious susceptibility to the charms with which a boy's imagination already invested the vision of her destined apparition. In fact, I had premature but impassioned aspirations to launch into the real world of men, instead of retrograding to the mimic world of boys at any school, public or private. Nevertheless, my mother and I, early one morning, paid a visit to Dr. Keate, head master of Eton. I remember that he came out of his breakfast-room with his mouth full of roll ; and that, while answering my mother's queries as to the form I could be placed, or the house I could be lodged, in, and listening respectfully to her assurances of my extraordinary abilities, he politely requested me to make a few sapphics upon spring. I remember that he praised them highly, which must have been unmerited courtesy on his part ; for though I afterwards wrote prose, both in Greek and Latin, with much fluency, I never succeeded

in the verse of those dead tongues : a circumstance which will, no doubt, make the pupils of public schools consider me but an indifferent scholar. The praises did not, however, soften me, ungrateful as I was. I still retained my dislike to a public school ; and I argued the matter with my mother so convincingly, that our visit ended without other result than a sight of Dr. Keate and a survey of the lions of the town.

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I do not know whether or not to regret this decision. I am very sensible of the advantages which follow in life, especially in public life, from a probation at one of our great National Schools. I have often found the want of it in a certain distaste to discipline and co-operation with others ; and that kind of shyness, when thrown in company with contemporaries of very familiar social manners, or addicted to the sports of the field, which is seldom the defect of one reared at a public school. Always, throughout my career, I have been too thin-skinned and sensitive : faults which Eton might have cured. On the other hand, I was at that time too far advanced for a *début* at a school : too far advanced, not only in 'my studies' for the highest class to which, according to custom, I could have been assigned, but too mature in my sentiments and modes of thought. I had never been flogged ; and, after my first two or three years of school, I had never submitted to a blow from any of my companions. In every schoolboy fight I had come off victorious. Thus, something of arrogance, and certainly of the pride which attaches itself to personal dignity, had become interwoven with my nature ; and I am certain that, if I had been flogged by a master or fagged by a boy, it would have produced an injurious consequence on my health and character.

Now came the question of a private tutor. How prodigiously we were embarrassed in the selection ! What a number we saw ! What a number we rejected ! At length, as time rolled on, and my mother perceived that I only kept up my literary acquisitions by devouring the contents of three

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circulating libraries, the affair was cut short; and I went to a receptacle for young men, near London, until at last the proper Phoenix of a tutor could be discovered.¹ Here, I fancy, I was the best classical, certainly the best Greek, scholar; but then, on the other hand, I was the worst caligrapher and the most blundering arithmetician. Indeed, I had never learnt arithmetic, beyond a weekly lesson which I had always contrived to shirk; and I am sure my writing proved the truth of honest Dogberry's assertion, 'and came by nature.' I soon, however, conquered the mysteries of figures. As to the noble art of penmanship, that was unattainable, and my franks* are yet the admiration of collectors of such autographs.

I did not, alas! long continue in this intermediate state. I had a quarrel with the usher about making a noise; the usher fetched the master; the master was choleric; he became still more so at finding that his choler did not influence me; he gave me a box on the ear. I threw myself back in a pugilistic attitude; and the master, retreating, for no glory was to be gained by the contest, requested me to walk into his study. There immured, with a swelling and indignant heart (it was the first blow I had received unavenged from man or boy since the age of ten) I spent two tedious days. No companion visited me, save the servant with my meals or the coal-scuttle; no book cheered me save a volume of Beloe's 'Sexagenarian,'² which was lying on the sofa, but which, being soon remembered, was, with the usual didascallic malice,

[¹ In one of the autobiographical memoranda already mentioned, Hamerton is referred to as the locality of this school. But Hamerton is fifty-one miles from London.—L.]

* This part of the memoir was written while an M.P., and before franking was abolished.

[² Beloe's *Sexagenarian, or the Memoirs of a Literary Life*, is the posthumous work of a clergyman who was born at Norwich, and was a pupil of Dr. Parr's. My father would seem to have taken from this book the title given by himself to his Autobiography. The unpleasant circumstances of his first introduction to Beloe's *Memoirs* would have naturally recurred to his recollection when he began to contemplate the composition of his own; and it is possible that he may have owed something to the influence of the book, which abounds

summoned away before I had got through fifty pages. My master wrote to my mother, and so did I. My letter was incoherent and vehement—worthy of a Paladin. A blow—at my age—to one of my ancient birth! My ancestry was invoked with the spirit of a Roman. On the third morning the well-known carriage and its stately, long-tailed, horses stopped at the gate. I hailed it from the window. The door was unbolted: my mother entered. Scarcely time for a word, before in marched the Pedagogue, grim and tall, sullen and majestic. All attempts at reconciliation were in vain. I demanded the first apology. The master, very properly, refused to give it; and, very improperly, put himself into a violent rage. The scene was admirable. It ended by a proof of that spirit of quiet decision with which I have often in later life got out of difficulties. I opened the door, walked through the garden, reached the gate, and ensconced myself in the carriage. What more could be said or done? The affair was settled. So ended my schoolboy days. I now entered prematurely into youth—its sufferings, its memories, its adventures. The stream was crossed, the bridge broken for ever. With what wistful eyes, with what bitter regrets, have I looked back on the irrevocable shore!

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in curious gossip about all sorts of literary characters (Mary Wollstonecraft among others) and in literary criticisms rather dogmatically pronounced, though not without occasional flashes of a certain kind of quaint humour.—L.]

CHAPTER IV.

(Autobiographical.)

LIFE AT EALING. 1819. ET. 16.

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A few weeks afterwards, I was placed under the roof of a very different preceptor, at Ealing. The Rev. Charles Wallington was an amiable type of the old school of Oxford man. He was a Tory, and High Churchman to the backbone. He took his principles in State and Theology without much examination, as part and parcel of his natural character as clergyman and gentleman. His scholarship was not devoid of taste and elegance, but without depth or range. He could not have fitted an aspiring genius for a first-class at Oxford; but, at least, he could have assisted a pupil of ordinary capacities towards a respectable degree. Long habit had made him familiar with the ordinary classics, Greek and Latin. He did not wander voluntarily out of those beaten tracks. His acquaintance with modern literature was limited; but he wrote in his native tongue with neatness and some grace—wrote like an educated gentleman. Gentleman, indeed, he was *emphatically*, in impulse and in habit, in appearance and in manner.

He was a very handsome old man, with an air more martial than priestly, extremely slight but sinewy, upright as a dart. He wore his black coat buttoned to the throat. Never once did I see a button relaxed; and the coat was padded across the chest like a life-guard'sman's. He had a magnificent aquiline nose, almost as large as the immortal Wellington's, but much more delicate. He had blue eyes of great sweetness

when pleased, and great vivacity when angry; and a physiognomist would have detected refinement of sentiment in the curves of the mouth. Despite his age, his countenance was free from the lines of care and sorrow; his complexion was clear and brilliant. If you had put on him such a wig as was worn by George IV., he would have seemed in the prime of manhood; but though he was vain of his good looks, he did not affect youth. He wore a very becoming toupet in large Brutus-like curls; but the colour of the toupet was snow white. His height varied, growing gradually taller, perhaps, for weeks, and then some morning he appeared at breakfast suddenly shortened by a couple of inches. This arose from a peculiarity in his habits. Not liking new boots (who does?), it was his custom to appropriate to himself the boots of his second son—a handsome man in a crack regiment, who was sure to have boots well made, and who resigned them to his father after they had lost their first uneasy freshness. The son's feet were larger than the sire's; and, in order to make the boots fit better, Mr. Wallington senior stuffed them every morning with the letters he had received that day. In those boots he kept the correspondence which a less ingenious man would have devoted to the waste basket. This process went on till the boots could hold no more; they were then suddenly emptied, and Mr. Wallington senior diminished proportionately in stature. The boots were not the only things my tutor had appropriated from his son Clement. He took also from that favoured son an old grey charger; a stately and venerable animal. And every day, unless the weather was actually stormy, the old man paraded this war-horse along the highways—his chest thrown back, his seat military, his air collected and stern. Every passer-by, ignorant of his real attributes, mistook him for a general in the Peninsular War. He had one companion in these rides; an ugly, yellowish Scotch terrier. If his son Clement were the object of his pride, the Scotch terrier was the object of his love. Sometimes,

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by forgetfulness, he left this poor dog in the pupil-room, and pounce on the poor dog went the pupils. No favourite with them was that dog; and they knew they must make the most of their time, for very soon was heard the old man's tremulous step hurrying backward along the corridor. An instinct warned him of the woes that were befalling the faithful but unpopular animal; and it always went to my heart to see the pathetic, suspicious, wistful glance which he cast round the room (all the tormentors were then at their desks, looking as innocent as hypocrites generally do), while the dog bounded towards him and then rushed through the open door. This dog was not more a favourite with servants than pupils; and, perhaps for that reason, even on Sundays the vigilant, tender master did not like to leave the animal at home. The dog went regularly to church with him, paced up the aisle demurely, mounted into the reading-desk, and assisted afterwards in the pulpit. Perhaps the old man loved the dog the more because he seemed to have little happiness in the other ties of his domestic life. His wife and he quarrelled from morning to night; he had no daughters; his two sons were in the army, and rarely visited him. He seemed to have no friends. I never heard him speak of any. To the man thus circumstanced a dog was necessary; otherwise the heart might have suspended its functions. Alas! he must have long survived that Scotch terrier. I hope he found another one, for he lived till he had passed his ninetieth year.

The character of our small society was unusually quiet. The pupils were sober and steady enough, except when the dog was to be teased. We had each our own bureau, purchased with our own money. It was a matter of emulation which should have the handsomer one. In the evening each was set apart, occupied with his own studies or amusements. Our desks were as our separate homes.

I loved my preceptor, who imagined me a genius. I loved my companions. And you, my dear old oak bureau, strewn

with books, and literary litter. Ah, who owns you now? Who succeeded to that quiet corner by the snug fireside, and the door opening on the garden close at hand? I would give your weight in gold to possess you once more; you, on whose unconscious surface were written my first attempts at something more than childish rhyming, my first outpourings of love. Satirist and politician though I be, I think I should never write another harsh or ungentle line were you once more the companion of my studies.

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With this excellent old man I made rapid progress in the classics; and, what was more, in the love of letters. I read every book I could lay my hands upon; no matter how trifling, no matter how abstruse, the volume. Mr. Wallington was an ardent politician, and Sir Robert Peel was his idol. He never forgave Canning the Catholic question. Sometimes he read to us aloud the Parliamentary debates, and he infected us betimes with the passion for public affairs. It was a favourite plan with him (and an admirable one, since we were not to be only readers of books all our lives) to induce us to excite ourselves and our comrades by speaking and discussing aloud, in full conclave, long extracts from Demosthenes, or compositions of our own, either in English or a less familiar tongue. For my part, I caught from this practice quite an oratorical mania, and mouthed out declamations with the enthusiasm of an embryo Gracchus. But my aspirations at that time were poetical rather than political. My mother had shown, with pride, to my preceptor some boyish verses of mine; on the strength of which he encouraged me 'to cultivate the Muse.' I needed no such encouragement to persuade myself that

Ich auch war in Arcadien geboren.

Poor Horace was robbed of all his classic turns, and my beloved Euripides poured into vernacular verse. Then did I conceive, *audax omnia perpeti*, the Homeric epic of the 'Battle of Waterloo,' beginning, if I remember right, with 'Awake

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my Muse!' and then did I perpetrate the poem of 'Ismael : an Oriental Tale,' beginning, Byron-like, with ' 'Tis eve,' &c., and thronged with bulbuls and palm-trees. In short I was a verse-maker, and nothing more. But my efforts pleased my tutor. He persuaded my mother to publish a little volume of these versifyings. The sale was even smaller than the volume. But—

A book's a book, although there's nothing in 't :
'Tis something still to see one's name in print ;

and among my mother's friends I was regarded as a youthful prodigy. Moreover, about this time Dr. Parr deigned to write to me, and was very kind in his encouragements. This passion for verse-making was unfortunate. It carried off the natural eagerness and tenacity of a mind always restlessly active, into very unprofitable channels. It divided the ardour of knowledge, and it made me absent and dreamy. There was nothing in the tuition I received to elevate my ambition towards higher objects, or stimulate it to sterner efforts. My tasks were easy and monotonous. They cost me no trouble ; nor did the acquirements or assiduity of my companions inspire me with serious emulation. Mr. Wallington lived not far from London, and there, chiefly, I passed my vacations. I was tall and manly for my age ; prodigal of talk, full of high spirits, gay to overflowing ; ready alike in verse and compliment. Women smiled on the young poet. Invitations showered upon me. My mother yielded to the flattery so sweet to a mother's heart ; and, whilst little more than a child in years, I was introduced into the world as a young man. Dinners, routs, and balls diverted me from serious study. I was passionately fond of dancing, and amongst the last to leave the ball-room by the light of dawn.¹

[¹ On March 5, 1820, Mr. Wallington, the tutor, writes to Mrs. Bulwer Lytton, 'Mr. Bulwer regularly attends Mr. Macfarren twice a week, and practises, before me, the quadrille steps ; which I trust he does from the best motive, knowing that it is your wish. Since you brought him back to Ealing, and the serious conversation I then had with him on this point, I have never heard

The middle-aged ladies took me home in their carriages, for I was but a boy. The young ones did not disdain me as a partner—for I was almost a man. In fact, I forestalled the natural growth of years : and, enjoying my youth too soon, I renounced its tastes when I should have commenced them. At the age of twenty-two, I hated balls as much as they are hated by most men of twenty-eight. For experience, which is time, had advanced me six years in the progress to satiety. All this might have destroyed in me for ever manliness and depth of character, but for the sorrow in which it closed. Woe is me even now, when I recall the gloom wherein my boyhood vanished !

[A friend kindly interested in the subject of this work has brought to my notice some private autobiographical reminiscences of the early life of the Rev. C. J. Barkley, late Vicar of Little Melton, in Norfolk ; who died in 1883, at the age of eighty-four. Mr. Barkley's reminiscences were written in his latter days, at the request of his family, and with the encouragement of my friend, who wished him to put on record the salient features of a generation widely different, in many respects, from our own ; and the concluding portion of his narrative, penned only a few months before his death, contains an account of the establishment and character of Mr. Wallington, to whom he went as a pupil four years before my father, in the year 1816. It is singular that a person without any kind of celebrity, who did not become a tutor till he was long past middle life, and who never had more than six or seven pupils at a time, should reappear in autobiographies by two of his pupils. The similarity of the impressions of Mr. Wallington's character which may be gathered from these independent descriptions of it, attests the fidelity with which its peculiarities were preserved in the recollection of their

him express any aversion to it. Fencing, as you know, was always congenial to his taste, and from the attention he pays to Mr. Angelo, and Mr. Angelo to him, I have not the smallest doubt that he will speedily become a most skilful and graceful fencer.'—L.]

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writers : and I am glad to have the permission of Mr. Barkley's family to publish here his vivid sketch of Mr. Wallington, not only because it confirms and completes my father's, but also for its intrinsic interest as a specimen of vigorous portraiture written from recollections sixty-seven years old, at the age of eighty-four.

Having mentioned that from Bath, where his family resided, he travelled to Ealing with Penruddock, a pupil of some standing at Mr. Wallington's, Mr. Barkley thus proceeds :—

We drew up in front of a massive old-fashioned arched door in a high brick wall, above which nothing but the chimneys and projecting gables of the attic windows of Mr. Wallington's house were visible. It was a large, ancient, time-worn edifice, in which the lord of the manor, or other great man of the parish, might be supposed to have lived in the reign of William and Mary, or Queen Anne, but it had been disfigured by a mean-looking brick building tacked to its northern side, possibly by its present proprietor. From this house Penruddock returned with a gentleman who differed so completely in appearance and manner from any other I had seen engaged in the work of education that, when he held out his hand to me, and expressed his satisfaction at making my acquaintance, I could hardly bring myself to believe that this was Mr. Wallington. He ushered us in, not by the somewhat stately hall door which directly faced us, but by a door in the middle of the ugly annex, and which opened directly into an apartment. 'This, Barkley,' he said, 'is our lecture-room.' It was also our dining-room, and we soon sat down with Mr. Wallington to an excellent dinner, and as such a just sample of the whole series which followed. Instead of rising from the table directly we had done eating, and hurrying out of the room, Mr. Wallington encouraged us to take our time while a meal lasted, and generally remained talking with us a while after it was ended. And these social conversations, though mainly the promptings of good nature, were conducive to what was then a peculiar mode of school government. Floggings and canings he discarded entirely. Neither could my fellow-pupils nor myself recollect his ever saying a harsh word to, or of, anyone, except of William Cobbett, or Orator Hunt, or some other demagogue who attempted to increase the discontent of the lower orders and goad them on to revolution.

Dinner over, I made a survey outside the house, and found that, although the wall which surrounded the entire premises enclosed ground enough for a market garden, the part to which the pupils had access was probably smaller than the smallest cottage garden in the parish. On my asking Penruddock to explain this strange state of things, he shrugged his shoulders and replied, 'I can only say that the garden, like almost everything else, is Mrs. Wallington's, or at any rate is called hers;' and I myself, if asked for an explanation now, could give no better. However, though we had no playground on the premises, we had an excellent substitute in a small neighbouring common, extending to thirty acres or more. On our return indoors, Penruddock showed me a second room on the ground floor, which was the playroom of the pupils, and remarked with a sigh that he and the senior pupils regretted (especially when preparing for lectures) that the junior pupils had not a room of their own. It struck me that in the adjoining house, with its thirty or forty windows, a room might surely be spared for the purpose, but my companion exclaimed 'that it was not a thing to be thought of.' The house, as well as the garden, was Mrs. Wallington's. She had still another privilege in a comfortable exemption from all the labours which attach to a schoolmaster's wife; these were discharged by a middle-aged widow woman.

Punctually at six, Mr. Wallington sat down with us to tea, and, when the tea-things were cleared away, withdrew to what we called 'his lodging next door.' At half-past eight he returned and joined with us in a service of prayer and praise to God. At ten we lighted our candles and retired to rest.

I was not long in discovering that Mr. Wallington was not the scholar I had hoped to find him. Not only had he no objection to our preparing our lessons by the help of English translations, but at lectures he used a like 'crib,' and, even with its assistance, failed, as often as not, to explain the grammatical structure, or throw light upon the meaning, of some passage in Sophocles or Thucydides that had baffled Gore, by far the most advanced student of our lot. Nevertheless, by being always at his post, in cheerful readiness to take his share in our tasks, he kept us up so well to our work that there was no falling off in our previously acquired knowledge of Latin and Greek.

My time at Ealing for another reason was not wasted, for in Mr. Wallington we had always before us the example of one who, in principles as well as manners, was a gentleman in the best sense of

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the word : courteous in bearing, pleasant in speech, with patience, fine temper, and a tender regard for the feelings of others. Of his birth and lineage not even Fagge, who had been several years at Ealing, could tell me anything. I must not omit to say a word or two of his dress, which at first surprised me. There was nothing, perhaps, that a clergyman off duty or unattached might not becomingly wear, and yet none the less it had the same effect, and was nearly the same in fact, as that which was commonly worn by elderly country gentlemen who employed *good* tailors. The resemblance, I think, would most strike those who saw him taking his daily exercise on horseback. On Sundays, especially when called upon to officiate in church, his dress was strictly canonical.

Mr. Wallington had two sons in the army, Charles and Clement, both captains by purchase, one in a dragoon regiment then stationed in India, the other (Clement) in the 10th (or Prince of Wales's Own) Hussars, the most fashionable and expensive regiment in the service. Now, the price of their first commissions, the cost of their outfit, the money paid for their promotion to the successive grades of lieutenant and captain, together with the large sum lodged in official custody to insure their future advancement to the rank of major, must have amounted, on a moderate calculation, to 6,000*l.*, probably to more, and by the total loss of interest on this large sum, Mr. Wallington's income must have been considerably diminished. Nor was this all. For whereas in the infantry it was not easy for a captain to live on his pay, in the cavalry it was next to impossible, and though Captain Charles, with his Indian pay and emoluments, might dispense with his father's assistance, it must have been necessary to supplement Clement's pay with an allowance. And just at this time he was newly returned from the Waterloo campaign, impoverished by the loss of two horses killed under him, and by irreparable damage done to his gorgeous equipments. Here, I think, we have the answer to the question which often suggested itself : 'What could have induced Mr. Wallington to turn schoolmaster?' He did it to obtain by his own labours the means of gratifying his sons without diminishing the home comforts ; and certainly as regards Mrs. Wallington the end was accomplished, since she had her house and garden in their integrity, her carriage and horses, her coachman and gardener in one, and was free from all the fatigues of her husband's calling.

Clement, I suppose, had not yet supplied himself with fresh chargers, for he repeatedly borrowed his father's 'Bonnie Lass,'

formerly a favourite hackney of George III., for whose service she had been specially trained, and, in order to protect him against sudden assaults, had been taught to rear and trample down anyone who put out a hand to seize her bridle whenever she had a rider on her back. This she attempted with a private in the Foot Guards the only time I ever mounted her. The man escaped by stepping forward to clutch my stirrup strap instead of trying to get out of the way, and, strange to say, the first words the veteran uttered were, ‘ Old Bonnie Lass, is this you ? ’ He had made acquaintance with her some years before while in garrison at Windsor. How she came into Mr. Wallington’s possession I do not know. The story ran that Queen Charlotte, a lady of frugal mind, had sold her husband’s stud as soon as his malady had reached the stage that there was no hope that he would ever mount horse again.]

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CHAPTER V.

*(Illustrative.)*FIRST ESSAYS IN AUTHORSHIP. 1820. *Æt.* 17.BOOK
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[THERE is a letter preserved in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, from Lord Byron, when he was a boy, to his aunt ; whom he asks to excuse its faulty orthography because it is the first letter he has ever written. Those who have read it with an interest reflected on its sprawling pothooks from the subsequent fame of its writer, will understand why I here interrupt this Autobiography in order to add to it some particulars about the volume of early verses mentioned by my father in the preceding chapter. Perhaps one source of the enjoyment with which we read even the most trivial records of the childhood of illustrious men is derived, unconsciously, from a momentary suspension of our sense of the intellectual disparity between them and ourselves. We have acknowledged or disputed their supremacy as men. But as men only we have known them : men in whom we recognised our rulers or our rivals. Death turns them to statues. The common path leads up to their commanding images, which stand above it like monuments that serve as milestones, marking the world's progress. But by the biographies which present these illustrious persons for the first time to our imagination in their character as children, we are placed at once upon a footing of early and tender intimacy with them, and, as it were, in the relation of their elders and superiors in experience.

ISMAEL
AN ORIENTAL TALE
WITH
OTHER POEMS
BY
EDWARD GEORGE LYTTON BULWER

*Written between
the Age of Thirteen and Fifteen*

was published by Messrs. Hatchard in the year 1820.

Probably no famous poet or novelist has ever derived from all his works put together a single moment of enjoyment comparable to the delicious sensations with which he first beheld his own manuscript in print. Every imaginative writer has some reason to recall his first publication with feelings akin to those which endear the recollection of a first love. To the author the book first published, as to the lover the face first loved, in early youth, differs ever afterwards from all others; for was it not the source of exquisite emotions which no subsequent experience in authorship, or love, can resemble or renew? Insignificant, commonplace, uncomely, it may have been to every eye but his own; but to him the first radiant apparition of it was

Clad in the beauty of a thousand stars.

And even the dim remembrance of that apparition is clothed by memory in

Golden exhalations from the dawn.

Such sensations must be all the more exciting when they are experienced at the age of seventeen; and the juvenile author of 'Ismael' was naturally reluctant to forego the luxury of publication when encouraged by his tutor to enjoy it. The following letter to his mother is characteristic.

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Ealing: April 2, 1820.

My dearest Mother,—I seize the earliest opportunity of writing to you, to express my hopes that you are now perfectly recovered; which, whenever you will favour me with a line expressing as much, will give me y^e greatest pleasure.

As I refrain from my daily walk to write to you, I shall have leisure to state my Reasons for wishing my Poems to be published; and can only say that, should they not meet with your approbation, I shall endeavour to think no more about it,—as, independent of the high idea I entertain of your Sense and Judgement, I shall always hope that my affection for you will prompt me to follow your advice.

In y^e first place, I must observe that I certainly intend publishing at some period of my life. Probably when I go to College. But it will be far more advantageous for me to publish *now*, as my extreme youth would be my Passport. For the World, which generally requires some external Recommendation to take up a Book, would be far more anxious to see poems (particularly tales in verse) written by one at so early a period, than if they were to make their appearance at a more matured age. Any faults *then* committed, would be noted and criticised; *now*, however, they would be overlooked. My Youth, like the shield of Ajax, will ward off those darts which, at a later age, can meet no considerable Resistance or Obstacle.

And, generally speaking, the Public Critics are very favourable to early writers. Dallas, in whose works there is certainly no peculiar Merit, is an instance of this.

Again, if I give productions to the public written at 20 or so, should they be disliked, no other work, however good, would afterwards be received. But, were I to publish *now*, should my book be unfavourably received, no detriment to a future publication would ensue. A Person would naturally say, 'However bad this Author writes now, still it is impossible to give a judgement what he may produce when his taste and style are refined and matured.' In the Law, or any other profession I may embrace, or even at College, it will be of the greatest assistance to me. It will give me a passport, not only to the best company (to which, independently of that, your connections and my rank would entitle me), but what is far more rare, and to me more valuable, the first literary society. When to these are added the Fame I might get, the fair Prospects it might, if successful, open to me, I think you will incline to my side, of a public printing being preferable to a private one. But, indeed, it

would be *almost private*, as the very few copies that are printed would be almost all circulated among our own acquaintance, and, should we change our opinions, it would be perfectly Optional whether we should print off Another Edition or let the whole affair go to sleep after the sale of the first.

I might suggest many other reasons to you for their Publishment, but they will most probably suggest themselves equally to y^rself. Should these remarks, however, not meet with your approbation, and should your superior judgement and knowledge of the world induce you to think the contrary, I shall submit without bestowing another thought upon the subject : knowing that, however averse to my Wishes, and destructive of my Hopes, it will be intended for my advantage. And, with every good and dutiful wish, I am, my dearest Mother,

Your most affectionate son,

E. G. L. BULWER.

On the subject of this letter Mrs. Bulwer Lytton appears to have addressed her son's tutor, Mr. Wallington, who thus replied :—

Ealing : April 13, 1820.

Dear Madam,—When the Person brought your first letter early on Wednesday morning, I was so engaged that I could not write in a manner that I thought would be satisfactory to you ; and therefore your Son, in his eagerness, wrote the Note you mention, and probably omitted to say that I was decidedly for their publication. I have written to Mr. Hatchard on the Subject, and you would have my letter to-day, had you not left Town. I have shewn the Poems to two intelligent friends of mine, who all agree that they are extraordinary productions for so young a mind, and who by all means recommend their publication. To suppose that the eye of Criticism will not find out imperfections, is what cannot be expected ; but the more candid cannot but be pleased with such early Specimens of poetical genius. They display talents rarely observable in an equal degree at such an age ; and breathe the language of Poetry, with an unusual degree of discretion in the application of it. In my Preface, my object was to meet objections that I know have been made to early publications of young authors, rather than to give my candid opinion of the Poems themselves. And in doing this, I cautiously avoided running out into general extravagant praise ; as Puffing in

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all directions I consider to be unworthy of an ingenuous mind, and generally subversive of y^e intended end. The character I have given is what I think they fairly merit; and it is such, I conceive, that an Author of much more mature years would be happy to have stamped upon his works. I can readily perceive, and indeed I have perceived it, that in the enthusiasm of affection which first productions naturally produce in a young and ardent mind, your Son might suppose that my Preface did not glow with a sufficient warmth of panegyric. But I explained to him the motives by w^h I was directed in saying what I did, and no more, and that I acted under the authority of a rule of Horace which your Son perfectly understands, and which, translated, is this—

‘One with a flash begins, and ends in smoke,
Another out of smoke brings glorious light,
And without raising expectation high,
Surprises us with dazzling miracles.’

With respect to the Dedication I always thought that if an Individual of Consequence could have been selected, it would have been a favourable circumstance: but as that was not to be done, without a good deal of trouble and previous application for permission, perhaps a Dedication to the public will appear more independent, and will avoid any suspicion of secret influence. The Passage you mention in the ‘Parnassus’ might naturally, on first reading it, give you the impression you remark. I have always considered these lines as the expression of a highly-wrought fancied grief, occasioned by interruptions of his favourite Muse, without y^e smallest reference to any other circumstance in his life. For how is it possible that any such thoughts could come across his mind, who has invariably received such uninterrupted marks of affection and kindness from you? I remain, Dear Madam,

Your obliged and faithful Servant

C. WALLINGTON.

The ‘passage in the Parnassus’ to which this letter makes reference, occurs at the conclusion of a little poem ‘written,’ says the boy-author, ‘at the desire of a lady who asked him for his opinion of our living poets in verse.’ The poem itself is a juvenile panegyric upon Scott and Campbell, with an amusingly solemn reproof to Byron for the immorality of his

Muse, and a few slight sketches of the boy's impressions about other contemporary poets; amongst them Moore, who

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Deserts Parnassus to pursue a fly,

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and Wordsworth,

—who followed Homer's rule

In every line to study Nature's school;

For, as his heroes drive the waggon, so

Rustic and rude his humble verses flow.

The lines which his mother appears, from Mr. Wallington's letter, to have suspected might apply to woes originating in her own conduct to the sufferer, obviously refer to a memorable episode described at large by my father in the eighth chapter of this book of his reminiscences. Standing

On the green banks *that shade Brent's humble flood,*

Musing o'er pleasures past and scenes to be,

he exclaims—

Yes! though the hand of time has scarcely spread

His roseate wreath of youth around my head,

Yet I have felt how keen the piercing dart

That grief can give to lacerate the heart.

The 'dart' in this instance had inflicted a wound lasting in some of its effects, and, when the verses were written, the bitterness of the 'grief' had not reached its climax. But in general the pretensions of Youth are preposterous. Gifted with superabundant health, a boundless prospect, and a freshness of sensation which the most miserly of Epicurean millionnaires would thankfully purchase with more than half his fortune, if he could,—that sublimest of egotists, a young man of genius, is seldom moved to write verses about himself except for the purpose of representing the interesting subject of them as the premature victim of fate's fiercest persecution, blighted before his time by some transcendent experience of withering affliction, and sickened with the hollowness and insufficiency of human life under its happiest conditions. Poor Age, thankful

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for small mercies, gratefully employs its waning powers in expatiating on the benevolence of Providence, and the consolations of sorrow and sickness. But then, as Dr. Johnson observed, men write books to prove that poverty is a blessing; no one has thought it worth while to be at the pains of proving the blessing of wealth.

The verses in 'Ismael and other Poems' have no literary value. Yet, with all its defects of immaturity, there is much in the little book that indicates a character precociously developed, and by no means commonplace. The poems are preceded by a preface from the pen of that amiable pedant, Mr. Wallington, under the appropriate pseudonym of Philomousos. 'To court applause by oblique dexterity,' says the pedagogue, 'or, without a due sense of respect for public opinion, impertinently to advance pretensions, is equally revolting to the feelings of an ingenuous mind. But, as genius and a desire of fame are naturally allied, and perhaps the former never existed without the latter, will not the youthful adventurer be justified in endeavouring to stand well in the opinion of the judicious and discerning, by disseminating his works among them—under a confidence that the more candid will be pleased with the first blossoms of poetical talent, not only as the fruits of industry, but as presages in maturer years of more elevated titles to distinction?' And, after a characteristically stately survey of merits, 'which, though not, *perhaps*, of that superior kind which will find a place among the first orders of poetry, are yet marked throughout by the spirit of virtuous sensibility, vigour of fancy, and that characteristic manner which always accompanies strong power of invention,' he concludes with the expression of his hope that 'the author, when his taste is more matured, will perfect the produce of his youthful industry, and augment the stores of a mind formed by nature to accumulate and decorate them. It is only left for me to say,' he adds, 'his saltem accumulem donis. Φιλόμωσος.'

The preceptor's preface is followed by a shorter one from his pupil, in the usual apologetic style. The poems, he says, which his friends have encouraged him to publish, 'were written when I was but a child. They were the first faint dawnings of poetic enthusiasm: and that sense of integrity which should accompany every action, prevented my now altering them in any *material* respect. I expressly state the age at which they were written, and I think it a duty to the public that they should actually *be* written at that age.¹ For the same reason, therefore, and not from any arrogant vanity, I have been particularly careful that no other hand should polish or improve them.' Of the most ambitious of these juvenile essays in verse he says: 'It was begun in a moment of enthusiasm; it was continued from a deep interest in the undertaking, and,' he adds characteristically, 'it was completed from a *dislike I have always entertained to leave anything unfinished.*' Then comes the Dedication, which is not without a retrospective interest.

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TO WHOM SHOULD A YOUNG, AND TIMID
COMPETITOR FOR PUBLIC REPUTATION,
DEDICATE HIS ATTEMPTS,
BUT TO
A BRITISH PUBLIC?

TO THAT PUBLIC, WHO HAVE ALWAYS
BEEN THE FOSTERERS OF INDUSTRY, OR GENIUS,
WHO HAVE ALWAYS LOOKED FORWARD FROM
THE IMPERFECTIONS OF YOUTH,
TO THE
FRUITS OF MATURITY.

IT IS TO THAT GENEROUS PUBLIC,
THAT HE NOW COMMITS HIS HOPES AND HIS FEARS.

IT IS TO THAT GENEROUS PUBLIC,
THAT HE NOW OFFERS HIS
JUVENILE EFFORTS,
FOR THEIR APPLAUSE!

[¹ Owing to the circumstances already explained, however, in the few remarks prefixed to my father's Autobiography, his age was erroneously stated. 'Ismael' was written between the ages of fourteen and sixteen.—L.]

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The publication of this little book was eventful to the boyhood of its writer. For it brought him at once into enlarged contact with minds maturer than his own, and procured for him an acquaintance, curiously intimate for one so young, with some remarkable persons. The result, perhaps, was not of unmixed benefit to a character which needed less than that of most young men so powerful a stimulant to youthful vanity. But in some characters such vanity is a strong incentive to the exertions that discipline and redeem it from self-conceit. The first of the 'other poems' published with 'Ismael' was an address 'To WALTER SCOTT, Esq.; *written at thirteen years old.*' And this address was acknowledged by Scott in the following letter :—

Sir Walter Scott requests the favour of Mr. Hatchard, to transmit his thanks to the author of 'Ismael' and to assure Mr. Bulwer he is much obliged to him for his attention, and for the pleasure he has received from his poems.

Jermyn Street, Saturday.'

CHAPTER VI.

*(Illustrative.)*LETTERS TO A FELLOW-PUPIL. 1820. *Æt.* 16-17.

[THE premature social activity and independence of the life which, while still in his teens, the boy author of 'Ismael' was already leading, and its effects upon his mind and character, are reflected in the style of the following letters addressed by him, at this time, to one of his fellow-pupils at Ealing. I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. Drake Garrard¹ for permission to include these letters in the present narrative of the early years of his old friend and neighbour; and I do so in the belief that there is a considerable biographical interest in the marked contrast they present, as regards maturity of thought and expression, to those written by the same hand, only two years earlier, from Dr. Hooker's. They certainly attest the fidelity of the portrait painted by my father himself of his boyhood at the age of seventeen.²

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[¹ Of Lama Park, Herts.—L.]

[² In a letter written from Ealing to another of his fellow-pupils there, my father mentions that he had been suffering great pain from an earache. To frequent and severe recurrence of that pain he was subject till middle age, and his public and social life was greatly affected by the deafness it induced. When he was about forty, an abscess revealed itself in the ear from which he had thus suffered ever since the age of sixteen. He was then told by the aurists that any attempt to stop the discharge from this abscess might prove fatal. In his seventieth year, after an exceedingly painful and prolonged attack of earache, the discharge stopped of its own accord, and a few days after he was dead. Truly his life has been called an incurable disease. In these letters their young writer (overflowing with life and energy) predicts his future fame. But at that very moment nature was predicting his death.—L.]

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Edward Bulwer to Drake Garrard (an. æt. 16).

Ealing: February 21, 1820.

Dear Drake,—I answer yours to shew that if I am an unenterprising correspondent I am at least a punctual one; and in this respect I set you an excellent example, which indeed you are rather in want of. For your epistles come 'like angels visits, few and far between.' I will begin by answering your interrogative 'Have you read "Kenilworth"?' in the negative. Nor do I know when I shall, since it is in such great request that my question at those emporia of Lady's science ycleped Circulating Libraries 'Is "Kenilworth" at home?' is always answered by 'No, Sir, no.' I think all your old associates here are gone, except West and Gore, and we have, with the exception of one named Schomberg, who is just come and who is a devilish nice fellow, lost by the exchange.¹ But I do not care much about it, since I leave myself on Lady Day. Do you know a fellow named Slade at Westminster? And do you know another named Musgrove? I have a slight, but very slight, acquaintance with both.

I have just heard that Mrs. Osbaldiston is dead; and, conceiving you to be interested in the news, I communicate it to you! I was in town the greatest part of last Christmas, and found it very dull, as it was so empty. But when I say empty, I speak comparatively; since the immense numbers of all ranks which populate London, that 'Beast with many heads,' are very slightly considered and spoken of when I say town is empty. And I think it is rather singular that the beings above all the rest most insignificant and useless should constitute the thinning or fullness of the metropolis. I mean what Byron calls 'the Insects of Pleasure.' Do you not think I have turned this sentence into a very neat period? I think myself it was very Edgeworthian! But do not be surprised at it; since I intend to have my letters published after my death, like every other great man. And I hope therefore you will take the

[¹ Mention is made of him in my father's autobiographical memoranda, as of a youth whose character he intended to describe. I presume therefore that he must have been more or less influenced or impressed in boyhood by his intercourse with this young man. But the intercourse does not appear to have been continued in after life.—L.]

hint and not destroy either by fire or sword my epistles. It would be quite a profanation to see paper bearing the hieroglyphics of my handwriting embracing the tall and lily form of a tallow candle, or covered with the grease of half a pound of butter. And now having, the Devil knows how, filled up three sides, I will take my leave of you for the present by saying that I am yours very truly,

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E. G. LYTTON BULWER.

The Same to the Same (an. æt. 16).

5, Upper Seymour Street: April 2, 1820.

Dear Drake,—I called at your house in Gloucester Place the other day, but was not so lucky as to find you at Home. I therefore trouble you with a few lines, as I do not know where to call upon you at Westminster. I hope you like your situation there, and that you have now past the somewhat tremendous ordeal of fagging. I know enough of your disposition to assert that you will surmount those difficulties to which a public school is exposed far more easily than most others in your situation. As for your old friend Wallington, he and his establishment are exactly the same as when you left; except, indeed, that we have lost three of your old friends—namely, Stephens, Sneyd and Collard. The latter is, I am sorry to say, very ill, and obliged to go down to the sea for change of air and the benefit of bathing. His complaint is consumptive.

I have been very busy this last month or two preparing a volume of Poems for publication which, however, come out to-morrow (Friday) at Hatchard's, Piccadilly, and your perusal and approbation will oblige me much. I have put my name to them, so you may ask for Bulwer's 'Ismael, an Oriental Tale, with other Poems.' I believe you are a very miscellaneous and pretty deep reader.

Your old classfellow West is likely to be a near neighbour of ours, as he talks of getting a house in Portman Square. I believe your holidays are in May, when I shall hope to have the pleasure of seeing you. If you have leisure to favour me with a line, direct to me at Wallington's, where I think of staying for some short time longer. You will pardon this wretched scrawl, and believe me to be yours very sincerely,

E. G. LYTTON.

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The Same to the Same (an. et. 17).

Knebworth Park : September 15, 1820.

You tell me, my dear Drake, to write to you at Leamington. But as you, in the first place, did not give me your address there, and, secondly, as I had nothing to say which was worth travelling such a distance, I have delayed till now. You will not therefore, I hope, accuse me of negligence in deferring my epistle till I imagined you had returned either to Gloucester Place or to Westminster.

I dined with my brother at General Roper's the other day—your tenant at Lama. I had not seen your place for a long time, and was much pleased with it. The grounds are in my opinion very pretty, and the house equally so; though, as I only saw two rooms I can form no opinion as to its size. The Ropers are, I understand, extremely rich, and seem to live in great style. They have completely Londonised the rooms by those little nick-nacks which you see nowhere but in Town. Their only son is just of age and, *mirabile dictu*, without a foot of land in the county has set up for a candidate at St. Albans. What venal, what infamous, elections are those of boroughs! they are bought and sold like cattle, and the Guardian of our laws, the Rectifier of the mistakes of the nation, the Representative of the Majesty of the People, is placed in our senate, either as a Tool to be employed by those who obtain him the office, or by an abominable pecuniary contract enters (himself in either way a mercenary and base character) to that *sanctum sanc-torum* of Britain, her Parliament.¹

I hope you were amused at Leamington. Pray did you meet a Mrs. Porter, the late Bishop of Cloyne's 'lady'? She went there just before you.

I am now at Knebworth. I shall continue there about a fortnight, and shall be happy to hear from you whenever it is agreeable to yourself; and am, Dear Drake, yours very sincerely,

E. BULWER.]

[¹ It will be seen from this letter that the opinions, or at any rate the sentiments, with which my father entered Parliament as an ardent supporter of the Reform Bill of 1832, were formed at that early and innocent age which is, without knowing it, the Golden Age it dreams of. Young men of generous spirit confidently invest the magnificent moral capital of youth in taking out patents for the improvement of the creation which they are afterwards constrained, and often content, to part with upon very moderate terms.—L.]

CHAPTER VII.

(Illustrative.)

LETTERS FROM ELDER FRIENDS. 1820. Æt. 16-17.

[THE preceding correspondence illustrates the intercourse between Mr. Wallington's pupil and one of his young contemporaries at Ealing. The terms on which he was then in correspondence with elder persons, men and women, and the impressions made upon their minds by 'young Mr. Bulwer,' find striking illustration in the letters addressed to him at this time, and during the following year (1820-21), both by Dr. Parr and by the Mrs. Porter spoken of in the last letter to his friend Drake Garrard. This lady was the widow of 'the erudite Bishop of Cloyne,' mentioned by my father in the second chapter of his Autobiography: and he says of her in the reminiscences already referred to (Book II. chap. i.), 'I think she must have known my father. She was very friendly to me on my precocious entrance into society.' This friendliness is warmly expressed in the following letters.

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Mrs. Porter to Edward Bulwer.

Leamington, Warwickshire: December 24, 1820.

My dear young and amiable friend,—You quote Pope, then why not I, when his verse may be so well applied?

'Praise from *thy* lips 'tis mine with joy to boast.
He best can give it who deserves it most.'

I am truly sorry for the cause of your absence from Knebworth; but, were it the means of bringing you here, I should say there

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comes 'good out of evil.' Excuse a proverb. Never let me hear you say again that time hangs heavy on your hands. A mind like yours—a head and heart like yours—must always find employment, whether London be full or empty. Remember me to *your* good mother and *my* good friend. And of yourself what shall I say? Believe that in all places I shall ever remain your most sincere and true,

MARY PORTER.

P.S. When do you leave your Tutor? Are you going into the army? Let me hear from you soon, if you please. But I am half afraid of writing to you because I know your genius, and my own stupidity. Make allowances for your friend. It is a curious thing that I should have thought so much of you lately, and that your charming, poetic, welcome letter should have come just at this time. Adieu.

The Same to the Same.

Leamington: January 14, 1821.

My dear friend,—Again I have to thank you. Your letter was received, read, and, as usual, much admired. Wherever I am, it shall not be *my* fault if we do not *converse* with each other. If I intrude too much upon your time, be honest and say so. I am glad you do not follow the drum, both because it would have pained the best of mothers, and because your head is fit for greater things. I think you wrong yourself by saying you are not *submissive*, and therefore unfit for the Army, where subordination is required. Tell me what you are *not* fit for; and never apologise for your style of writing. I like to hear of your plans in life; and the more you tell me of yourself, the more I shall be inclined to believe that you regard me as your sincere friend. May many seasons roll over your head, with sorrows unknown; may you be blessed with every happiness you so well deserve; and lastly, my dear young friend, may you ever think of me as I think of you. Let not time, or the pleasures of the young and gay, ever cause you to drop the friendship of your sincere

MARY PORTER.

The Same to the Same.

Leamington: January 15, 1821.

Can you really suppose me interested in your concerns? Ever entertain that thought. It is only doing me justice. Heaven only

knows when we shall meet. Perhaps I shall be in town for a short time, at the end of May. But you have so made me wish to be what you say *I am*, that in your presence I shall be quite *honteuse*, and you will think me the stupidest creature in the world. I fear you have a bad opinion of women, and think they are fond of flattery. I must own it is delightful to be thought well of by those we esteem. But then, my good young friend, when you write, you forget to whom you are writing. You show your own power at the expense of your sincere friend. Nevertheless write to me by return of post.

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Your very sincere M. P.

But the tone of Dr. Parr's letters is still more remarkable.

Samuel Parr to Edward Bulwer.

Hatton: February 9, 1821.

Dear Sir,—Permit me to offer you the tribute of my praise for the very elegant letter you have lately written to me, and of my thanks for the honour you have conferred upon me by offering to dedicate to me your poems. I feel strong and triumphant anticipations of the just recognition of their excellence; and you will excuse me for confessing that, as a continual writer and a man of letters, I should derive even peculiar satisfaction from the appreciation of such a writer, and such a man, as I believe you to be. And now, dear Sir, let me turn to some interesting topics. When I rambled into Norfolk, and for nearly seven years while I resided at Pinner, it was my good fortune often to visit your grandfather, Mr. Bulwer, at his old and venerable mansion. He was not only a studious man, he was also the best bred, as well as the best informed, country gentleman in Norfolk. But you have another, and yet stronger, claim upon my attention. My acquaintance with Richard Warburton Lytton began when he was a boy at Harrow School. It continued for more than thirty years. His singularities were numerous; but his erudition was stupendous. He visited me in Middlesex, and spent nearly three weeks with me at Hatton. I have spent weeks and months with him at Bath, and we were often together at Knebworth. He consulted me frequently on subjects of the highest importance; and, together with the late Sir William Jones, I was selected by him as guardian to your mother. I also knew Sir Paul Jodrell and Richard Jodrell; and I

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mention these circumstances to show you how lively an interest I felt in welcoming my correspondent when I saw at the end of his letter 'E. G. Lytton Bulwer.' Be assured that I will take proper measures for you to present your MS. with your own hands to Her Majesty, and that I shall convey to her my opinion of the writer. Now, Mr. Bulwer, let me write to you with my wonted plainness. Let not the summer pass away without your coming to see me at my Parsonage. My books will delight you. And here let me express my sorrow that the library of Mr. Lytton was sold, when there was in store a grandson so able to use it. I often see our amiable friend, Mrs. Porter, and our conversation has lately turned upon you. If I should visit the capital at the commencement of the year, depend upon it I shall then pay my personal compliments to you. I beg of you to write, and direct your next letter to me at Dr. J. Johnstone's, Temple, near Birmingham. I go there on Monday next. With best wishes to you and your mother, I have the honour to subscribe myself, dear Sir,

Your faithful and obedient humble Servant,

SAMUEL PARR.

The Same to the Same.

Hatton: March 17, 1821.

Dear Mr. Bulwer,—I shall read with the greatest attention any manuscript which you may choose to lay before me; and, if you were better acquainted with the character of my mind, you would expect a plain declaration of my real opinion. I well remember the large old house at Knebworth, and the rows of stag-horns which hang up in the hall. I heard some time ago that the house had been nearly pulled down, and I hope the new edifice is capacious as well as elegant. Assure Mrs. Bulwer of my esteem and unfeigned good will. Time softens the harsher features of things and persons; and I am convinced that, in talking of events which passed long ago, we should sometimes be amused, and sometimes interested. Send me your MS. and believe me, dear Sir, with a just and assured sense of the intellectual powers with which you have been blessed,

Your well-wisher and obedient Servant,

S. PARR.

The Same to the Same.

Hatton: March 27, 1821.

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Dear and excellent Mr. Bulwer,—I am delighted with the elegant language and vigorous spirit of your letter. I shall read the MS. with great attention, and, with my wonted fidelity, I shall tell you my opinion of it. If you prefer addressing your Dedication to me rather than to Lord Holland, you have my entire assent. To be sure, dear Sir, I must feel some little regret that so enlightened and honourable a man as yourself should not quite agree with me in politics. But this is my situation with other wise and virtuous men. We esteem and confide in one another. We put no invidious construction upon motives. We are ready to discharge, the one to the other, all the lovely and useful duties of private life; and upon public affairs we mean well to our country. God bless you. Do not fail to present my best respects to your mother. I am, dear Sir, most sincerely,

Your well-wisher and obedient humble Servant,

S. PARR.

The Same to the Same.

Hatton: April 26, 1821.

Dear Mr. Bulwer,—I dictate this from a couch to a friendly scribe. I have this morning arranged all the letters with which you have honoured me; and I assure you that the impression they have made upon my mind can do no discredit to your learning, to your taste, to your ingenuity, and, above all, to the moral character of your mind. I am proud of such a correspondent; and, if we lived nearer to each other, I should expect to be very happy indeed in such a friend.

Mr. Bulwer, I mean to preserve your letters, and, before I dictate one more sentence, I will put them together. I shall enclose them in a strong envelope, and concisely but significantly write my opinion on their value.

This promise has just been performed by my Oxonian scribe and myself; and now I shall go on with my letter.

I have read your poems very attentively. I have ventured to mark every passage I wish you to reconsider, and I rejoice that you will have full time for revisal, correction, and decoration. Really, when I think of your youth, my delight is mingled with

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astonishment at your intellectual powers. And, although in our politics we differ widely, yet I feel a pure, and I had almost said a holy, satisfaction in contemplating the moral properties of your mind. It is quite wonderful that such a habit of observation has been formed, and such a rich store of its fruits collected and made ready for use, at your time of life. There are many vestiges of your reading in classical authors ; but you have taken a wider range than is generally taken by young men : and there is a secret charm pervading all your writing, which I trace not only to your discernment but also to your sensibility. But pray, dear Sir, when you speak of Burke and the Three, tell the reader who the three were. And surely in the ' Illustrious Friend ' you will find ample materials for one or two couplets ; but no more.

I differ from you, and from many of my contemporaries, upon the poetical merits of Walter Scott. Lord Byron stands on the highest pinnacle in my estimation : and Moore, whom you admire, deserves *in secundis consistere*. Crabbe only can be the rival for the second place. I see great excellence, *sometimes*, in Southey ; and there are *parts* in the writings of Campbell which lead me to consider him as a Poet.

Increase your store of poetical imagery. Write whenever you find yourself disposed to write : but collect the whole force of self-command, and let not the *limæ labor et mora* discourage you. The largest collection of modern Latin Poets I ever saw is in my own possession ; and, if you lived near me, I should often set you a long, but most useful and delightful task in reading them. Remember, dear Sir, how much Milton and Gray were indebted to their learning : and you may be sure that Pope drew very largely from sources little known. I am, dear Sir, truly your well-wisher, your admirer, and

Your obedient, humble Servant,

S. PARR.

P.S.—BE AMBITIOUS !

And this letter was written by a man of sixty-four to a boy of seventeen.]

CHAPTER VIII.

(Autobiographical.)

FIRST LOVE. 1820. Æt. 17.

VAGUE, wild beatings of the heart, how sorrowfully I now recall you! I longed for some one to love; I cared not whom. There was a pretty village girl, in a cottage near the house of Mr. Wallington, often seen plaiting straw by the threshold. To her I gave a whole romance—never spoken. For I never once uttered a word to her; but I used to pass by the door, and at length she noticed me, and smiled and blushed when I passed. If I saw her alone, I looked on her with longing tenderness; but if ever I saw a young peasant loitering near, I looked such indignant daggers! I was terribly jealous of her, and fancied I had a right to be so. Nay, by degrees, from the magnetism, I suppose, that one heart conveys to another, she seemed to accord me that right. For when I looked thus angry, she replied by a deprecatory, sorrowful look; and I have even seen the tears in her eyes. Still we never spoke. She was, no doubt, inexperienced and innocent, and never gave me an opportunity. And certainly I never made one. Nay, I don't think I desired it. The illusion was worth more than any reality. This lasted a whole summer. The next summer, alas! I found elsewhere both reality and illusion. A brief tale of true passion, and of great sorrow: a tale never to be told. But, when that tragedy was over, I felt myself changed for life. Henceforth melancholy became an essential part of my being; henceforth I contracted the

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disposition to be alone and to brood. I attained to the power of concentrating the sources of joy and sorrow in myself. My constitution was materially altered. It was long before I knew again the high animal spirits which delight in wild sport and physical action. Till then I had been irascible, combative, rash, foolhardy. Afterwards, my temper grew more soft and gentle, and my courage was rather the result of pride and jealous honour than the fearless instinct that rejoiced in danger. My ambition, too, became greatly subdued; nor did it ever return to what it was in boyhood.





BANKS OF THE BRENT NEAR EALING.

CHAPTER IX.

*(Illustrative.)*LOVE STORY CONTINUED. 1820. *Æt.* 17.

[In the preceding chapter my father says that 'the brief tale of true passion and great sorrow' was never to be told.

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Never told completely, but revealed in fragments: and of its history, till the happy days had reached their sudden close, I have found among his papers a very beautiful and touching record; which, though undated, appears to have been written at an early period of his literary career.

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The country around the village in which my good preceptor resided was rural enough for a place so near the metropolis. A walk of somewhat less than a mile, through lanes that were themselves retired and lonely, led to green sequestered meadows, through which the humble Brent crept along its snake-like way. O God! how palpably, even in hours the least friendly to remembrance, there rises before my eyes, when I close them, that singular dwarfed tree which overshadowed the little stream, throwing its boughs half way to the opposite margin! I wonder if it still survives. I dare not revisit that spot. And there we were wont to meet (poor children that we were!), thinking not of the world we had scarce entered; dreaming not of fate and chance; reasoning not on what was to come; full only of our first-born, our ineffable love. Along the quiet road between Ealing and Castlebar, the lodge gates stood (perhaps they are still standing), which led to the grounds of a villa once occupied by the Duke of Kent.¹ To the right of those gates, as you

[¹ The old gates still stand, but no longer in their old place. The grounds formerly belonging to the Duke of Kent's villa have long ago been partitioned and sold in lots to enterprising builders. The villa itself has been pulled down. In its place are other smaller villas, each with a little pleasure-ground of its

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approached them from the common, was a path. Through two or three fields, as undisturbed and lonely as if they lay in the heart of some solitary land far from any human neighbourhood, this path conducted to the banks of the little rivulet, overshadowed here and there by blossoming shrubs and crooked pollards of fantastic shape. Along that path once sped the happiest steps that ever bore a boy's heart to the object of its first innocent worship.

She was one or two years older than I. She had the sweetest face, the gentlest temper ever given to girlhood. The sort of love we felt for each other I cannot describe. It was so unlike the love of grown-up people; so pure that not one wrong thought ever crossed it, and yet so passionate that never again have I felt, nor ever again can I feel, any emotion comparable to the intensity of its tumultuous tenderness.

It was then summer. She did not live in the immediate neighbourhood of those pleasant fields which were our place of daily meeting. But, though she was well born, very peculiar circumstances had created for her a liberty almost equal to my own. We were too much children, both of us, to talk in set phrase of marriage. But we believed, with our whole hearts and souls, that we were born for each other, and that nothing could ever separate us. And so we had no care for the future. That was the warmest and the brightest summer I ever knew in this country. I can remember none like it. The sky smiled and glowed on us as if it also were full of love. At the Duke's lodge the gardener used to sell fruit. So there, as I passed it, I made my purchases for our little feasts, and, as I was

own, comprising some portion of the old domain. Of these, the largest and handsomest now belongs to a gentleman named Gibbon, who is, I believe, a solicitor. This information I (the first pilgrim to a spot hallowed for me by the recollections here recorded) received from that gentleman's gardener, who obligingly conducted me over the grounds of the Villa Gibbon; and, in reply to my inquiries, pointed out to me the place to which the old iron gates have been transferred from another part of them. The present stables are, I believe, a remnant of the old ones; and considerable portions of the old brick wall which formerly surrounded the Duke's kitchen-garden (many also of the old fruit-trees) are still standing. Nothing else is left to indicate the forgotten seat of that brief but boundless empire, a boy's first love. The ducal domain is no more; and the name of Gibbon is appropriately associated with the decline and fall of it. Of the 'green sequestered meadows,' some remain: still green, but no longer sequestered. They are now appropriated to the rifle practice of the neighbouring volunteer corps, and much frequented in summer by urchin bathers and fishers in the waters of the Brent, still flowing through them between banks covered with blossoming shrubs and overshadowed here and there by the branches of dwarf trees.—L.]

always first upon the spot, I spread them out on the grass, where the stream grew darker, under the boughs of that old dwarf tree.

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When I saw her at a distance my heart beat so violently that I could not breathe without a painful effort. But the moment I heard her voice I was calm. That voice produced, throughout my whole frame, a strange sensation of delicious repose. The whole universe seemed hushed by it into a holy stillness. Comparing what I felt then with all I have felt since, I cannot say if it was real love. Perhaps not. I think it was something infinitely happier and less earthly. Till that time, my spirits had been high and my constitutional gaiety almost turbulent. But when I sat beside her, or looked into her soft melancholy face, or when I thought of it in absence, the tears stood in my eyes, I knew not why. I am not sure that she was what others would call handsome. Often now I see faces that seem to me beautiful, and people smile at me when I say so. But, looking close into my impressions of them, I perceive it was a trait, a look, an air, like hers, that charmed me with them; and my only notion of beauty is something that resembles her.

No one ever suspected our meetings, nor even, I believe, our acquaintanceship. I had no confidant in any of my companions. I was well with all, but intimate with none. And the poor girl had no sister, no mother, no friend, I believe, but me. I think it was her desolate state, in its contrast to my own happy home, and ardent hopes, and bright prospects, that first drew me to her. I never breathed her name to a human being. How thankful I am now for my silence! Sweet saint, *your* name, at least, shall never be exposed to the deliberate malignity, the low ribaldry that have so relentlessly assailed my own. If ever I fulfil the hopes I once cherished; if ever I outlive my foes and silence their atrocious slanders; if ever the time should come when your memory will not be reviled because it is dear to me and sacred; when none are left to hate you for the love you gave me, and from those who will have known you only as its sinless martyr, the tale of your long, unrecorded sufferings, may win perhaps tears softer and less bitter than my own; then, if ever, but never till then, shall that tale be told.

The last time we met was at evening, a little before sunset. I had walked to London in the morning, to buy her a book which she had wished to read. I had not written my name on the title-page, but I said, half-jealously, as I gave it to her, 'You will never lend it to anyone? never give it away?'

She shook her head, and smiled sadly; and then after a little

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pause, she said, without answering my question, 'It will talk to me when you are gone.'

So then, for the first time, we began to speak gravely of the future. But the more we discussed it, the more disquieted we became. And it ended with the old phrase, 'We shall meet to-morrow.'

The sun had set, and it was already dark. I could scarcely distinguish her features, as I turned to depart. But when I had left the spot some little way behind me, looking back to it I could see that she was still standing there. So I turned and rejoined her. She was weeping. Yet she had *then* no knowledge of what was to happen, and she could not say why she wept. I was unable to comfort her, for I shared (though in a less degree) her own forebodings. But I covered her hands with my tears and kisses, till at last she drew them away from my grasp, placed them on my head as I half knelt before her, said in half-choked accents 'God bless you!' and hurried away.

It was my turn then to linger on the spot. I cried out 'To-morrow! to-morrow we shall meet as before!' My voice came back to me without an answer, and we never met again. Never, never.

The next day she came not, nor the next. Then I learned that she was gone. What had happened I cannot relate. Some months afterwards there came a letter. Not from her. She was married. She, whose heart, whose soul, whose every thought and feeling, all were mine to the last, she who never spared even a dream to another,—lost, lost to me for ever!

It does not seem to have occurred to my father, either at the time or afterwards, that the poor girl's dejection throughout the final meeting was caused by something much stronger than a presentiment. Her evasive reply to the request that she would never lend the book he gave her (a request which in her altered circumstances she might have no power to fulfil), her lingering to weep on the spot where they had parted, and the sudden spasmodic effort with which she tore herself away from her lover's ebullitions of feeling—all indicate plainly that she was consciously bidding him a last farewell. Their interviews had probably become known to her father, and he must have

peremptorily interfered to put an end to an apparently hopeless attachment. The sequel is only told in outline. She was forced into a marriage against which her heart protested. For three years, in obedience to duty, she strove to smother the love which consumed her; and, when she sank under the conflict, and death was about to release her from the obligations of marriage and life itself, she wrote a letter to my father with her dying hand, informed him of the suffering through which she had passed, and of her unconquerable devotion to him, and intimated a wish that he should visit her grave. Of his pilgrimage to that spot (somewhere in the neighbourhood of Ulleswater) in the summer of 1824, we have the account further on. 'I think,' he says in the manuscript printed above, 'it was her desolate state that first drew me to her.' And it was probably a surviving influence of this early association of love with the sentiment of pity which, in all his subsequent intercourse with women, disposed him to find in a woman's apparent need of his protection the most seductive of all her attractions. That influence, as will afterwards be seen, was one of the leading motives of his marriage; and, throughout the long practical widowhood of his after life, it combined with other dispositions to isolate him more and more from the society of all who were not to some extent dependent on his care or his support.

The impression left on my father by this early 'phantom of delight' was indelible, and coloured the whole of his life. He believed that, far beyond all other influences, it shaped his character, and it never ceased to haunt his memory. Allusions to it are constantly recurring in his published works; and in none of them is it more prominent than in the last of all. 'I would give your weight in gold to possess you once more,' he says, in his mature years, of the desk on which he wrote at Mr. Wallington's his 'first outpourings of love.' 'Satirist and politician though I be, I think I should never write a harsh or ungentle line were you once more the com-

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panion of my studies.' The words were not a passing sentiment. The magic power of the association was in the gentle girl who subdued everything he connected with her into the likeness of herself.

The spell she laid upon him comes out again in the letters wherein 'Falkland' confides to 'Monkton' the recollections of his boyhood :—

When I left Dr. — I was sent to a private tutor. It was during that time that—but what then befel me is for no living ear ! The characters of that history are engraven on my heart in letters of fire : but it is a language none but myself have the authority to read. It is enough for the purpose of my confessions that the events of that period were connected with the first awakening of the most powerful of human passions ; and that, whatever their commencement, their end was despair. And she, the object of that love—the only being who ever possessed the secret and the spell of my nature—her life was the bitterness and the fever of a troubled heart, her rest is the grave. That attachment was not so much a single event as the first link in a long chain coiled around my heart. It was after the first violent grief produced by it that I began to apply with earnestness to books. From the moment in which the buoyancy of my spirit was first broken by real anguish, the losses of the *heart* were repaired by the experience of the *mind*. I passed at once, like Melmoth, from youth to age.—'Falkland,' pp. 15-19.

It was she who inspired the following passage in one of his earliest essays :—

'My lost, my buried, my unforgotten ! You, whom I knew in the first fresh years of life—you, who were snatched from me before one leaf of the Summer of Youth and of love was withered—you, over whose grave, yet a boy, I wept away half the softness of my soul,—now that I know the eternal workings of the world, and the destiny of all human ties, I rejoice that you are no more !—that custom never dulled the music of your voice, the pathos and the magic of your sweet eyes—that the halo of a dream was round you to the last ! Had you survived till now, we should have survived—not our love, indeed—but all that renders love most divine—the rapt and wild idolatry that scarce imagined it adored a mortal

thing of frailty and of change—the exaggerated, the measureless, credulity in the faith, the virtues, of each other, that almost made us what it believed, in our desire not to fall short of the god-like standard by which we were raised in our mutual vision above the children of earth. All this—how long since would it have passed away! our love would have fallen into 'the portion of weeds and worn-out faces,' which is the lot of all who love. As it is, I can transport myself from every earthly disappointment when I recur to you! On your image there rests no shadow of a shade! In my hours of sickness—in the darkness of despondency—in the fever of petty cares, and all the terrors of the future—you glide before me in your fresh youth, and with your tender smile—for from you never came the harsh word or the wronging thought. In all that I recall of you there is not one memory which I would forget. Death is the great treasure-house of Love. There, lies buried the real wealth of passion and of youth; there, the heart, once so prodigal, now grown the miser, turns to contemplate the hoards it has hidden from the world. Henceforth it is but the common and petty coins of affection, that it wastes on the uses and things of life.—Essay 'On the Want of Sympathy,' republished in 'The Student,' 1882.

The same master thought which he has here expressed in prose, he embodied later in verse; and in these stanzas from 'King Arthur' it is still apparent that the 'golden holiday' on the banks of the Brent had lost none of its enchantment:—

'Two loves, and both divine and pure, there are.

One by the rooftree takes its root for ever:

Nor tempests rend nor changeful seasons mar:

It clings the stronger for the storm's endeavour.

Beneath its shade the wayworn find their rest,

And in its boughs the cushat builds her nest.

But one more frail, in that more prized perchance

Bends its rich blossoms over lonely streams

By the untrodden ways of wild Romance,

On earth's far confines, like the Tree of Dreams.*

Few find the path. O linger ye that find.

'Tis lost for ever when 'tis left behind.

* 'In medio ramos,' &c.—Virgil, vi. 282.

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O the short spring ! the eternal winter ! All,
Branch, stem, all shatter'd ! fragile as the bloom !
Yet this the love it charms us to recall :
Life's golden holiday before the tomb.
Yea, *this* the love which age again lives o'er,
And hears the heart beat loud with youth once more.

And this love the author's own age did, in memory, 'again live o'er.' For to the love episode in 'Kenelm Chillingly' (the last, and yet, in that part of it, perhaps one of the freshest and youngest of his works) the recollections of the old man transferred all that his boyhood had bequeathed to them of the ineffaceable impressions made upon his inner life by the enduring potency of his first love.]

CHAPTER X.

*(Autobiographical.)*LIFE AT ST. LAWRENCE. 1821. *Æt.* 18.

It had been a subject of discussion between my mother and Mr. Wallington whether Oxford or Cambridge should be the University selected for the completion of my academical career. Mr. Wallington, of course, strongly advised Oxford, and my mother at first seemed so inclined. For myself, at the time when my choice might have turned the scale, I was wholly indifferent. I was wrapped in my own secret grief, and the future had no place in my thoughts. My mother did not then comprehend the state in which I was, body and mind. To her I seemed sullen and ungrateful; and perhaps it was because she thought that my tutor had failed to render me more amiable, that she suddenly discarded his advice, and resolved that I should go to Cambridge. This was a great mistake. My studies had not been directed to the abstract sciences, which at that day were the principal avenues to distinction at the University thus selected. I did not know even the elements of mathematics. It was resolved to send me to the house of a Cambridge man, to teach me Algebra and Euclid. One evening the coach set me down at the gates of a house at St. Lawrence, near Ramsgate. Young eyes peered at me from the windows; and I passed up the front garden, pale, thin, and careworn, the ghost of what I had been a year before. Mr. Thomson, my new tutor, was as completely the genuine Cambridge man, as Mr. Wallington had been the

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Oxford man. Wallington was a Tory, Thomson a Whig; Wallington was High Church, Thomson somewhat of a latitudinarian; Wallington was dignified and silent, Thomson easy and loquacious; Wallington loved a quotation, Thomson loved a joke. Both of them were excellent men in different ways. Thomson would have called Wallington a prig, Wallington would have called Thomson vulgar. Thomson had a great advantage over Wallington in domestic life. He had chosen a pleasant, good-tempered, affectionate partner, who never answered him when he was cross. I liked Thomson much, Mrs. Thomson more. There were but two pupils besides myself. They were about my own age, but I looked on them as mere children. They had not seen the world, as I had done, in boudoir and drawing-room; they had much less information; they were shorter than I was by half a head; and they did not dress like men. For the rest, they were amiable enough: one of them clever, the other dull, and both played the flute.

I found a peculiar interest in my new residence, for I learned, to my surprise, that it had belonged to my erudite grandfather Lytton. Hence had emerged all those books which so excited my childish wonder. Here had he lived obscure, amassing stores of learning that humbled even the arrogance of Parr; and here had he died, leaving behind no trace of his labouring path through the wide world of knowledge. Many little anecdotes of his eccentric habits, his benevolent simplicity, endeared to me his memory, and made me forgive him the single flogging of my young existence. These anecdotes came back to me when I drew the portrait of Austin Caxton.¹

The neighbouring watering-place of Ramsgate was gay with dinners and carpet dances. Friends of my family found me out, and invited me often. On pretence of not disturbing

[¹ Though published much later, *The Caxtons* was written before *Lucretia*, or *the Children of Night*, which made its appearance in 1847.—L.]

my tutor's household by late hours, Mr. Thomson suggested to me to hire a bedroom in the immediate neighbourhood. I rejoiced at that symbol of independence, and I did not abuse the liberty thus improperly accorded to my youth. How I loved that little room in a stocking-weaver's cottage, so homely, and yet all my own! I had much time to myself. Mr. Thomson soon discovered that in classics he could teach me nothing; and I soon discovered that in mathematics I was disposed to learn as little. But in my own quiet room I collected all the books that the neighbouring libraries could furnish, and read them with vague, desultory application. Then, for the first time, the 'Confessions of Rousseau,' in a bad English translation, fell into my hands. The book made on my mind a strong impression; and, so far as my estimate of Rousseau as a man is concerned, I fear that impression is indelible. Stripped of the charm of its native style by the dull translator, the book shocked all my notions of human dignity, not more by the meanness of the faults or vices it recorded, than by the shameless cynicism with which they were confessed. My youth could not make those indulgent allowances for the morbidities of a diseased temperament which a wide experience of mankind would compel me to make now. This exhibition of moral paltriness by the side of intellectual grandeur permanently lowered the homage I had till then been inclined to render to intelligence in the abstract; and made me cling with the more loyal reverence to the simple masculine virtues of courage, truth, and honour. A few years afterwards, the other works of Rousseau, more especially the 'Nouvelle Héloïse' and the 'Rêveries,' produced on me a different kind of effect. Read in the original, the exquisite grace of their diction, the elaborate melody of their cadence, captivated my taste; and I studied them with care as models of style.

In the meanwhile, however, my spirits became more and more dejected; my health more and more enfeebled. I

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wandered alone for hours, in a state of desolate sadness impossible to describe. I flew eagerly to Religion for her comforts; and my prayers were murmured through burning tears. But it was long before I found the consolation that I sought. My nerves were so shattered, that Religion oppressed me with her awe, rather than soothed me with her mercy. I can remember some snatches of poetry I wrote under that state of mind. They are the first lines I ever wrote that gave promise of originality, for they were the expression of feelings peculiar to myself. They were the wail of a soul alone, and severed from its race.

About this time I fortunately contracted an acquaintance with a young man some years older than myself. Indeed, he had just taken his degree at Cambridge, where he gained the Chancellor's Medal for a poem on Jerusalem. He had, moreover, published a volume of poetry. Chauncy Hare Townshend (such was his name) was still staying at Ramsgate with his

[¹ Of Chauncy Hare Townshend a short biography has been written by Charles Dickens. He was an accomplished man, with many intellectual tastes, but little intellectual power; an amateur painter, musician, and poet, and a collector of pictures, coins, and gems, which he bequeathed, I think, to the South Kensington Museum. On leaving college he entered holy orders, having, I believe, three livings in his own gift. But his theological views were hazily unorthodox; and without actually leaving the Church of England, he soon ceased to act as one of its officiating priesthood. When I knew him he must have been nearly sixty, but was still very good-looking, very well dressed, and very well 'preserved'; an amiable sybarite, of delicate health and character, a great admirer of Mr. Maurice, and a copious writer and composer of songs, which he was fond of singing to his own accompaniment on the piano. He interested himself greatly in the phenomena of *clairvoyance* at a time when attention and controversy were being excited by Dr. Elliotson's adoption of mesmerism (partly as a curative process, but mainly as a means of inducing insensibility under surgical operations) before the discovery of anæsthetics. On this subject Townshend recorded the results of his experiments in an interesting book. He married, in youth, a young lady with whom he fell in love (from the sweetness of her voice) whilst listening to a hymn sung by her in a village church. They soon afterwards separated. He had no children, no very intimate ties; and his income (a large one) was spent chiefly upon the purchase of nicknacks, and the bestowal of private charity; for he was a kind-hearted man, though not without the gentle egotism natural to kind-hearted men who have no inherited or contracted duties to distract their attention from themselves. The latter years of his life were passed chiefly at

parents and a fair young sister. He was very kind to me, and I accompanied him in long boating excursions on the sea. The breezes did good to my health, and my companion's conversation benefited my mind. He impressed me with the idea of being singularly calm and pure. In spite of a beauty of face which at that time attracted the admiration of all who even passed him in the streets, his manners and converse were characterised by an almost feminine modesty. He used to say, smiling, that he did not believe he was susceptible to love. Withal, he had a pervading sense of his own existence. With an egotism not uncommon to young poets, he thought, wrote, and talked of himself—his own peculiarities and feelings. Thus, unconsciously, I became attracted from *my* sorrows, and gazed on the portrait of another, not the mirror of myself. Townshend, too, had made the acquaintance of eminent poets. He had visited Wordsworth, and he corresponded with Southey. Stars that before had been scarcely visible on my horizon

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Lausanne, where he had purchased a villa on the shores of Lake Leman. My father (who, not having been to a public school, found few old friends at Cambridge when he first went there, and who was there, as at all times, exceedingly shy and sensitive) resented what appeared to him the coldness and carelessness of his reception by Townshend at the University, where they were not long together; and it was not till many years later that their intercourse was renewed by the following letter.

Schlöss Wyenberg, bei Innsbruck, im Tyrol: February 29, 1840.

My dear Sir Edward,—Years have passed since you wrote me a very kind letter, somewhat renewing the intimacy which once subsisted between us, and then was unfortunately broken by an unintentional fault upon my side. The letter to which I allude was very grateful to my feelings; but that I did not follow up the opening it seemed to make must be attributed to a delicacy on my part, a shrinking from even the *appearance* of courting the celebrated author, or of having sought him after an interval of years from any self-interested motives. Since then I have been much abroad, or perhaps I should have earlier conquered what after all is perhaps a very foolish pride, and have followed the simple dictates of the heart; which, as we grow older, turns most perseveringly towards our first friendships, and those youthful recollections which are 'the master light of our being.' Do you ever think of Ramsgate, and our pleasant excursions there by sea and land? . . . Believe me, my dear Sir Edward,

Very sincerely yours,

CHAUNCY HARE TOWNSHEND.—L.]

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loomed near through his anecdotes, and their grand influence reached me. I felt, too, a brotherly interest in his pretty sister, who had lately passed through a deep disappointment in love. Sympathy drew me towards her; and her presence soothed and calmed me.

Poor thing! she married a year or two afterwards; and died young, from the after effects of childbirth.

Towards the later autumn, my mother came to pass a few months at the neighbouring Broadstairs. She was strongly opposed to my lodgment out of the tutor's house; but to this liberty I clung with obstinate vehemence, and finally carried the point.

I left Mr. Thomson's house, after the Christmas holidays, somewhat improved in health and spirits, but still sickly and dejected. I had gained very little in knowledge of books under his direct care; though I had picked up a few things of value, here and there, from the waifs I had myself collected. But, languid and objectless, indifferent to ambition, not dreaming of honours, shunning companionship, averse from noisy pleasures, I went into the animated, restless, world of the University.

CHAPTER XI.

(Supplementary and Illustrative.)

THE MANUSCRIPT OF 'LIONEL HASTINGS.'

[IN the second chapter of this Book reference is made to an unfinished romance which describes with great fidelity under a fictitious character my father's feelings as a schoolboy, and even the circumstances and events of his life at that period. The manuscript of this fragment was found among his papers after his death. No precise date can be assigned to it; but from the character of the handwriting, and the quality of the paper, I believe it to have been written between the years 1840 and 1850, probably before the commencement of 'The Caxtons,' and certainly before the commencement of 'What will he do with it?' a work in which some of its outlines have been adopted with considerable alteration and development. The biographical interest of it (and few, if any, of all the posthumous papers published in these volumes are more interesting from a biographical point of view) arises wholly from its close relation to that period of my father's life which has already been described in his Autobiography. Nor will its appearance in this place unduly interrupt the course of the narrative it illustrates. For with the preceding chapter of the present Book, we have completely closed one epoch in his life; and with the first chapter of the next Book we shall open upon an entirely new scene. The autobiographical character of the tale will be recognised in every page by all who have followed the true story it idealises. Dr. Hooker is

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the obvious original of Dr. Wortham. Rottendean is revived in Puzzledean. The originals of the dead Colonel, of Lady Anne Hastings, and of her son, are unmistakable. Mr. Tuftoe does duty for Dr. Keate. In Highclerc there are apparent reminiscences of Mr. Wallington, mixed with traits taken, in later life, from a more modern character. Christopher Cotton I believe to be a highly idealised embodiment of a rather eccentric old gentleman who will reappear in the sequel of this biography. The portrait of Lady Clara is almost identical with that of Lady Caroline Lamb, which will be found in a later chapter of the Autobiography ; and the incident which led to my father's acquaintance with her he repeated, with but little variation, in the tale.]

LIONEL HASTINGS.

VOLUME I.

CHAPTER I.

Letter from the Rev. Dr. Wortham to the Right Hon. Lady Anne Hastings.

‘Puzzledean Rectory, near Deal: July 24, 18—.

‘My dear Madam,—Your son will leave us by the coach to-morrow, so that he will probably be with you two or three hours after the receipt of the letter I have now the honour to address to your ladyship. I flatter myself that you will find him much improved in health ; and I can satisfactorily answer your questions as to the progress he has made in his studies during the last quarter. He is now a very fair classical scholar for his age ; though, should you decide on sending him to a public school, his obstinate deficiencies in the composition of Latin Verse will tell much against the position his general knowledge would otherwise enable him to take there. I say *obstinate*: for these deficiencies can only be ascribed to the self-will pervading his whole character. He thinks proper to despise the art of Latin versification ; the elegance of which, I should observe to you, consists in a spirited imitation of

the most approved models. "I do not desire to succeed," he said to me, somewhat pertly, "where it is a merit not to be original." And original certainly your son is disposed to be. You ask me my frank opinion as to his intellectual capacities and moral qualities. My dear Madam, it is hard to answer you, for the boy puzzles me. He does some things amazingly well; and some most lamentably ill. Nevertheless, his abilities are incontestable. He has great quickness; a very retentive memory; and, when he pleases, a more determined application than all the other boys in the school put together. The quality most pronounced in him is energy; and his worst fault, as a schoolboy, is his impatience of routine and discipline. He has an astonishing vitality, a superabundance of life. He is too much for my quiet school, though there are many boys in it considerably older than he, and though his frame appears rather delicate than robust. He is not exactly quarrelsome, but he is terribly fond of fighting. A week ago he was laid up in what we call our Hospital; scarcely able to walk, from a severe blow by a cricket-ball on the cap of his knee. The next morning, when the surgeon came to examine him, our young sufferer was missing; and found, at last, behind the garden wall in single combat with the biggest boy in the school. It seems that words had passed between these heroes on the cricket-ground, just before your son met with his accident. Communications of a hostile nature passed between the hospital and the schoolroom, in the course of which the bigger boy accused the lesser of shamming illness in order to escape chastisement. At this taunt, your young gentleman sends a challenge, and is with difficulty brought back to his room, covered with honourable bruises. 'Hastings,' said I, mildly, 'you might have maimed yourself for life.' 'Sir,' he replied, 'dishonour lasts longer than life.' Pretty bombast for a boy not yet fourteen.

'From this anecdote you may judge that he is very fearless, and on the point of honour only too Quixotic. But I should want candour, my dear Madam, if I did not add that there is another side to the medal. Your son is not an amiable boy. He seems to have little or no tenderness in his nature. He forms no friendships with his schoolfellows; which I think a bad sign, both of temper and disposition. He is inordinately ambitious (sleeps with Plutarch's Lives under his pillow), has much too high an opinion of himself; and, in a word, does not seem to me likely (unless a great change be effected in him) to be popular in domestic life; nor yet to stoop to that subordination, or manifest that respect for

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others, which I have always heard to be necessary to the conduct of any young man who would rise in public life. Still, with such vigour of character, he can scarcely fail to become, one day, conspicuous either for good or ill. I say for ill; because who can confidently predict good from natures, however noble, in which the passions are fiery and the scorn of restraint so strong as to make one fear that it may stifle the voice of duty? Of one thing I feel quite assured. He may, if his powers be perverted, commit many wrong actions, but he will never do a mean one. He is essentially a gentleman. I persist in my former advice to you. Send him to some large public school; where betimes he will be drilled into discipline, and where intercourse with boys superior to himself, at all events in physical strength, and mental acquirements, will humble his notions as to his own superiority. In a word, let him find his level.

‘I must prepare you, however, for his own dislike to a public school. I have talked to him on the subject, and represented to him the good he would certainly derive from a public school. But strange to say (for I should have thought him just the boy to like, as well as suit, such a school) I have found him firing up at the very thought of it, and as resentful as if I had proposed to send him to Bridewell. You must not let your maternal tenderness yield to his prejudices on this point. But if you find him in the state of mind I have described, be firm, I conjure you. Believe me, dear Madam, I shall always be most willing to give you such aid and counsel as my long experience may suggest. A boy of a nature so impassioned and headstrong—an only child, and fatherless—must indeed be an anxious charge to a mother. Much in him, it is true, may justify all your pride. But it were vain to deny that much in him also may warrant all your alarm. You have asked me to speak frankly. I have done so. Perhaps, with some bitterness: for the boy has disappointed me. I had hoped to be of more service to him. I admired his noble gifts and would fain have found a friend in my pupil. This he would not permit. And I am now parting with him for ever, half in regret, and half in anger. Often, at one time I have been tempted to clasp him to my heart, and at another disposed to expel him from my school.

‘In fact, nothing but my grateful sense of your constant kindness and distinguished confidence could have made me keep your son so long. Now, he has outgrown us all: master and boys. And so, God be with him. I have the honour to be,

‘Your ladyship’s humble Servant,
‘DAVID WORTHAM.’

'Read that!' said Lady Anne Hastings, as she extended, with a hand that slightly trembled, Dr. Wortham's equivocal and somewhat menacing epistle to an elderly gentleman who now entered her drawing-room.

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The 'Read that!' was effective and dramatic. It arrested all preliminary salutation. It cut in half a very profound bow, on the grace of which the visitor habitually valued himself.

'Good heavens!' said the gentleman, 'what's the matter? Nothing amiss with Master Lionel?'

'Read! read!' the poor mother repeated, impatiently; and she turned away to the window, for her lip quivered, and her countenance was very pale.

The gentleman thus appealed to appeared, in ordinary circumstances, to be of an indolent, apathetic temperament. So much so that his enemies called him a Philosopher, meaning thereby a man profoundly indifferent to the weal or woe of the human species in general, and of his friends in particular. But in truth Mr. Christopher Cotton ('Gentle Kit,' as he was more often designated in popular parlance), obtained his reputation for philosophy very undeservedly. He had at least as much feeling as his neighbours; perhaps more than most of them. But he was the quietest creature conceivable, and he did with his heart, as some people do with their money, dribbled it away without making a show. You have only to look at the man, as he stands there, glancing now at Lady Anne, now at the letter, to see what an old-fashioned original he is, and how completely he is encrusted in his quiet, as a snail in his shell: a snail putting forth its delicate, anxious feelers, and longing to draw them in again. The man's very dress was quiet: drab shorts and loose drab gaiters; wide black coat and long black vest, white limp neckcloth and an antiquated profusion of frill; all scrupulously neat, but so quiet! The sight of it would set one yawning. And the face, so benevolent, so pleasant, and, beheld at any moment but this, so serene! A little pensive, perhaps, but of a pensiveness the most patient, the pensiveness of—— No, I cannot complete the sentence. I shall be misunderstood. I shall be supposed to ascribe to thee, O Gentle Kit, the most disparaging and odious resemblance. But a word in your ear, my reader. There is an animal much maligned as to its intellectual qualities, an animal of surpassing meekness. It feeds upon thistles, which never wound it. Observe that animal when it dozes. What pensiveness in the expression of its physiognomy! Such was the pensiveness peculiar to the face of

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Christopher Cotton. Those who wrote to him addressed their letters to 'Christopher Cotton, Esquire;' but he was the only man I ever knew who preferred to that designation (by rights, feudal and military) the peaceful title now only linked to names on mouldering old monuments. Gentle Kit styled himself 'Christopher Cotton, Gentleman.'

CHAPTER II.

'WELL, Marm—'

Mr. Cotton preserved that broad pronunciation of the ellipsis *Ma'am*, from *Madame*, which was formerly considered high bred, and is still the Court mode.

'Well, Marm, I have read the letter. I can't say but what it has very much relieved my mind. Which I take kind in you as regards the showing it. I was afraid that Master Lionel had the whooping cough, or the measles. And he is coming home. In an hour or two. Which is what I ought to have expected. On account of the Midsummer holidays. Not but what Midsummer is past and gone. Dear me, I wish I had known. I would have brought my fiddle.'

'Fiddle!' exclaimed Lady Anne indignantly. 'But everyone says you have no feeling, Mr. Cotton. Fiddle! when my poor boy's career, his whole existence, is so endangered. And you talk of fiddles!'

Gentle Kit bowed his head to the storm. His heart was galled, not at the accusation against himself, but at the aspersion cast upon his fiddle. Hitherto Lady Anne had respected *that*. Still, he concealed his dove-like resentment, and said soothingly—

'Master Lionel is so fond of music. Which I can't but say I take very kind in him. Seeing that it shows a good nature to bear with an old man's hobby, and —Tut, tut, my lady! Don't grieve! Don't cry, now. There's no cause. Seeing that I've read this worthy gentleman's letter from beginning to end, and though it has a great many big words (which I observe clever people are fond of using when they get bother-headed. No offence to him, poor man!), yet how Master Lionel's career and existence are endangered is more than I can make out, save your presence.'

'Mr. Cotton, you provoke me. So wilful and headstrong—'

'Lord bless you, he'll grow out of all that. Why I myself was a terrible fellow. In the nursery. Which is what everybody

wouldn't suppose. Only think! I've heard my poor mother say that when I was two years old I actually pulled my own grandfather's nose.'

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Mr. Cotton communicated this interesting anecdote of his precocious ferocity with so awe-stricken a voice that Lady Anne could not resist a smile; and, laying her hand mildly on her old friend's shoulder, she said:

'But Lionel is more than two years old. He is nearly fourteen. And if Dr. Wortham, who really likes him, entertains such fears for his future fate, what must I do?'

'Tut, tut! Dr. Wortham is a schoolmaster. I don't much mind what Wortham says. By reason that he is a schoolmaster, and that all schoolmasters see things just like—schoolmasters. What is the matter, after all? That Master Lionel fought a boy for accusing him of having shammed sickness to get out of a quarrel. I don't say it was quite wise in him. By reason that the boy was bigger than himself. Still, he would not have been his father's son if he hadn't done it. And then poor Dr. Wortham says he don't like Latin verses. Well, every man has his hobby, and a schoolmaster may naturally like Latin verses. But I never knew a school-boy that did. His master says he has abilities and application, and that he is brave and honourable, and a gentleman. And you are to be alarmed at that? Why, bless us and save us! I am as timid as most people. And I never had a son. For which I'm not sorry. By reason that I'm an old bachelor. But, if I had a son, I vow and protest that it would not alarm me at all.'

Gentle Kit, as he said this, loftily drew out his snuff-box, and inhaled a noiseless pinch, with considerable complacency at his own eloquence. And, indeed, it takes so little to make a mother think well of her son that Lady Anne's face relaxed, and again she smiled upon her comforter. But the smile instantly vanished. For the remembrance of one passage in this accursed letter, that had stung her more than all the rest, came across her as she gazed upon the old man's placid, kindly face, and she exclaimed:

'But ah! he says that my boy, my own only child, has little or no tenderness in his nature. And if, after all, he does not, cannot, love me—if he wants heart!' The mother burst into tears.

Christopher Cotton rose. He took one stride across the room, and came back to his friend's side, gently drew her hands from her eyes, and held them both in his.

'My poor lady,' said he plaintively. 'Did you not tell me that

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everybody says I have no feeling? Which I can't say I think civil in everybody. But that's no matter. Do *you* think so?'

'No, no! I was unjust, peevish. Forgive me.'

'To be sure I forgive you, my sweet darling Lady Anne. But if everybody is wrong about me, who have been before everybody's eyes for fifty-six years, don't you think that one body may be wrong about Master Lionel, who has not been in the world fourteen?'

Sometimes Gentle Kit chanced upon a shrewd saying so at variance with his ordinary tone that it rarely failed of its effect. Lady Anne pressed his hand warmly, and he continued: 'What! Master Lionel no tenderness? You did not say that, my lady, when he was present to take his own part. Which, begging your pardon, is what I don't think handsome in you.'

'Boys alter so at school,' said the mother irresolutely. 'What a pity they must go there, where they lose all natural affection! And now, to send him to Eton, or some such dreadful, dreadful place—worse still! I know not what to do for the best. Dr. Wortham says, "Be firm." But surely we should try, not to harden him more, but to soften him.'

'Ha!' said Gentle Kit with unusual animation. 'That's true. I have hit it! We'll soften him. Take my advice. Let him, let him——'

'Let him what?' exclaimed poor Lady Anne eagerly. For the agitation of her friend (an agitation that heaved his chest and checked his voice) made her think him inspired with some divine educational conception. 'Let him what?'

'Learn the fiddle, Marm,' said Gentle Kit.

CHAPTER XII.

(Supplementary and Illustrative.)'LIONEL HASTINGS'—*continued.*

VOLUME I.—CHAPTER III.

'HURRA! Here I am, mother! Dear mother!' And Lionel Hastings rushed into the room.

No tenderness? O Dr. Wortham! If this be not tenderness, it is something a mother prizes as much. A passionate joy, the joy and the passion of a nature rich and healthful, rushing out from a heart full to overflow, and sparkling from eyes on which then burst that schoolboy's heaven,—Home Regained, and the dear parent's face.

Gentle Kit stood by, in quiet, till it came to his turn to be hugged and hauled about. Next, the fat spaniel was tossed up to the ceiling, amidst its own doleful and astonished cries, and Lady Anne's deprecating prayer. Next, the grey macaw was forcibly plucked forth from its cage, pecking and screaming, with all its feathers stroked the wrong way. Even the gold fish in the glass bowl, a stately gold fish of habits the most sedate and old maidish, was jerked out by the tip of its tail, and patted affectionately on its abhorrent head, before it was restored to its crystal element, there to marvel for the rest of its life at the strange event which had befallen it. This done, Lionel Hastings stood for a moment or two by the hearth, gazing straight before him on the summer lawn outside the half-open window; with dilated nostrils, as if voluptuously inhaling the air of home. As thus he stood, who but a mechanical old schoolmaster could look upon the boy with any feeling of alarm for his future? Future! Why, that young life seemed to seize it as a thing of joy. What power in the bold open brow, with the loose brown hair dashed back from it in wild grace! What firm decision in the high clear features!

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What vivid consciousness of intelligence in the happy dauntless eyes! And the frame, so fitted for activity, exertion, and endurance: a frame light as a Mercury's, from the elastic springiness of its vigour. Such a frame as Hope might wing for the skies, and Genius use to convey to man the messages of the gods. All in the aspect of the boy betokened his Anglo-Saxon blood, with some fierce old drops, perhaps, from that of the wilder Danes. Had you come upon him in the remotest quarter of the world, you would have said at once, 'That is English!' It belongs to the race of those who hope, combat, strive, succeed, everywhere; in the city, in the wild, under the tropics, at the pole; peopling new worlds, renewing themselves for ages; arrogant in the power of self-government, restless from the longing for unbounded range. Fear for that boy's future? You might as well fear for the future of Australasia. Ha! he has caught sight of his old friend, the pony, grazing in the paddock beyond the lawn. And he is off like a shot; is out of the window, has leapt the fence. Away scuds the pony, and away fleets Lionel. Neck and neck—it is a race—there they go—now through grove, now through glade—now out of sight—both of them!

'Mr. Cotton, Mr. Cotton!' exclaimed Lady Anne, 'run after that boy, do!'

'Anything to oblige my lady,' said Mr. Christopher, waving his hand, as he plunged himself into an arm-chair. 'But, as for running after Master Lionel, it is not what is right and friendly to ask. By reason that I am naturally a quiet man, and that I would as lief, save your presence, run after a whirlwind.'

Then Lady Anne rings the bell in agony. 'Preston! John! run, both of you, after Master Lionel. He has gone without his hat, and that dreadful pony kicks! and I shouldn't wonder if he got upon it, without bridle or saddle! Nobody knows, nobody *can* know, what it is to be a mother!'

'There's Master Lionel,' said Gentle Kit, burying himself still deeper in the downy cushions of the arm-chair.

And, sure enough, there *was* Master Lionel, galloping up towards the house on the back of the pony; and the pony snorting so loud that it could be heard all over the house, and lashing out its heels every minute, as if a swarm of wasps had settled on its hind quarters.

As the boy was now trying to force the pony to leap the fence; as Lady Anne was exclaiming at the top of her voice; as the fat spaniel barked and the macaw screamed, 'Upon my honour, my

lady,' cried Mr. Cotton, jumping up, clapping his hands to his ears, and then catching at his hat and cane—'upon my honour, I am a quiet man. Quiet is a great blessing. With your leave, I'll go back at once—for the fiddle !'

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CHAPTER IV.

'MANKIND,' saith a writer who has written on the History of Fiddles—'mankind may be divided into two classes : those who play the violin, and those who do not.' Our author, observing that the former class constitute the minority (which may be said of all pretenders to human excellence), says of the latter (that is, of the herd of men) with a lofty yet benevolent contempt, 'LET THEM NOT DESPAIR. They cannot all hope to play the fiddle. If they respect, admire, and encourage those who *do* play it, that is perhaps sufficient.'

Be respected, admired, and encouraged by thine audience, O Gentle Kit !

Mr. Cotton was not so wrong, after all, in going home for his fiddle. The fiddle produced a very softening effect upon our wild hero, Lionel.

It is now twilight. The boy is seated near the window ; his mother's hand clasped in his. His head is bowed, musingly, over his breast : his eyes are half-closed, heavy with dewy moisture and sweet enchanted reverie. And in the deepest shade of the room, the outline of his form vaguely visible, the musician is giving voices of strange wonder to his violin.

So little was seen of the player, and so softly did his modest existence shrink and merge itself into that of his instrument, that one forgot him altogether. It seemed as if the fiddle was speaking from its own melodious impulse ; like a bird, like a spirit. Christopher Cotton played well. To be sure, he had played every day, shine or rain, for the last forty years. But practice alone cannot make a fiddler. *Nascitur, non fit*. Christopher was not merely a performer, he was a composer. And, being Welsh by his mother's side, and accustomed to that ancient tongue in his infancy, he had treasured up in his recollection many of the old Welsh airs, adapting them, with sundry modifications and improvements, to his violin. He knew how Lionel loved these airs. There was something in

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them that went home to the boy's heart. For there they touched on a congenial sentiment; devoted, as most of them are, to the praise of heroic deeds, or the lament for departed heroes.

The music now glided off into an *adagio*, soft, mournful, yet not effeminate. It expressed sorrow, but a manly sorrow. The boy's head drooped gradually on his mother's bosom. The music stopped. All was silent. The evening grew chiller, and the shadows darker.

'I should like,' said Lionel, in a very low murmur, 'to do some great thing for England, and then die.'

'Don't talk so, child,' said poor Lady Anne, transported to new fears. 'Pray shut the window, Mr. Cotton. Lionel talks of dying! You have no pain in your chest, my dear?'

'No, indeed, mother. What! You are going already, Mr. Cotton? I am so much obliged to you. There's something in music—I mean in that fiddle of yours—which makes one try to ease one's heart by doing something very brave, or very kind. Oh, stop! I've a present for you, Mr. Cotton.' And Lionel started up, overset the macaw in its cage, and dashed out, calling loud through the hall for his trunk and a light.

'The dear boy!' said Gentle Kit, after he had picked up the fallen cage, and restored it to the stand.

'Yes, he is very good this evening. But you don't think there is anything wrong with his chest, do you? It is so strange to hear a boy talk of dying.'

'A very common effect of my fiddle, Marm. After I have practised an hour or two on Mrs. Graves, my old housekeeper, she always relieves her enthusiasm, I may say, by reading the burial service. Which is what I take very kind in her. Not to say pious. If I may make bold to pass an opinion on these matters. In a quiet way. Not being of the cloth.'

'Here it is! I hope you will like it. It does not please *me*, but I thought it just what *you'd* fancy, these summer evenings, when you go out fishing.'

And Lionel extended a very handsomely-bound copy of Walton's 'Angler,' illustrated.

'Bless me, the very book I've been longing to buy,' cried Mr. Cotton, 'ever since I saw an extract from it in the county paper.' And he gazed on the plates, by the light of the candle in Lionel's hand. He might have seen them as well by the boy's eyes, they shone so brightly.

'But it does not please you? Impossible! Why, and by reason of what, I pray?'

'It's such quiet reading,' said Lionel, laughing. 'I'd as soon fish.'

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Here he turned to his mother. 'And I've a pretty set of chessmen for you, dear Mamma, and I've learnt to play, that I may do something to amuse you, when otherwise you would sit thinking and moping. You know you like chess.'

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Lady Anne's heart smote her sorely for having doubted her son's love. And she was still hanging on him fondly, long after Mr. Cotton (charmed with his acquisition, and longing to show it to Mrs. Graves) had silently slipped out, and was walking home, by moonlight along the still hedgerows, to his small bachelor's house about half a mile distant.

The servants came in with lights, and the curtains were drawn.

So far, so good. Why could not the whole of that evening pass off as pleasantly? But no. Lionel had introduced the *donum exitialis Minervæ*. That accursed chess-box! *Hoc inclusi ligno occultantur Achivi*. Mother and son sat down to play. Play, indeed! Who ever *plays* at chess? Talk of playing at Waterloo.

Lady Anne understood chess well, for a lady. Lionel understood nothing of the science; but he made the most daring and unexpected pushes towards checkmate, sacrificing piece after piece by the way, and charging up to the king, as Richard III. charged up to Harry of Richmond. His combative qualities became inflamed. He forgot all courtesies, and all good breeding. Filial affection and respect lay dormant. He was not thinking of a mother; he was only thinking of that black king in the corner, by the side of its castle. And when he saw that Lady Anne, taken by surprise and discomposed (as a good fencer is when a man who never before had a foil in his hand pokes it direct at his eyes), paused aghast and bewildered, as she perceived that, with three pieces more than her antagonist, and advancing to victory in the most approved style, she herself was in imminent danger of checkmate, he burst into a fierce joyous laugh, rubbed his hands, and exulted, as his ancestor the Dane might have done at the battle of London Bridge. Lady Anne grew annoyed and irritated. She moved a knight, and then, suddenly retracting, covered her king with a bishop.

'You can't do that. 'Tisn't fair; you moved the knight first. You *must* play it. That's the rule.'

'Don't raise your voice so high, Lionel. It is disagreeable. I didn't know you were so very particular, in playing with a lady, especially.'

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'I am *not* playing with a lady. I'm fighting an enemy,' said Lionel with set teeth.

'Shocking!' cried Lady Anne. 'Well, I've played the knight, since you insist on it.'

The knight was not placed, however, as Lionel had supposed, and as the enemy had first intended, which would have insured him the game. Guarded by a humble pawn, the faithful cavalier frustrated the meditated regicide. In his impatience, Lionel at first overlooked the pawn. His queen took the knight, and to that ignoble pawn her own life was justly forfeit. Then he at once recognised his oversight, and threw himself back in his chair with a stern cry of 'All is lost!'

'Oh, a mere oversight,' said the mother, with true female generosity. 'Take the move back, my dear.'

'I! O mother, how can you suppose it? I would rather lose fifty games than do anything so base.'

'Base! to take back a move at chess?'

'Base to lay down a law for an enemy, and break it oneself.'

'My dear, I really can't take your queen. I must insist on your removing it.'

'No.'

'When I insist, Lionel?' said Lady Anne, with tender reproach.

'No one has a right to insist that I do what I think dishonourable.'

'But, if I say it is not dishonourable, am I not the best judge?'

'No, certainly not.'

'A mother not judge better than a boy of fourteen?'

Lionel swept his hand over the board. 'If those pieces of wood were all the inhabitants of the world, they could not judge better than one's own heart, or make a shabby action an honourable one.'

Lady Anne pressed the matter no more. She was a noble creature herself; and, if her son's reply was exaggerated, she felt that the exaggeration was on the right side. But, as she mechanically restored the chessmen to their box, the warning in the school-master's letter returned with increased force to her mind. Was there, indeed, nothing dangerous in the haughty determination of one still but a child in years, to think and judge for himself? Nothing dangerous to his character, and injurious to his career? Ought she not to take the preceptor's counsel, and be firm? She mused a moment, and then said seriously:

'Lionel, I believe you liked your schoolmaster. I have always heard you speak of him with respect.'

'Yes. He was very kind to me, in his way. And everyone says he is a good scholar.'

'But he complains that you would not suffer him to be your friend.'

'No boy of any spirit can be *friends* with his schoolmaster.'

'What a very extraordinary notion! Why?' cried Lady Anne in great amaze.

'For the same reason, I suppose, that no high-minded man can be *friends* with a king. He can respect, serve, love him even: but friends? No, one is only a friend to one's equal. To be friends with one's schoolmaster is like being a courtier, a parasite.'

'This is the most absurd pride. How do you think a young man can get on in life, unless through the friendship of his superiors?'

Lionel's face flushed. 'By allowing no superior,' said he, loftily.

His mother looked at the proud young face with a mournful earnestness, and there was a long pause. At last Lady Anne said: 'My dear Lionel, there is no help for it. You *must* go to a public school.'

'*Must!* But why must?'

'Because there you will learn subordination. And,' added Lady Anne, repeating the Doctor's words, 'there you will find your level.'

'So! I understand,' said Lionel gloomily. 'The Doctor has been putting you up to say this. Oh yes, he says I am to go to a public school, to be beaten and flogged into slavery! With all my heart. Let them try. But mark me. In three months the whole school shall be in rebellion, or I shall be expelled.'

'This is too bad, Lionel. Yes, I must be firm. Go you shall, and we will see.'

'Shall? shall! shall! Don't say that word, mother.' And the boy rose hastily, lighted his chamber candle, and, without one kind 'Good-night,' stalked off to his room.

'Ungrateful!' cried the mother, as the door closed. The word went straight and sharp to the son's heart, but he did not turn back; and, ascending the stairs very slowly, he entered the room he had occupied as a child.

The moment he crossed its threshold, his face softened. He put down the candle gently and looked round him. The room had been retrimmed and decorated for his return. One or two of those little

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articles of furniture which boys value had been added. A bureau with quaint pigeon-holes and wells. A pretty bookcase, wherein were arranged volumes he had been wont to borrow one by one, now tacitly made over to him: 'Robinson Crusoe,' and the 'Seven Champions of Christendom,' and 'Amadis of Gaul,' and 'Cook's Voyages,' and Pope's Homer. He knew them all at a glance. Every spot in the little room spoke of the mother's provident, tender love. The boy bent down his face, and covered it with both hands. He did not weep; at least no tears flowed. But his frame shook. A minute after he had flung open the door of the room below, and was on his mother's breast.

'Forgive me! forgive me, Mamma! I call you by that name again, as I did when I never disobeyed you. I will go to Eton, Harrow, Winchester—where you will. Anything rather than I should grieve you and be ungrateful!'

'Lionel, Lionel, my own child! you subdue, you melt me. You shall go nowhere you do not like.'

'Then let me stay with you, Mother, and your kind voice will humble me more than all the schools can.'

CHAPTER XIII.

*(Supplementary and Illustrative.)**'LIONEL HASTINGS'—continued.*

VOLUME I.—CHAPTER V.

HAPPY reconciliation! happy night! Remember it long, Lionel. If thou livest to have children of thine own, that memory will return to thee, sweet and bitter. For rarely till we ourselves are parents can we estimate a parent's love, or think how often, in our childish passions, we have galled and wronged it. And then, perhaps, remorse comes too late, and the tear it wrings from us falls in vain.

But when morning brought back to Lady Anne sober and cool reflection, she felt all the weight of her responsibilities, and after much meditation resolved to call in the aid of counsel. The question lay between public education and private tuition. Why not appeal for advice to approved authorities in each? Her husband, Colonel Hastings, had been intimate with his tutor at the University, a gentleman not much older than himself, said to be no mere pedant, but a man of the world. This person had been under some obligations to Colonel Hastings; whose interest had assisted in procuring him the situation he now held, of second master at one of our principal public schools. She learned from Mr. Cotton, who was personally acquainted with this dignitary, that the Rev. Pertinax Tuftoe (such his name) was in the habit of paying an annual visit to Lord Dumdrum, who resided in the same county as Lady Anne. This was about the time. She resolved, by Mr. Cotton's advice, to write to him, and ask him to call on the way. Thus she should obtain a sound practical opinion as to Lionel's fitness for a public school. On the other hand, she herself knew of a gentleman who devoted himself to the instruction of a very limited number of young men, and she had every reason to think well of his character and

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talents. He was the son of the clergyman in the parish which boasted the distinguished honour of containing the principal county seat of her father, the Earl of Norvale. She knew that the son had distinguished himself at Cambridge and obtained a fellowship at Trinity; which, with all ambitions thereto pertaining, he had resigned for much love and a small living.

Not long ago this gentleman, styled the Rev. Latimer Highclerc, had modestly written to Lady Anne, reminding her of his existence, informing her that he undertook to prepare six young gentlemen for the University, and soliciting, in no undignified terms, the honour of her ladyship's recommendation. She would write also to him, and request him to visit her for a few days. Thus armed on either hand, she prayed to Heaven to direct her choice. Lionel heard of these preparations without a murmur, and, indeed, with seeming indifference. Nothing could be more becoming than his behaviour. But Lady Anne took care not to ask him to play at chess.

CHAPTER VI.

Four or five days after Lionel's return home, a very respectable clerical-looking chariot, unpretending but not shabby, stopped at the door of Mr. Cotton's house.

Now, this house was characteristic of its owner. It stood on the outskirts of a provincial town of some size, but detached and alone; green fields stretching far on the side remote from the town, with a large garden at the back. In front a plot of sward, circled with laurels and other evergreens, divided the house from the high road. And in the corner of the wall, facing this same road, there was built an old-fashioned summer-house, intended to command a cheerful view of the coaches, chaises, droves, flocks, and dust by which the thoroughfare was occasionally animated. The dwelling itself was the very picturesque of quiet. Its dark red bricks, so sober in hue, its porch deep sunken in a central projection surmounted by a gable roof, its old quaint small windows (in many of which antique lozenge-shaped panes were retained, and across which no form ever seemed to flit) all had something prim and cloister-like, but serene and placid. It was a house in which Sir Thomas Browne might have written upon *Urn Burial*. It was a house of which the owner, you could well suppose, would write himself 'Gentleman,' not 'Esquire.'

When, after a second ring at the outer bell, a staid and comfortable-looking woman presented herself, and replied in the affirmative to the inquiry whether Mr. Cotton was at home, a footman of stern countenance opened the carriage-door and let down the steps. A gentleman, who might be in his forty-ninth year, but who, thanks to a hat of vast brim, black knee-breeches and gold spectacles, looked considerably older, descended from it with much state, and followed the bachelor's housekeeper (for Mrs. Graves it was) into the bachelor's presence.

A room so charming in its old primitive way did Gentle Kit occupy that it rarely failed to strike pleasantly any visitor, however callous to external impressions. Its walls were covered with small wainscot patterns of the time of Charles I. Upon these were hung sundry rare prints, most of them portraits of eminent persons—especially of eminent fiddle-players—in curious old frames. The windows opened to the ground; and, as the aspect was full south, a burst of sunshine poured through them, pleasantly lighting up every nook and angle of the room. In one of these nooks were ranged old china cups and long spiral glasses; in another, books and folios of music. Several fishing-rods, with a landing net and an eel trident, were set in a sort of trophy over a reading-desk in one corner of the window; and, on the other side, behind a screen of stamped leather, you just caught a glimpse of several priceless fiddles, shelved in a glass case. And then, the garden without: such turf! such cedars, with benches under them! Here, the eye rested on an old monastic sundial; there, it wandered on towards a trout stream, bounding the demesne, and musical with a tiny murmuring waterfall. No wonder Mr. Cotton was a bachelor. When you gazed around you here, you could not but excuse him for celibacy. What on earth could he want more in the way of comfort?

The old man was engaged, when his visitor entered, on the fabrication of an artificial fly: to which labour the perusal of Isaak Walton had stimulated his energies. He held out his hand with the barbed hook protruding between two fingers. The wary visitor looked down, beheld, and recoiled in time.

'Thank you, Mr. Cotton, but we will suppose that we have shaken hands. *Davus sum, non Piscis*. I am not a fish.'

'Dear me, I beg your pardon, I'm sure,' said Gentle Kit. 'I really was not aware that the hook was still in my hand. By reason that one grows so absent, living alone. But I take it mighty kind in you to have called. You have not yet seen poor Lady Anne?'

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‘No, Mr. Cotton. You begged me to come to you first. And, since it is all in my way, I was happy to be able to oblige a gentleman whom I esteem: a gentleman of ancient family and connected with the Cottons of Maderly. Ahem! Why do you call Lady Anne poor? Not been speculating in the funds, I hope? I did hear she was—poor. Not in want of money, I trust?’

And the visitor’s eyes gleamed, with a hard and frosty light, through his gold spectacles.

‘Oh no,’ replied Kit simply. ‘She doesn’t want money. That is, not exactly. We’ll talk of these matters later. Since you speak of them. Which I take very kind in you. I called her poor, just at that moment; as one may say, because—because——’

‘Because?’

‘She is—a mother,’ concluded Gentle Kit, in a pathetic tone, “soft as descending fleeces.”

‘Humph! Mothers *are* poor creatures, certainly. The most troublesome, impracticable, nonsensical creatures! creatures that ought to have nothing to do with boys. If one attended to mothers, one would have to shut up every school in the three kingdoms. Well, I guess now. This mother wants to consult me about her son. A prodigy, of course! Never knew a mother’s son who was not.’

Gentle Kit heeded very little all the malignant sarcasms upon maternal wisdom implied in these acrid and heartless sentences; but bowed his visitor into a seat. Which the said visitor first carefully inspected (for he knew not what other fishhooks might be in store for him) and then majestically occupied, sitting in it bolt upright. Mr. Cotton drew a chair beside it; and, after a preliminary pinch of snuff, thus began.

‘You see, my dear Mr. Tuftoe, I am an old friend of the Hastings family. I have known three generations of them. There was the Colonel’s father, a very fine-hearted, liberal gentleman. He might be fond of his bottle. I don’t say he was not. But——’

‘But he is dead,’ said Mr. Tuftoe impatiently, and taking out his large watch, which looked like a watch tyrannically true to the moment. ‘*Tempus fugit*, sir. Time flies.’

‘He is dead, as you say. And time does fly, to be sure. When I think of it—and the Colonel too! How you must have loved him! Everyone loved the Colonel. And you are Second Master of the great and famous * * * School! Dear me, when I remember you and the Colonel rowing together at Oxford—when I paid him that visit—you recollect, sir? He, he! why *you* loved your bottle then. No offence, sir. He, he! And as I was saying, the Colonel——’

'Sir, he is dead too. Pass on to the boy who concerns us. (Nestor was nothing to this man),' muttered Mr. Tuftoe.

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'Well, well, I don't wonder you learned men always want to get back to your books. But to the boy, as you remind me. And I take it kind in you, Mr. Tuftoe, to have your heart so fixed on your friend's son. Well, as I knew you would be in the neighbourhood during your holiday time——'

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'On my yearly visit to my friend Lord Dumdrum,' interrupted Mr. Tuftoe. 'Most intellectual man. Devotes his leisure and his princely fortune to science, and has a superb, I may say an unrivalled, collection of Scarabæides.'

'Of what?' cried Gentle Kit, astonished—'of scarry what?'

'Scarabæides. That important body of beetles, sir, which constitutes the chief part of the section Lamellicornes.'

'What does his lordship collect them for? Fishery? I should think they must be a very good bait.'

Mr. Tuftoe disdained to answer the question. 'I believe,' he said, 'you are not a scientific man, Mr. Cotton. Pass we on. The boy, the boy!'

Mr. Cotton, who had been fumbling over the leaves of his Isaak Walton, to see if that ruthless old insect-slayer had made due mention of Scarabæides, now dropped the book at Mr. Tuftoe's querulous exclamation. 'Ay, the boy!' said he. 'And I dare say you wonder, sir, what I have to do with boys. A quiet man and a bachelor. For which, and all other mercies, the Lord be praised. But the fact is—and fewest words between friends the better—that's my maxim.'

'For heaven's sake, practise it, sir! My horses are catching their death of cold.'

'Poor things! I'm very sorry to hear it. And I hope they'll excuse it. But when one meets an old acquaintance—and lives so alone—and that boy, and the dear good mother, get into one's head—and one has known three generations—Lord, how time does fly! Well, but I'm coming to the point. Sit down, sit down. I take it, your school is rather expensive? Eh, my dear Mr. Tuftoe?'

'It is, sir. Schools for gentlemen *should* be expensive. There is no other means of preventing—ahem! an improper mixture.'

'I was afraid of that. But I say, sir, if you should think that Master Lionel will prove an honour to your school, and if you advise him to go to it, which I take it for granted you will, sir—'

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could you not, as an old friend of the Colonel's—could you not—eh? eh?'

'Couldn't I what, Mr. Cotton?'

'Keep down the expenses—slightly, you know—he, he! 'Tis a fine estate, but so mortgaged. The Colonel served his country in Parliament. By reason of which you have no idea, sir, what a mess his affairs were in. But my lady has her jointure safe. Which I take it is a great credit to the English law, sir. And she saves, and she saves, to lay by, to pay off encumbrances, and educate Master Lionel. And she don't grudge any expense for him. But it all stints herself. And every shilling now will be so much the less when the boy comes of age. Which stands to reason.'

'I understand you, sir. You need not proceed further. In a word, the expenses of * * * school are the same for all, and cannot be cut down. I excuse you, sir, I excuse you. Don't apologise.'

'That's very kind in you,' said Kit, with a sigh, 'and I won't. To be sure, you must know best. But'—(and here he drew his chair closer to Mr. Tuftoe's, putting his lips to that gentleman's rubicund and somewhat unwilling ear)—'but you see, I'm a quiet man and a bachelor.'

Finding that Mr. Cotton came here to a dead stop, Mr. Tuftoe exclaimed indignantly, 'You've told me that before, sir. Is that all?'

'Dear me, I thought you clever men could take a hint at once. A word to the wise. But if I must speak out, why I must. I am a quiet man and a bachelor. And I have no expenses. And no children. For which I am not ungrateful. And so, if you will just put down half the schooling to Lady Anne, and the other half to me—without saying a word to my lady—Why, I shall take it very kind in you. And don't let the boy stint for anything. And, and—that's all.'

'Really, sir,' said Mr. Tuftoe, a little softened, though only despising Mr. Cotton more than ever, 'this is very handsome in you no doubt, but it is quite contrary to all the rules, all the dignity of the Institution. You and Lady Anne must settle this between yourselves. One word more. Is the boy really clever? He has great connections, if they push him. His grandfather, the Earl of Norvale, might well afford to pay for his schooling. And the Earl is a very worthy nobleman. I should be happy to do justice to the abilities of the Earl's grandson—if he has any.'

'Any abilities! Lord love you, they'd make your hair stand on end. But you'll judge, you'll judge.'

‘And the Earl?’

‘Why you see the Earl quarrelled with the Colonel about politics, and I can’t say he has behaved altogether kind to Master Lionel, or my lady either.’

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‘Enough, sir!’ said Mr. Tuftoe with great stateliness. ‘I must not hear more of family disputes.’

Here he again took out his watch. ‘Her Ladyship’s luncheon hour, I presume. At all events I will drop in. Good day, sir. No ceremony, I beg. Pray don’t come out. You are in your dressing-gown; you may catch cold. I hope the horses will not.’ But Mr. Cotton persisted.

‘My own carriage,’ said Mr. Tuftoe as he gained the gate. ‘I always travel in it. Lord Dumdrum insists on my bringing my own horses too. It is convenient. Not a step further. Open the door, Simon.’

CHAPTER XIV.

(Supplementary and Illustrative.)

‘LIONEL HASTINGS’—continued.

VOLUME I.—CHAPTER VII.

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MR. PERTINAX TUFTOE'S carriage entered the lodge gates of Lady Anne's demesnes; and Mr. Tuftoe, putting his head out of the window of it, examined with attention the character of the grounds. Not that he cared a jot for mere scenery. Mr. Tuftoe was neither an artist nor a poet. All he cared to consider was whether the place was one of mark and importance, or of mere ordinary commonplace gentility. Certainly one merit the heads of our great public seminaries may justly claim. They do not condescend to intrigue for pupils. Boys come to them in numbers so great that they need not canvass for the confidence of parents. Mr. Tuftoe, as Second Master of * * * was supremely indifferent (and he would have been equally indifferent as Head Master) whether there were one boy more or less in its playgrounds. But Mr. Tuftoe had a profound constitutional veneration for worldly influence and position. *Voluit episcopari*. He had an indistinct prophetic notion that, by the aid of some grateful patrician pupil, he was some day to wake with his arms in lawn sleeves and his head in a mitre. At this present time he had but two vacancies in his own house, and two candidates for them: one, the son of a rich country baronet; the other, the son of an able enterprising merchant who represented in Parliament a commercial city. Neither of the two, however respectable, came up to the top mark in Mr. Tuftoe's imagination. But both seemed to him more promising than this well-born young gentleman whose school expenses that tiresome old bachelor proposed to halve. Still, Mr. Tuftoe looked out with some languid curiosity upon the grounds of Wardour Hall. And,

as he eyed them, he said to himself doubtfully, ' But it is a place of some importance. Cotton says the estate is fine, though encumbered. Very fine trees, certainly. And the boy is an earl's grandson, and if the earl don't notice him, still the Hastingses have high connections.'

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Doubtless the aspect of the grounds conveyed the idea of hereditary acres. The predecessor of Colonel Hastings, rarely residing at his country seat, and having had the extraordinary good fortune to have the large old Manor House burnt down, had instructed his steward to dismantle the gardens and turn the park to the best advantage, contenting himself with a small habitation which he built by the side of the ruined Hall. The deer had been expelled from the park. The park itself was reduced to a lawn and paddock, and the rest of the ground ploughed up and converted into a farm. But as the road wound through this paddock the limits of the sward were concealed by groups of venerable trees (more ornamental than valuable, otherwise they had not been spared), and their appearance was imposing. The distant hills, too, were crowned with woodland. It was only when Mr. Tuftoe's carriage stopped at the door of a small unpretending house, which but for the creepers trained round it would have been ugly, and which spoke of decayed fortunes—from its contiguity to the charred and ivy-mantled ruins of the old Hall, with their vast fissures and dismal rents—that the ambitious man murmured to himself, ' No, I don't see anything to be got here ! '

With this conclusion the Genius of Calculation came to a dead stop. But a voice from that spirit which presides over the gastric juices sighed out soothingly, ' except a luncheon.' Then, with the majestic strut of a gentleman and a schoolmaster, Mr. Tuftoe stepped across the insignificant hall, and was ushered into the drawing-room.

CHAPTER VIII.

MEANWHILE, Mr. Latimer Highclerc had been two days an inmate of Wardour Hall. But so little had he taken advantage of his possession of the ground that, after hearing all Lady Anne's doubts and perplexities, reading Dr. Wortham's letter, and making himself somewhat acquainted with Lionel's manners, disposition, and worldly fortunes, he had said candidly : ' Though I am not sure that

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all public schools would suit your son, yet I think that one in which he would have the advantage of being placed under the care and in the house of his father's friend (who would smooth over the first difficulties, and forbear with some peculiarities) would be preferable on all accounts to any private tuition.'

Lady Anne, poor soul, had trembled when she heard this. And she trembled still more when the door opened, and her eye rested on the awful brow of Mr. Pertinax Tuftoe.

Why schoolmasters should have that grand air, why they should impose more upon people accustomed to the presence of earthly dignities than it is in the power of other magnates to do, I know not. But so it is. Awful they are. And Lady Anne could not have trembled more had she been presented to the ghost of Louis Quatorze.

CHAPTER IX.

[THE opening page of this chapter, which described the first meeting between Lady Anne and Mr. Tuftoe, is unfortunately missing. In the next page they are already engaged in discussing the qualities of Lionel, and the comparative advantages of public and private education.]

'Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox were both great men,' said Mr. Tuftoe, with justice and candour, 'and rare exceptions to men in general. No public school can guarantee to any parent the production of a Fox; whether private education is sure to produce a Pitt, it may be invidious in me to decide. I doubt it.'

'My boy is very clever,' said Lady Anne, with energy.

'I was prepared to hear that,' rejoined Mr. Tuftoe, with serene sarcasm. 'And no doubt he has very delicate health, and must be taken great care of. Your ladyship is particular that he should never overheat himself at cricket, and change his shoes and stockings whenever he comes in!'

'Certainly—that is very essential,' said Lady Anne, unconscious of the irony. 'But Lionel is not delicate now. It is not his health I am fearful of; it is his temper. He has such a spirit.'

'So much the better,' quoth Mr. Tuftoe.

'Rather headstrong.'

'Soon cure that, my dear lady.'

Nothing could be more affable and reassuring than Mr. Tuftoe's smile as he said this.

'Oh! but no horsewhip. He would never bear it.'

'I understand,' said Mr. Tuftoe, briefly.

'He is so far advanced in his studies that, I trust, of course, he will not be subjected to that horrid system you call fagging.'

'Impossible to escape, Lady Anne. Every boy must fag at his first entrance. But if he is advanced in his studies, it will be but for a very short time.'

'So I told Lady Anne,' struck in Mr. Highclerc. 'It is a pity that the rule is inexorable, for the young gentleman is a very good scholar.'

'You have examined him, sir, in the Horatian metres, I suppose, and in Greek iambics?'

'No, only in construing. He reads Sophocles and Thucydides with ease, though now and then he makes a mistake in his tenses.'

'Ah! not well grounded! do him all the good in the world to put him back. Nothing so bad as setting boys to read the higher classics prematurely. Had I not better see your boy, Lady Anne?'

Scarce were these words out of Mr. Tuftoe's mouth when Lionel himself appeared at the window, and, at a sign from his mother, opened it and stepped in.

'This is the gentleman I spoke to you of, Lionel,' said the mother.

The schoolmaster and the boy looked at each other—the boy not with insolence, but with bold and fearless curiosity; the schoolmaster not with disdain, but with an internal resolution that the boy should wear a very different look if once he became a pupil at
* * * School.

A short conversation upon Greek and Latin, Lionel's previous method of study, &c., then took place between the two: Lady Anne admiring her son's answers; Mr. Highclerc leaning his head on his hand, and occasionally sighing.

The conversation ended by a request from Mr. Tuftoe that Lionel would seat himself, and write a copy of sapphics upon 'Spring.'

'I hate sapphics,' said Lionel bluffly; 'and what can one say upon Spring that has not been said before?'

'My dear!' exclaimed Lady Anne, in reproof and terror.

The smile of Mr. Tuftoe would have done honour to Minos.

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‘ Write the verses, if you please, Mr. Hastings ; we don’t discuss orders at * * * .’

Lionel tossed the hair from his brow and looked up, but caught his mother’s imploring eye, bit his lip, and seated himself.

‘ You have a Gradus, I suppose, Mr. Hastings ? You had better get it.’

‘ I left my Gradus behind, sir. I had rather make a false quantity than have all invention chilled by opening the page upon a set of hack phrases.’

Mr. Highclerc nodded approvingly. Mr. Tuftoe looked bewildered. Then, with an encouraging but Jove-like nod towards Lady Anne, he said softly :

‘ Don’t be uneasy, my dear Madam. We will talk of these little matters of manner and temper by ourselves. But perhaps this is your luncheon hour. Shall we withdraw, and leave Mr. Hastings to court the Muse ?’

Lady Anne took the hint, and rang for luncheon. Then, taking Mr. Tuftoe’s arm, she led the way to the dining-room. Mr. Highclerc lingered behind a moment, in order to steal up to Lionel kindly.

‘ Remember you will be classed at * * * accordingly as you write, not with originality, but correctness. Attend to your quantities.’

‘ But, sir, you yourself said that more attention was paid to this trumpery verse-making than it deserves.’

‘ You are not to adopt my notions at present, but Mr. Tuftoe’s.’

‘ I will be no impostor. I will be what I am—good or bad,’ said Lionel hotly.

And so Mr. Highclerc left him, and slowly passed into the dining-room.

‘ I have just been telling Mr. Tuftoe that you advise my sending Lionel to * * *,’ said Lady Anne.

Mr. Tuftoe, who had been greatly amazed at first on hearing such disinterested counsel on the part of a private tutor (a race that he regarded with great contempt), had, upon second thoughts, considered that Mr. Highclerc wished to palm upon the Royal Institution of * * * a pupil neither docile nor promising. Therefore, with emulous generosity, he replied :—

‘ And from what I have seen of the young gentleman, I think he would do best with a private tutor.’

‘ I should so like to hear what you two gentlemen have to say

on the matter,' cried Lady Anne, as the luncheon was now placed on the table. 'You need not wait, Preston.'

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The servant retired, and the three were left to themselves to discuss chicken and education.

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'What do you consider the great advantages of a public school, Mr. Tuftoe?'

'First, Madam—(may I ask you for a slice of that tongue?)—first, a public school makes a boy hardy.'

'Lionel is hardy enough already, Heaven knows,' sighed the mother.

'Next, it makes a boy a gentleman.'

'Oh! he is that. Dr. Wortham says so. How could he be otherwise?'

'Thirdly'—continued Mr. Tuftoe, who treated all interruptions with supreme indifference—'thirdly, it enables him to form good and useful connections and friendships. Fourthly, it brings him up to be a man of the world. And, fifthly, if he will work hard and become a good scholar, it gives him a distinction on starting into life which, with all submission to Mr.—Mr.—the gentleman here—no private tuition can pretend to bestow.'

Seeing that Mr. Tuftoe here came to a stop, Lady Anne now turned to Mr. Highclerc. 'And what do you think are the especial advantages of a private education?'

'I really do not know whether I ought to state them in presence of Mr. Tuftoe,' replied Mr. Highclerc bashfully.

'Oh sir, I have no prejudices—I suppose there are *some* advantages in the private system. I should be very glad to hear them. May I take wine with your ladyship?'

'The advantages, then, appear to me simply these. In a large public school, all the boys, whatever their differing habits, talents and tempers, must be subjected to one general routine. This cannot be equally applicable to all. In private tuition, the principal can study the character of each boy individually, and train it accordingly. At a public school, a brilliant boy may get on if he chooses: at a private establishment, something may be made of every boy, brilliant or not.'

'Ah, possibly,' said Mr. Tuftoe, 'possibly. (A lobster salad, I declare—nothing better!). Proceed, sir.'

"In a public school, only the classics are attended to, and no attention is paid to English literature and history: in a private establishment, a taste for general knowledge may be instilled. One

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boy may never do much in Latin and Greek, who may yet have a natural aptitude for other acquirements which may serve him instead.'

'Serve instead of Latin and Greek, sir? Pardon me there: a classical taste is everything—for a gentleman, I mean!'

'There is a classical taste in modern letters as well as ancient.'

'Only to be acquired through a thorough appreciation of—Horace in particular, sir.'

'And how many boys at a public school thoroughly appreciate Horace?'

'It is their own fault if they don't.'

'True, but at a private establishment, the master takes to himself some of the fault which in public schools is ascribed solely to the boy.'

'With these sentiments, permit me to inquire,' said Mr. Tuftoe, reddening, and throwing himself back in his chair, 'why you recommend that Mr. Lionel Hastings should be sent to * * *.'

'Because,' said Mr. Highclerc, after a little hesitation, 'the young gentleman's former master, who ought to know best his character and bent of mind, advised a public school; and from what I have seen of Master Hastings I should fear that, unless one of the authorities, like yourself, sir, devoted much trouble and care to him, he would not stay long——'

'Eh!'

'Or do that credit to his instructors which his mere capacities ought to enable him to do. But as I heard that you, sir, were the particular friend of the late Colonel Hastings, I did not doubt that you would pay your friend's son that nice, and minute, and watchful, attention which he could not expect at other public schools—in a word, have your eye constantly upon him.'

'My eye, sir!' ejaculated Mr. Tuftoe, and paused: he would like to have added, 'and Betty Martin!' But he would not condescend to a jest so vulgar, tempting though it was. 'Sir, you do my eye more credit than it can possibly deserve.' Then, having now completed his luncheon, and wishing to proceed to Lord Dumdrum, he turned politely to Lady Anne, who had been listening with her lips apart and her hands clasped, looking so fair and so motherlike that she might have softened any man less plagued by mothers than the Rev. Mr. Tuftoe. The schoolmaster resumed in his superb condescending way.

'Nothing would have pleased me more than to devote myself

night and day to your very amiable and promising son ; but, unfortunately, I have no vacancy in my house. The elder son of my Lord Pimperden, and the third son of my particular friend Lord Dumdum—most intellectual man, whose scientific attainments as a naturalist are doubtless known to you, sir, as a scholar. In Scarabæides, his Coprophagi are matchless, and his Melilophili most interesting, though as yet incomplete. But to return : the sons of these noblemen have just left me, and their places are about to be filled up by the son of Sir Nathaniel Peatacre (immense property in Yorkshire), and the son of Mr. Sterling, M.P. (first-rate Parliamentary reputation). Nevertheless, your son could be very comfortable in the houses of other tutors—not quite so sought after as mine, but unexceptionable. If he lodged at a Dame's, it would be a trifle more economical. Should you decide on sending him to * * *, I shall be most happy to enter his name, recommend to you a suitable house for his reception, and, as you suggest, sir, keep my eye upon him, as often as the other duties of my responsible situation and the claims of four hundred and fifty-three other boys will permit that eye so enviable an honour.' Then Mr. Tuftoe rose, and added, ' With your ladyship's leave, I will ring for my carriage.'

' But I thought at least you were to examine Lionel,' said Lady Anne, in a tone between complaint and indignation.

' I will look at his verses with pleasure—examined he has already been, it appears, by this gentleman. You have been yourself at a public school, sir, I should guess—Rugby ? '

' No ! I was educated at home by my father.'

' Ah, I understand now ; not at the University either, sir ? '

' Yes, I took my degree at Cambridge.'

' Tried for honours ? '

' I was second Wrangler.'

' Eh, eh, indeed ! Your studies, then, were devoted exclusively to mathematics.'

' Not exactly. I obtained the Pitt Scholarship.'

Here Mr. Tuftoe opened his eyes very wide, and, indeed, felt a strange mixture of admiration and contempt at the intelligence conveyed to him—admiration for the learning necessary to obtain such distinction ; and contempt for the learned man who, having obtained it, was nothing better than an obscure private tutor. For want of anything to say further, he strode into the drawing-room.

' Well, young gentleman—and the sapphics ? Oh ! playing with the dog. Nothing done, I suppose.'

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'All done, sir, as well as I can.' And Lionel handed a sheet of paper scrawled over with a bold, rude, but very intelligible caligraphy.

Mr. Tuftoe turned first to the amount done.

'Forty verses already. Very good—surprising!'

Then, shifting his spectacles, he shot a glance at the substance.

The first stanza was without a fault—or a beauty.

'Very good indeed,' said Mr. Tuftoe; 'highly creditable.'

The second stanza had two original ideas, and one false quantity.

'W—he-w!' whistled Mr. Tuftoe; w—h—cw! This is a sad fall off! This *e*, Mr. Hastings—this *e* is as long as my arm!'

The third and fourth stanzas showed that the writer had got warm on his subject; they were written with vigour and gusto; they were the efforts of a mind that comprehended the Poetical, and strove, though with the extravagance of boyhood, to express living modern thought in the dead old tongue. Poetical the verses were, not classical.

Mr. Tuftoe read no more! 'We must go back, my young friend, *ab initio*. Very ill-grounded, I see; boys always are so at private schools. Start fresh with longs and shorts; and the Gradus is not to be despised.'

'But he will not be a fag long?' whispered Lady Anne, much disheartened by the foregoing criticism. Low as was the whisper, Lionel overheard it, and rose so abruptly that the table shook, and the macaw screamed, and the dog barked. Lionel himself remained silent.

'Long! let me see—about a year, I should say—provided he is not turned back.'

'And please, sir,' said Lionel, with his full round voice—'pray, if a fag refuses to do what his master, the other boy, orders him, what happens?'

'His master, I suppose, thrashes him, my good young friend.'

'And suppose that when the master attempted it, he got thrashed himself?'

'Oh, that would never happen twice, my dear Mr. Hastings. One of the monitors would be appealed to.'

'And if the fag thrashed the monitor? I know one at least who would try his best!'

'Lionel, Lionel, my dear!' cried Lady Anne.

Mr. Tuftoe paused. 'Pleasant boy to be always *in* my eye!' thought he. 'I shouldn't wonder if he would be *at* it. I vow and pro-

test that his right fist is clenched already.' Then he said gravely, and with the sense derived from experience: 'My boy, this talk is all very well *here*. But did you ever see a steam engine?'

'Yes, sir, once.'

'Try to stop one of its wheels when you next see it—and you will then know what it is when one boy, or one man either, tries to stop the wheels of a great established system. I see my carriage is come round. Good day, dear lady. I am most flattered by your confidence, and I have been much refreshed by your hospitality. Good day, Mr. Highclerc. To our happy meeting, and better thoughts to you, Mr Hastings.'

'But do you advise me, or do you not, to send Lionel to * * *?' said Lady Anne, following the schoolmaster across the hall. 'You see what he is—what a spirit!'

'Ma'am,' cried Mr. Tuftoe, struggling towards his carriage, 'I cannot take upon myself the responsibility of advice, the consequence may be so awful.'

'Awful!'

'For if flogging and thrashing don't break in that very charming boy's spirit, why he will be expelled, and expulsion from * * * is ruin for life. Explain that to his no doubt excellent understanding. I have the deepest interest in his welfare. Simon, tell the coachman to drive on to Dumdrum Park.'

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CHAPTER XV.

*(Supplementary and Illustrative.)**'LIONEL HASTINGS'—continued.*

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Poor widowed mothers left with wild boys to manage, I pity you from my very soul! Ye can never know what boys are; even we men cease to know when we have left boyhood behind us. They are the most troublesome, anxious, diabolical charges; and yet, if there be any good in them at all, there are such grand elements in the chasms and deeps of that struggling, half-formed, chaotic world which lies in their turbulent hearts. The greatest man that ever lived (I stop not to ask who he be) had some half hours as a boy when he had sublimer dreams and aspirations than he ever knew as a man. Alas and alas! as boys we seem of the race of Titans; how comes it that we grow up into such commonplace mortals? Who would not exchange whole hundredweights of his matured submissive social wisdom for one grain of the old-hero folly of our friend Lionel; braving, in the might of his valiant ignorance, Tuftoes, and masters, monitors, systems, and machines. Pr-r-r! My own cold blood is tingling again. Gently, gently! Pertinax Tuftoe, thou art right; there is no resisting thee, and that of which thou art prototype. Shake hands on it, friend World—no, don't shake hands: I respect thee best at a distance. What a villanous look it has of Tuftoe, our friend World! Drive off to thy Dumdrums, and peace go with thee! I suspect that if Christopher Cotton had less resembled that thistle-eating, philosophical, quadruped to which I have before likened him, his conference with Mr. Tuftoe would have produced a very different effect, and that Lionel Hastings might have been preferred to one or the other of the two boys whom he now elected to the vacant board and bed at his house.

To judge of the soundness of this suspicion, it is necessary to take a rapid glance at the antecedents of our narrative.

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XV.

In the reign of King James I. a cadet of the illustrious House of Hastings had risen into fortune and repute, married the heiress of an old knightly family, styled The Wardours of Wardour Hall, and according to the History of the shire, 'enlarged and embellished the old Manor House, lived in great state and opulence, and died seised of the several lordships and manors of Wardour, Bletchforth, Mapletree, and Storkswold, the which are now enjoyed by the lineal descendants of his marriage with the said Ruth Wardour of Wardour.'

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But from the time of Anne this goodly inheritance had gradually declined. The Hastingses of Wardour were a jovial, old English race—hospitable, large-hearted, open-handed—the sort of race that has never prospered much since the days of Anne. The immediate predecessor of Colonel Hastings had, however, been the first of that line who had moved the scene of expense from the shire to the metropolis. He was a man of great natural powers of mind, not without literary tastes, a keen politician, but always in opposition; a good liver and mighty Bacchanalian. It was not the characteristic of his family to do anything by halves. No petty peddling, small, huxter-like vices had they. If they resolved to ruin their health and their fortune, they did it in a proud, mighty way, as befitted their descent from the Plantagenet and Warwick the King-maker. Colonel Hastings had, however, received a careful education. If he inherited the reckless spirit of his ancestors, he elevated its energy at least to higher objects. Not finding sufficient field for his abilities and eager temperament in the army, which he entered on leaving college—for his regiment was not called into service—he obtained a seat in Parliament, and had already acquired a very considerable position therein, when, having triumphed by three votes, and at a cost of 12,000*l.*, in a contested election, he was carried in a chair through the borough, and the day being exceedingly wet and his head uncovered, he was carried on a bier to the family vault about a month afterwards. Colonel Hastings had married for love the daughter of Lord Norvale before he had entered Parliament or thought very seriously upon politics. When he entered fairly upon public life, his opinions were discovered to be diametrically opposed to those of his father-in-law. The Earl was a good man, and a kind man, but he had no notion of any other man, especially a son-in-law, having a will of his own. He at first

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contented himself with cold and disdainful reserve, but the Colonel had the indiscreet infirmity of frankness, and the true Parliamentary appetite for argument. He sought discussion on the points at issue, and the result of the discussion was that the two politicians never spoke to each other again. In fact the Earl had, in his irritation, wounded his son-in-law in one of those points where, to a man of honour, there is no other forgiveness than that of a Christian; which in the modern sense of the phrase, whatever it may mean in the primitive and Scriptural, merely denotes that you don't actually murder the man who has offended you.

The Earl had said that he had been taken in and deceived; and that, had he known both the political opinions, and the pecuniary affairs, of Colonel Hastings at first—as he ought to have done—Colonel Hastings should never have had his daughter.

Colonel Hastings, on hearing this, took up his hat and walked from the Earl's house, that day, and passed him in the street without bowing, the next.

When the Colonel died, the pecuniary prospects of his orphan heir were certainly so unfavourable that nothing but the protection which the Court of Chancery extends to orphans of property could have put them into a worse.

Fortunately, however, as the mother was left sole guardian to her son, this appeal to the benignity of that paternal Court was not made. Fortunately, also, her own jointure, and a settlement of 10,000*l.* upon her children by her marriage, were free from the claims of the various mortgagees, annuitants, and creditors who gathered round the estates of Wardour. And now this lady, whom we have seen but in that light most favourable perhaps to her heart, but the least so to her understanding—the light of the anxious, fond, irresolute mother—evinced a readiness and vigour of intellect of which no one could have conceived her capable. Her natural desire was to save to her son the inheritance of his forefathers. She, herself, saw mortgagee and creditor. Some she conciliated by persuasions, others by promises and personal engagements. She surrendered half her jointure to go towards instalments of the debts due to the most obdurate and pressing claimants. She contrived to prevent foreclosures, and maintained the lands intact. And as some who had only life annuities of from 10 to 15 per cent. on the property died off, and as the interest on the 10,000*l.* assured to Lionel as sole child of their marriage accumulated (for this interest, though paid into her hands for his schooling and maintenance, she instantly reinvested on his

behalf), there became a fair chance that, on attaining his majority, he would derive a competent income from the property.

In all this, and in the general management of the estate, the letting of farms, &c., Lady Anne had found an unexpected and invaluable assistant in Christopher Cotton. Whether it was that he fatigued and prosed people down to his terms, or whether, as we may shrewdly surmise, there was a large degree of innocent cunning and mother-wit under his apparent simplicity, certain it is that no ordinary man of business could have managed for her half so well.

At the Colonel's death, Lord Norvale wrote affectionately to his daughter, and even offered to take charge of Lionel. But he accompanied this proposal with strictures so severe upon the principles, political and pecuniary, of the deceased, and so spoke of the 'poor ruined boy' with a pity which Lord Dives might have expressed for an infant Lazarus, that Lady Anne could not answer with that degree of gratitude which the Earl thought becoming; and he abruptly declined all further interference in her affairs.

So far, then, Mr. Christopher Cotton had not inaccurately represented the circumstances and prospects of the heir of Wardour. It was true that his inheritance was heavily encumbered; true that Lady Anne stinted herself to provide for his education; true that he derived, and was likely to derive, no benefit from his relationship to the Earl. But there were other and brighter views of his future, on which Mr. Cotton had not expatiated, and which might materially have altered Mr. Tuftoe's estimate of his importance.

The Colonel had been greatly respected and beloved by certain magnates of his party, and with that delicacy and tenderness which are no uncommon characteristics of those patrician politicians who, in struggling for the ascendancy of their opinions, neither desire nor would accept anything for themselves, these eminent persons * * *

[Here there is an hiatus in the manuscript. The pages introducing Mr. Tempest are lost, and the continuation of the narrative begins in the middle of a sentence.]

* * * that he should like to hear every year how the boy went on, that before Lionel came to manhood Mr. Tempest would see him, and that he hoped to like him enough 'to do something handsome for him.'

In subsequent letters Mr. Tempest had plainly requested that

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Lionel might be brought up to views of Parliament and public life on the right side of the question—which Lady Anne took it for granted was the side honoured by Colonel Hastings—and, added this odd kinsman, ‘If his principles are worthy of him (that is, if they agree with mine), I can put him in Parliament and keep him there.’

No wonder, then, that Lady Anne had always looked forward to public life as the future career of her son; and here Lionel did not thwart her.

Without knowing anything of these promises in his favour, he took naturally, and as by the impulse of his temperament, to that grand sphere of strife and action which is embraced in the word Politics, when nobly construed. In his earliest musings over the trite schoolboy Histories of Greece and Rome, he would puzzle himself and his preceptors with questions on problems never solved to this day. Aristocrat and Demus, Patrician and Plebeian, did not pass by his quick bright eyes as mere words. And, when the historical compiler indulged in some edifying moral or apophthegm, deducing effect from cause, or warning the youthful reader of the excesses of ancient commonwealths, with comparisons between Pericles and George III., to the disadvantage of the Athenian, Lionel’s combative mind started up, always in direct opposition to the compiler. At school he loved to argue, to harangue. He got up rival factions of Cæsar and Pompey. He enacted the ostracism of Aristides, and attempted to justify the said ostracism in a long speech that would have done credit to Mr. Grote. He was fond of getting some old newspaper, poring over the debates, and then trying to decide for himself. These inclinations coloured his general taste in literature. He had in him a vivid and glowing love for the Poetic and Picturesque, but the poetry and the picture that pleased him were of no pastoral stream, no Dutch still life. He liked that which had strong human interest and showed men in action, not in repose. Add to these prepossessions towards the very career for which Fate seemed to destine him, a passionate, intense love of country: such a love as is less rare with boys than men; such a love as the glorious old Classics fan into enthusiasm; and you may recognise in Lionel Hastings one of those who are pretty sure to be troublesome to some Ministry or other, and, if they cannot be a Chatham, may hope at least to be a Cartwright.

Now, to return to Mr. Christopher Cotton: had that gentleman fairly stated to Mr. Tuftoe the better and fairer prospects of the

heir of Wardour Hall; had he said 'the Duke of This and the Marquis of That take the liveliest interest in his fortunes; he has a kinsman wondrous wealthy who says he can buy him into Parliament and keep him there; his abilities, such as they be, are all for action;' I do verily believe that Mr. Tuftoe would have found room in his house and heart for Lionel Hastings. 'Not,' Mr. Tuftoe would have inly said—'not that I calculate on any good he could do to *me*; it would be a long time to wait before he could have much influence in the creation of bishops, even of deans and prebends, be he ever so pushed and pushing. But I have a son of his own age, whom he might benefit. Early friendships are often very useful, and paternal affection is far-seeing.'

How Mr. Christopher Cotton, who managed Lady Anne's other affairs so well, came to manage this so ill, I cannot pretend to say; unless, indeed, Mr. Christopher Cotton secretly was of Lionel's side, and wished to prevent his going to a public school, under the idea, not that the school would be too much for him, but that he would be too much for the school.

And if thou didst so opine, and so conduct thy diplomacy, O Gentle Kit, why thou wert not as like our friend the thistle-eater, as Lavater would suppose, judging by the physiognomy.

CHAPTER XI.

I NEED not say that Lady Anne now resigned the idea of sending Lionel to * * *, and Mr. Highclerc was requested to undertake the completion of the boy's education.

That gentleman asked a few days to consider. 'I should not mind it if I had no other pupil,' said he; 'but if your boy should unsettle them all!'

'Poor dear child!' cried Lady Anne. 'How he is persecuted! I love him all the better for it; and if you do not take him he shall be educated at home, as Mr. Pitt was!'

But happily, if not for Lionel, at least for the dog, the macaw, the gold fish, and the pony, the result of a few private conferences with Lionel persuaded Mr. Highclerc that he might receive his proffered pupil with little danger to the rest of his flock.

He soon saw that he had two strong checks on this impetuous nature: first, in Lionel's punctilious sense of honour; next, in his

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fervent love for his mother. And when, by exciting the last, he obtained from the first a solemn promise that Lionel would implicitly attend to the mild rules of the establishment; and that whenever he thought himself unjustly aggrieved, he would make no complaint before others, but state it to the principal in private, 'as man to man' (that lofty phrase completely won over the heart of Fourteen)—when, I say, this promise was given, and hands shaken on it, Mr. Highclerc had not a fear or scruple left.

But it was now the time of his vacation; it wanted several weeks to the next school term. Mr. Highclerc, whose health was delicate, required himself a holiday by the seaside. And in the meanwhile Lionel was to stay with his mother. The tutor wished to set him some task that would occupy his energies and not displease his taste, and while wondering what this task should be chance favoured him.

Lionel was an English schoolboy, therefore I need not say that he had been taught little or nothing of English history. His passion for political reading had made him, of his own accord, seize with avidity upon such works thereon as had come in his way, but these were chance waifs. It happened one day that Mr. Highclerc made some observations (incidental to Lionel's ancestor, the first Lord Hastings, beheaded by Richard III.) upon the Wars of the Roses, which struck Lionel, and he fell to reading Hume's History. He found this brilliant but rapid work insufficient to satisfy his curiosity as to the leading characters and agencies in that turbulent domestic strife. He came to Mr. Highclerc with his doubts and questions. Now, the Colonel's library had been preserved, and, though not extensive in other branches of knowledge, it was very fairly complete in English History, as became a distinguished member of the English Parliament. Mr. Highclerc took from this library one of the old Chronicles, and, somehow or other, all that had been before shadows grew lifelike to Lionel.

'I should like to read all these Chronicles. I should like to know the history of my own country well—oh, but very very well!'

'Begin, then. That be your holiday task. Here are most of the books you require. Take these folios of Rapin for your general text-book. They are very dull, but more full and important than Hume. Turn to Henry's 'Great Britain' for chapters on Manners, and here are all the principal Chronicles from which the facts in the History are taken: some in very indifferent Latin, some in very

old-fashioned English. But in whatever we learn there ought to be labour.'¹

'Why?'

'First, because labour exercises all the muscles of the mind, as it does those of the body. One grows stronger in the arm by felling wood than by dangling a cane.'

'True, sir.'

'Next, because we remember well and durably in proportion to what it costs us to acquire.'

'That's natural enough, sir. I will promise you to labour.'

So when Mr. Highclerc went, he left Lionel resolutely at work on the History of England. And what a history it is when so studied! What enchanted forests, stretching far on into fairyland, open from those trim little hedgerows which our historians in vogue seek to plant in the Past! Into what gigantic proportions arise all those old warriors and churchmen, who seem dwarfed into a catalogue of mere names when we find some mighty reign of romaunt and chivalry, some momentous era of Freedom and Feudalism, compressed into a dozen neat-written pages.

Lionel grew enamoured of his study. He worked at it day and night. The pony had a rest. And at every step he took in the glorious record, England became more dear to him, more a living thing in his mind and soul. Athens and Rome paled before her.

[¹ It will be seen later that this was precisely the direction taken by what my father in his Autobiography calls his 'first course of serious reading.'—L.]

CHAPTER XVI.

*(Supplementary and Illustrative.)**'LIONEL HASTINGS'—continued.*

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BUT Lady Anne grew alarmed at such intense application. Lionel looked pale. She insisted on his taking exercise and amusement. The County Races were at hand. He must go to them.

We are all of us glad of a reprieve from any study forced upon us ; but from a study which we have chosen for ourselves ; in which we have found pleasures unexpected ; which we have made a companion, nay an actual wife : endowed it with all our goods of thought, and worshipped it with soul and body, we are unwillingly diverted, be we ever so lamblike by temper. I knew a worthy man, an officer in the army, high in station and repute, who never read anything but the newspaper, but in a happy hour he took to netting, and if you disturbed him in the midst of a lemon-bag, heaven and earth rang with his complaint that he could never have an hour to himself for rational occupation.

However, when the day for the races arrived, the pony was brought to the door, and Lionel, who was in the midst of Froissart, saw a white hand placed on the magic page, and heard a soft voice say : ' What, not dressed yet, Lionel ? You must make haste ! '

Dressed ! He was already dressed in mail *cap-a-pie*. And he was summoned to lay by helm and hauberke for ignominious jerkin of blue and trowsers of Russian drill. Lionel had not yet arrived at that age when, as Gil Blas says, ' the toilet is the pastime of the young.' And Lady Anne, with maternal providence, saw that his waistcoat was not buttoned awry, and with her own hands adjusted the knot of his neckcloth.

Resigned, but inly murmuring, the boy was then passively led to his impatient steed. But when the pony, at sight of him, put down

its ears and pawed the ground, and the fresh strong breeze played on his cheek, the natural love of movement and exercise returned to youth. And as he vaulted on the saddle, and the pony bounded forward, Lady Anne gazed on his bold face, and his easy horsemanship, with excusable pride.

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His way wound through green lanes, and now and then through short paths cut amidst thick umbrageous woods. Froissart and chivalry were with him more vividly there than in his little chamber. He was a knight on his way to the lists, and a thousand adventures befell him by the road; if all in fancy, why such adventures are the wildest. At last he emerged on the high road; carriages and gigs and horsemen, with many a group of rural pedestrians, animated the thoroughfare, and called him back to existing life. And when he was pacing on the racecourse; saw the stand and the starting-post; saw the caps of the jockeys, and the racers in their cloths; heard the hum and the din, and caught the general excitement—then he became all and wholly in the present. Sympathy with the throng around plucked his heartstrings to the cause of the universal agitation; as it ever must the heart of one who is to become fitted for busy, practical life, and to take impassioned part in the 'quicquid agunt homines.'

Lady Anne never mixed in the society of the county. Her widowhood and her straitened circumstances were her excuse for declining all the hospitalities at first tendered her, and so they had gradually ceased. On that ground, filled by the residents of the county, in which for birth and hereditary possessions the Hastingses of Wardour ranked among the first, the heir of this ancient house knew not a soul. He was alone in the crowd. But he did not feel his solitude; he was not one who cannot shift for himself; he rather liked it than not. He pushed on his pony through ranks of tall steeds, and darted across files of carriages, with their poles just escaping his own limbs and the pony's haunches. Lady Anne would have fainted to see the perils he incurred and conquered. He won his way to as good a place for seeing the race as if he had come like the Lord-Lieutenant of the County, in his carriage-and-four, preceded by two outriders. And when the racers flashed and thundered by to the goal, fleetest among those that followed was the pony of Lionel Hastings.

There was something in the life and spirit of the boy-rider that drew on him, in the intervals between the heats, an attention of which he was unconscious.

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One lady in especial, seated in an open barouche near the winning-post, had exclaimed three or four times: 'Who is that handsome boy? He will be sure to meet with an accident. Do look at him. Oh, Lord Dumdrum, do go to that boy's aid! See, he has got into high words with the man who clears the course. That man with the great whip.'

'Breaking must be suppressed,' said Lord Dumdrum, without stirring, 'and if people will cross the course, men with whips must interfere. Otherwise, what is the good of men with whips?'

Not heeding this sage and wise constitutional doctrine, the lady clapped her hands, with a pretty silvery laugh: 'Oh, do look! He has given the man's horse a cut with his own whip, and set the horse off. Here he comes.'

Lionel galloped by, intact and triumphant, and, brushing close by Lord Dumdrum's quiet hack, that animal gave a jump which nearly pitched his lordship into the barouche.

'That boy will come to no good,' muttered Lord Dumdrum, as he slowly recovered his equilibrium.

'Indeed,' said a majestic man, who was in a carriage filled with ladies and young people, drawn alongside the barouche—'indeed, that remark is said with your lordship's intuitive penetration into character. I recognise the ill-mannered and presuming boy of whom I spoke to your lordship, as presenting so unfavourable a contrast to the mild bearing of your son John.'

'What? That is young Hastings of Wardour, is it?' said Lord Dumdrum with unusual vivacity. 'I should like to know him. Those old ruins of his must abound with Scarabæides. My great Coprophagus came from Netley Abbey.'

'Hastings of Wardour? Oh, I must know him!' cried the lady in the barouche. 'We ought all to know him. Will nobody go and bring Mr. Hastings here? Say that Lady Clara Manford wants to speak to him.'

There were several equestrians grouped around the barouche, and at this imploring question most of them bowed and cantered off. But the bell rang, a new heat was at hand, and the equestrians forgot the message.

Just as the heat was over, there arose a great hubbub in the vicinity of the barouche. A poor labouring man had been knocked down by a horse in some tradesman's gig, and was taken up insensible. As soon as Lady Clara heard the cause of the agitation, and learned that the poor man was unaccompanied and friendless, she

insisted on his being brought into the barouche. In many things, though not only a fine lady, but a woman of rare genius, Lady Clara had all the impulses of a spoiled, charming, kind-hearted child. And silencing all remonstrances of the Dumdrum party, and the more rational assurance of a sensible yeoman, that it would be much better to convey the man at once, upon a hurdle, to the hospital in the neighbouring town, the sufferer was actually lifted into the carriage, and as soon as, thanks to Lady Clara's salts, he had recovered his senses and stared round him, was questioned in the sweetest tones of female compassion as to his injury.

Now, there was this double peculiarity in Lady Clara: whatever her faults, there was always in them a touch of the Natural; and whatever her merits, there was always in them a touch of the Dramatic.

Thus the one always obtained from friends an indulgent, and the other, from the world, an illiberal, construction.

'My lady is coming the Popular,' whispered a shrewd tradesman with a grin.

'One of Lady Clara's theatrical exhibitions,' said Lady Dumdrum.

'Sentimental,' murmured a man of the world, riding away unperceived.

'Damn'd affected,' lisped a dandy, in the wake of the world.

'What a bore all this must be for Manford!' growled a London formalist.

'She's as mad as a March hare,' quoth a blunt country squire.

And the group, more polished and aristocratic, that had surrounded Lady Clara's barouche, dispersed as by common consent; as, on the other hand, a cluster of the humbler pedestrians gathered and gaped around the wheels, peeping over each other's shoulders, to see what the great lady was really going to do with the poor man.

But amongst these last there had been one unnoticed observer. Lionel Hastings had resigned his pony to the care of one of those itinerant foragers who, in the more retired corners of race-grounds, provide hay and corn for the beasts whose owners are merciful; and the instincts of his nature attracted him towards the spot where he had seen the mob gather. To his young ardent heart there was something touching and sublime in the fair Samaritan's act of charity. He heard with indignation the derisive murmurs in his vicinity. And his own high disdain of mere opinion aroused

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his admiration of the courageous benevolence that dared to shock convention and brave ridicule. Like most clever boys, without being a poet, Lionel occasionally wrote poetry. Some verses, rude indeed, but not without felicitous spirit, shaped themselves in his head as he gazed on the lady and heard the bystanders—verses in homage to the good action, and in sarcasm at those who could misinterpret it. While this impromptu flashed on him, Lady Clara, looking round, and unconscious that her guards had vanished, exclaimed, ‘Come on, one of you, and help to support this poor man.’

Lionel pushed through the crowd, sprang on the wheel, and was in the barouche in an instant.

Lady Clara stared at the boy with surprise, and then thanked him with a beaming smile. ‘He says he thinks his collar-bone is broken; what shall we do?’

‘Drive at once to the nearest doctor,’ answered Lionel, with the practical readiness intuitive to his strong sense.

‘How right you are!’ exclaimed Lady Clara. ‘I should not have thought of that.’

Lionel, meanwhile, had taken on himself to order the coachman to proceed to the neighbouring town, and the carriage drove off, scattering the mob to the right and left. Some of the commoner people, then seeing that the right thing was done, took off their hats and cheered. Lady Clara bowed her graceful head, with a flush of pleasure on her cheek. Lionel, impassive and unmoved, continued to question the sufferer. Nothing was said by either lady or boy to each other, though they both spoke to their charge, who began to be exceedingly disturbed at his novel situation, and, forgetting his pain, could only reply by apologies of the most bashful character.

They soon arrived at the town, and stopped at a surgeon’s door. The surgeon was luckily at home. The poor man was lifted out and examined. No bones were broken, but he had received some severe bruises. Lady Clara entreated the surgeon to keep the man in his own house for a day or two, as the latter came from a distance; and emptied her purse into the hands of the sufferer; who, more and more bewildered, thought he had never made so good a day’s work, and inly resolved that he would never miss a race again as long as he lived. Meanwhile, Lionel, meaning here to take his leave of Lady Clara, had taken advantage of pen and ink in the surgeon’s parlour to dash off his verses, and, thrusting them into the lady’s hand as she was getting into the carriage, cried, ‘Good-bye; I must be off now;’ and so passed down the street.

Lady Clara looked after him as she got into the carriage, and then glanced with curiosity at the paper. Could the boy have made her a declaration of love? Just like him, she thought. However, when she read the verses, she felt more sensibly flattered than by the former unjust supposition. And, accustomed though she had been to similar compliments from the most eminent poets of her age—compliments intimating praise more usually gratifying to human vanity than that bestowed upon simple goodness—there was something in the schoolboy's bold honest lines that went deep to her heart.

'Drive after that young gentleman,' she cried out to the coachman; 'make haste, he will be out of sight.'

The coachman lashed his horses, and ultimately reached Lionel half-way between the town and the racecourse.

'Oh, Mr. Hastings,' cried Lady Clara, putting her head out of the carriage, 'we must not part thus. I have so much to say to you; and William (meaning Mr. Manford) knew your father so well; he would be so sorry to miss you—and dear Lady Anne; we used to meet at my Aunt Espingdale's. Come in, do. Let down the steps, Henry.'

The footman let down the steps. But Lionel lingered at the door of the carriage, and, for the first time in his life, felt shy. Lady Clara however insisted, and he got in slowly.

She then thanked him for his verses with a grateful delight that seemed almost infantine: and, indeed, she had with her at times a pretty infantine way that graver years had found irresistible. Then, with that tact which women of the world excel in, addressing him, not as the mere schoolboy, but the young man, she began praising his living mother and his lost father, and the fine old ruins of Wardour Hall, saying, in short, all that could best put him at his ease, and rouse his self-esteem. Lionel made but short replies and with heightened colour. It is strange, but true, that boys the boldest in the playground are often shyest in the drawing-room; and even men, dauntless with their own sex, acknowledge by timidity the softening influence of women. Lionel, unaccustomed to other female society than that of his mother, and rather ashamed of his verses, now that the enthusiasm that created them had cooled, wondered to find himself so abashed. But Lady Clara perhaps only liked him the better for his embarrassment.

When they regained the race-ground, the crowd was dispersing; the races were over. Lionel now wished to get on his pony and

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return home. But just as he began to stammer out something to that effect, several horsemen surrounded the carriage. Now that the poor man was got rid of, the flatterers returned; and they who had shunned to share ridicule were loudest in compliment. Lady Clara received all eulogies and questions with polished but careless irony; and then, with that marked tone and manner by which persons of high station commend those they desire to distinguish, she introduced her young friend, Mr. Hastings, to the principal persons that thronged around her. Some of them were the leading magnates of the county; some, fine gentlemen from London, guests at various country houses.

‘But most of you,’ she said, ‘will have time to make his acquaintance, for he is coming to stay a few days with us.’

Lionel then felt as all schoolboys would. He could not make a parade to these strangers of his filial duty, and say he must go home to his mother; and somehow or other, without any voice of his own in the matter, he found himself a few minutes afterwards on the road to Manford Park, while a groom was commissioned to take back the pony to Wardour with ‘Lady Clara’s compliments to Lady Anne, and she had run away with Mr. Lionel Hastings.’

CHAPTER XIII.

LADY ANNE, though disappointed at not seeing Lionel at dinner, was on the whole gratified to learn that he was in such good hands. Mr. Manford, who had been intimate with her husband, was universally esteemed for his character and talents—in every way a most desirable acquaintance for Lionel. Lady Clara, though one of those eccentric, dazzling persons, of whom quiet secluded women are in awe, was yet a lady to whom mothers would willingly trust a boy, though they might be reluctant to confide a girl. Her eccentricities could not injure, by example, our ruder sex. And her manners could scarcely fail to refine and polish. It was good for the heir of Wardour to make acquaintance with the notabilities in his own county; good for the future aspirant to public life, to enlist the interest and favour of persons like William Manford.

So, *dakruon gelasasa*, with a smile and a tear, Lady Anne made up, with her own maternal anxious hands, a little packet of all that Lionel could need for a few days, and despatched it at once

to Manford Park, with a courteous line of thanks to Lady Clara, and a note to Lionel, assuring him that she was happy he had so pleasant a reprieve from his books, and reminding him of the necessity of changing his dress for dinner.

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This done, she sent for Mr. Cotton to drink tea with her, and discuss the new event in her son's existence.

[Here the manuscript ends.]

BOOK III.
COLLEGE
1821—1825

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CHAPTER I.

(Autobiographical.)

LIFE AT CAMBRIDGE. 1821—1825. ÆT. 18—21.

THE college selected for me was Trinity, at which my two brothers had preceded me. My private tutor, Mr. Fisher, was especially distinguished as a Greek scholar. His versification in that language was excellent. He was not, however, a very skilful or attentive teacher. In our lecture-rooms one face instantly arrested my eye : a face pale, long, worn, with large eyes and hollow cheeks, but not without a certain kind of beauty, and superior to all in that room for its expression of keen intelligence. The young man who thus attracted my notice was Winthrop Mackworth Praed ; the editor and the most sparkling contributor to a magazine set up at Eton, and called the *Etonian* ; a scholar of remarkable eloquence and brilliancy, carrying off, in the course of his University career, prizes in Greek, Latin, and English ; the readiest and most pungent speaker at the Union Debating Society ; the liveliest wit in private circles ; in a word, the young man of whom the highest expectations were formed, and who, from the personal interest he excited, was to the University what Byron was to the world. The first term I spent at Cambridge was melancholy enough. My brothers had given me a few letters of introduction to men of their own standing, older than myself, but not reading men. Quiet and gentlemanlike they were, but we had no attraction for each other. I found amongst them

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no companion. I made no companion for myself. Surrounded by so many hundred youths of my own years, I was alone. The formality of the crowded lecture-rooms chilled me. No occupation pleased. When I returned home, I resolved to make a desperate effort to obtain for my listless mind some object of intellectual interest. I chose the 'History of England.' I had no one to direct my studies or enlighten my views. But I took Rapin's dry, grand, work for the main road of my researches, and diverged by the way into chronicles and memoirs; seizing, wherever I could lay my hands on them, upon the authorities referred to. I filled commonplace books with comments and abridgments. This was the first subject to which I had ever grappled with the earnest spirit of the scholar.

My second brother, Henry, who had quitted the University, now resolved to return to it. He had before him the prospect of the handsome fortune bequeathed to him by his grandmother. On returning to Cambridge, his object was not distinction but enjoyment. He would no longer be a pensioner at studious Trinity, but a fellow-commoner at extravagant Downing; a new college, at which the fellow-commoners were considered to be the 'fastest men' of the University.

I, too, had taken, from other causes, a deep and most unreasonable disgust to Trinity. Its numbers alone sufficed to revolt the unsocial and shrinking temper that had sicklied over my mind. The enforced routine of lectures, in which I found (proud fool that I was!) little to learn, stupefied me for the rest of the day. One of the college tutors, a rude and coarse man, had said something to me (I forget what) which I thought unjust at the time; and, as the tone was offensive, I had replied with a haughtiness that augured ill for a quiet life with that dignitary; who has since become an archbishop.¹

[¹ No doubt Thomas Musgrave, translated from Hereford to York in November 1847. He owed his promotion to causes which, neither at the time nor subsequently, were apparent to the public.—L.]

In a word, I urged my mother to let me remove to a smaller college as a fellow-commoner. Long was the debate on this point, but at length I carried it; and with the ensuing term I entered myself at Trinity Hall.

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I had not been three days in that comparatively small society before I found the benefit of the change. As a fellow-commoner at a non-reading college, I found ready dispensation from the morning lecture-rooms. I had my forenoons to myself in quiet, comfortable chambers, and peace and the sense of dignity returned to me with the consciousness of liberty and independence.

My brother Henry became my chief companion. He led a gay life at Downing. His passion then was in horses and landau-driving. He had the handsomest stud, perhaps, Cambridge ever saw. He mounted his friends, myself amongst the number, and in our long brisk rides I felt once more that I was young. But he only stayed at Downing one term, and not long afterwards his love of rambling and action led him into a journey to Greece, upon an undertaking which connected him with political affairs. After he went, my principal friend was a pupil with myself at Trinity Hall (the only reading pupil there), Alexander Cockburn. His father was British Minister at Stuttgart, and at the time I write he himself is Attorney-General under the administration of Lord Aberdeen.¹

[¹ In the administration of Lord Aberdeen, from the date of its formation (December 28, 1852) to its resignation (January 30, 1855), Sir Alexander Cockburn held (for the second time in his life) the office of Attorney-General: and this Autobiography must have been written some time between these two dates; probably in 1853 or 1854. On the letters from the late Chief Justice preserved by my father, he endorsed the following memorandum: 'I was at Trinity Hall with him. We were there great friends. This continued for several years. Then we became temporarily estranged at a time when both of us were struggling against great difficulties, and I found myself seriously involved in some of his embarrassments, for which I did not make sufficient allowance. I have always regretted this, but it made no permanent change in our affection for each other. His great talents cleared his way, and triumphed over all obstacles before he attained middle age. A man of fine qualities, with native instincts of justice, and a horror of all oppression and falsehood. Frank, quick-tempered, even fiery. An admirable extempore

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He is very little altered in appearance, perhaps not much in mind. Cockburn was the first young man combining both superior intellect and studious temper with whom I had ever associated. My brother William, indeed, possessed no inconsiderable natural powers; weighty sense, clear judgment, capacities for whatever business he undertook, fair acquaintance with the classics, and a facility for expressing himself with ease and polish in his native language. But he had no pretence to be a reading man. He was essentially indolent. Henry had then given little indication of the remarkable abilities he has since developed. Life has been his best preceptor. Though not without the ardour for knowledge, his reading was extremely capricious and desultory; and at that time horse-dealers, coachmakers, and tailors absorbed the larger share of his attention. Cockburn was older than myself; had seen much of the world, been originally intended for the diplomacy, knew intimately French and German. Deficient in classical information, he now toiled hard to acquire it. And his mornings and nights were spent in diligent methodical study; but in the hours of recreation he was singularly joyous and convivial. He had a frankness of manner and a liveliness of conversation that stole away all my reserve. Nor was he without gravity and tenderness of sentiment. His companionship was eminently useful to me at that critical period of my life.

And now occurred an event which has had much to do with my subsequent career in the world. Cockburn belonged to the Union Debating Society. At his persuasion I entered

speaker; owing much to a singularly musical voice and collected earnestness of delivery. A powerful advocate; and, I am told, an excellent judge. A very good linguist, with some literary taste. Social, genial, warm-hearted, fond of women; to whom he owed most of his difficulties. An intellect brilliant, yet solid, and a character exceedingly loveable.' The author's letters to the late Chief Justice have been destroyed. Of Sir Alexander Cockburn's letters to him the majority are upon matters of no public interest; but all of them exhibit a remarkable tenderness and depth of feeling, combined with uncommon vigour of intellect and character. The correspondence long maintained between the two men could not have been more affectionate and unreserved had they been brothers.—L.]

it. An attack of a personal nature, for some alleged misdemeanour in the honorary office of Treasurer to that famous Club, was made upon Praed; and the attack excited more sensation because it was made by one who had been his intimate personal friend—Robert Hildyard, now eminent as a barrister. The interest I felt in Praed animated me to the effort to defend him; and I rose late one evening, and spoke in public for the first time. My speech was short, but it was manly and simple, spoken in earnest, and at once successful.

At the close of the debate, the leading men of the Union introduced themselves to me. I had become, as it were, suddenly one of their set. I had emerged from obscurity into that kind of fame which resembles success in the House of Commons. The leading men in the Union were the most accomplished and energetic undergraduates of the University. From that time, I obtained what my mind had so long unconsciously wanted—a circle of friends fitted to rouse its ambition and test its powers; an interchange of stirring practical ideas. I did not speak again at the Union till the following term, and then I fairly broke down in the midst of my second speech. So much the better. 'Failure with me has always preceded resolution to succeed. I set myself to work in good earnest, and never broke down again; but, though my speeches were considered good, and more full of knowledge than those of most of my rivals, it was long before I could be called a good speaker. I wanted the management of voice, and I was hurried away into imperfect articulation by the tumultuous impetuosity of my thoughts. My first signal triumph was on the Conservative side of the question. The subject of debate was a comparison between the English and American political Constitutions. Praed, and most of the crack speakers, asserted the superiority of Republican institutions. Poor Great Britain had not found a single defender till, just as we were about to pass to the vote, I presumed to say a word in its favour. Then followed the rapturous intoxication of popular

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applause, and the music that lies in the uproarious cheers of party. From that hour I took rank among the principal debaters of the Club, and I passed through the grades of its official distinctions, as Secretary, Treasurer, and President.

There was then excellent speaking at that Club. Men came from London to hear us. First in readiness and wit, in extempore reply, in aptness of argument and illustration, in all that belongs to the 'stage play' of delivery, was unquestionably Praed; but he wanted all the higher gifts of eloquence. He had no passion, he had little power; he confided too much in his facility, and prepared so slightly the matter of his speeches, that they were singularly deficient in knowledge and substance. In fact, he seemed to learn his subject from the speeches of those who went before him. Cockburn came next in readiness; but, though he had more vigour than Praed, he wanted his grace—was sometimes too florid, sometimes too vulgar. Charles Villiers, renowned in Corn-Law polemics; Charles Buller, clever, but superficial—always wanting earnestness, and ironically pert; Wilson and Maurice, since honourably known in literature; Tooke (who died young), the son of the Political Economist; all gave promise of future distinction. Later, there came to the University an ardent, enthusiastic youth from Shrewsbury, a young giant in learning, who carried away the prize from Praed—Benjamin Hall Kennedy, now head-master of the school he had distinguished as a pupil.¹ He, too, spoke at the Union.

But the greatest display of eloquence I ever witnessed at the Club was made by a man some years our senior, and who twice came up during my residence to grace our debates—the now renowned Macaulay. The first of these speeches was on the French Revolution; and it still lingers in my recollection as the most heart-stirring effort of that true oratory which seizes hold of the passions, transports you from yourself, and

[¹ No longer head-master of Shrewsbury. He is now Regius Professor of Greek at Cambridge, and Canon of Ely.—L.]

identifies you with the very life of the orator, that it has ever been my lot to hear ; saving, perhaps, one speech by O'Connell, delivered to an immense crowd in the open air. Macaulay, in point of power, passion, and effect, never equalled that speech in his best day in the House of Commons. His second speech, upon the Liberty of the Press, if I remember rightly, was a failure.

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During these visits to Cambridge, I became acquainted with Macaulay. I remember well walking with him, Praed, Ord, and some others of the set, along the College Gardens ; listening with wonder to that full and opulent converse, startled by knowledge so various, memory so prodigious. That walk left me in a fever of emulation. I shut myself up for many days in intense study, striving to grasp at an equal knowledge : the trophies of Miltiades would not suffer me to sleep.

[Among the papers of my father which form no part of his Autobiography is the commencement of a second sketch of the gifted Praed. The fragment ends abruptly with the opening words of a sentence ; but it is, in some respects, fuller than the portrait in the Autobiography, and I append it here on account of the interest attaching to a man whose bright and varied talents obtained him a reputation in the University greater, perhaps, than was ever accorded to an undergraduate before or since. That his subsequent course did not sustain his precocious promise was probably due, in part, to the enervating disease which slowly undermined his constitution, and caused his death before he was forty years of age.

A common interest in that debating society brought together in joyous social life the most ardent and ambitious youths of the University. What robust and sanguine society exhilarated the suppers to which we adjourned from our mimic senate ! There, foremost in ready wit, as the hour before he had been in brilliant extempore eloquence, was Winthrop Mackworth Praed. There was a fascination in the very name of this young man which eclipsed the repute of all his contemporaries. Sweeping away prizes and

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scholarships from the competition of perhaps sounder and more copious learning; the quickest and easiest debater in the Union, without study or preparation; carrying everywhere into our private circles a petulant yet graceful vivacity; matchless in repartee; passionately fond of dancing; never missing a ball, though it were the night before an examination; there was in his mind a restless exuberance of energy and life, all the more striking from its contrast with a frame and countenance painfully delicate and marked by the symptoms of consumption. He excited at the University the same kind of haunting personal interest that Byron was then exciting in the world. All were fond of speculating about his future. For the outlines of his genius were not definitely marked. They vanished away when you sought to seize them. Would he be most renowned as poet, or wit, or essayist, or orator? Most probably the last. A political career seemed to be his natural destiny. With all these high animal spirits and strong tendencies, Praed's moral habits were singularly pure. Not more immaculate from the stain of the softer errors was the reputation of William Pitt. Like Pitt, he loved wine; but not to the same excess. Like Pitt, the year before the latter entered Parliament, his eager nature could be allured by high play; but too rarely to fix on him the character of a gamester. Yet gossip, ever busy in collecting anecdotes of his sayings and doings, never accused him of the looser follies to which youth is the most prone. And yet, with all my genuine admiration of Praed (and no one, I think, esteemed him more highly than I did), there were touches in his character, tones in his mind, which, whenever I came into contact with them, chilled the sympathy, checked the affection, and sometimes even lowered the estimation, with which I regarded him from the first hour of our acquaintance with each other. For instance—

Nor can I forbear to add the passage from my father's poem of 'St. Stephen's,' in which he once more commemorates the University triumphs of this 'bright creature,' as he calls him, who was the pride and delight of his contemporary academic world. After an apostrophe to Charles Buller, it continues:

More richly gifted, tho' to him denied
Ev'n thine imperfect honours, *Winthrop* died;
Died—scarce a promise of his youth redeem'd,
And never youth more bright in promise seem'd.

Granta beheld him with such loving eyes
Lift the light lance that struck at every prize ;
What the last news ?—the medal Praed has won ;
What the last joke ?—Praed's epigram or pun ;
And every week that club-room, famous then,
Where striplings settled questions spoilt by men,
When grand Macaulay sat triumphant down,
Heard Praed reply, and long'd to halve the crown.]

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ÆT. 18-21

CHAPTER II.

(Autobiographical.)

END OF COLLEGE LIFE. 1825. Æt. 21.

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I took my degree at a by-term, and, I believe, with more approving marks than any of the others who passed that very easy examination. But though I did not try for honours, I had established among my contemporaries a general reputation for ability and somewhat extensive reading.¹ I took my leave of the Union in a speech on the Game Laws, long remembered and cited as among the most effective which had been heard in my time at that famous debating club. Shortly before I quitted the University I tried for the gold medal accorded to the English prize poem—the subject ‘Sculpture;’ and it was adjudged to me after my departure, and while I was in the midst of the London season. I went down to Cambridge to deliver it. I had more pleasure, perhaps, in that first literary success than in any I have known since. But my chief pleasure was in the thought that I had at last done something my dear mother was proud of. It was somewhat ominous of the reception I have met with all my life, up to this day, from the writers of the periodical press, that, contrary to all precedent as to the passive in-

[¹ In addition to English History and Political Economy, the subjects which most attracted my father, at this time, were Metaphysics and Old English Literature. Whilst at Cambridge he joined a club set up there for the purchase of old English books, under the auspices of Professor Malden and Whewell, the late Master of Trinity, who was then an eminent Fellow of that college.—L.]

dulgence shown to academical prize poems, my verses were selected for a lampoon in the earlier numbers of 'Fraser's Magazine'—a lampoon not confined to the verses, but extending to the author. That magazine, under the auspices of Dr. Maginn and Mr. Thackeray, long continued to assail me, not in any form that can fairly be called criticism, but with a kind of ribald impertinence offered, so far as I can remember, to no other writer of my time.

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About this time I sketched the outline of the 'Tale of Falkland,' and wrote the commencing chapter of 'Pelham.' I do not think that the idea of publishing either was then in my mind; but they were begun as experimental exercises in the two opposite kinds of fiction—the impassioned and sombre, the light and sportive.

CHAPTER III.

(Supplementary.)

UNION DEBATES AND COLLEGE CONTEMPORARIES.

1823-5. Æt. 20-21.

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[THE preceding chapter closes my father's account of his life at Cambridge; and, in order not to interrupt his narrative, I have reserved for supplementary chapters all the explanatory and illustrative matter connected with this part of his Autobiography.

The prize poem which gave a glow to the termination of his academic career was pleasantly associated with his friend Alexander Cockburn. It was he who made the copy sent in to the authorities who adjudged the prize; and it was he also who first conveyed to its author the news of his success. At the banquet given to Charles Dickens on November 2, 1867, the Lord Chief Justice, in proposing the health of Lord Lytton, who took the chair on that occasion, made public allusion to this circumstance, in language which reflects his lifelong friendship for my father.

I should be ashamed (he said) to advert to anything which is personal to myself, and yet I trust you will forgive me for saying, that when this toast was committed to my care it was to me a source of infinite gratification and delight. It bridges over the chasm of years; it takes me back to the period when the noble lord and I were young in life, and starting upon our several careers. To me, and I believe to me alone—then his college companion—the noble lord confided that he was composing that beautiful poem which was crowned by the academic prize; I mean that poem on Sculpture,

which, to my mind, remains the most beautiful of all the poems of its class. To me he communicated that fact, and I had the immense gratification of being the first to announce to him, as he had left the University when the prize was adjudged, that he had triumphed over all his competitors.

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The Chief Justice, however, must have spoken with the partiality of affection if, when he made this speech, he had read the prize poem written by the present Poet Laureate; the only exercise of that kind, perhaps, which, from beginning to end, is genuine poetry.

At the time when my father was a member of the Union Society at Cambridge, the meetings of that famous debating club were held in the back room of an hotel in the Petty Cury. It has been described by Praed in an unpublished squib, from which the following lines are quoted by Mr. Skipper, in his interesting account of the Cambridge University Union.

'The Union Club of rhetorical fame
Was held at the Red Lion Inn;
And there never was Lion so perfectly tame,
Or who made such a musical din.
'Tis pleasant to snore at a quarter before,
When the chairman does nothing in state,
But 'tis heaven! tis heaven to waken at seven,
And pray for a noisy debate.'

From this locality, which, according to Lord Houghton, was 'little better than a commercial room,' the society first migrated to more commodious premises built for it in Jesus Lane. Subsequently (1850) it occupied, in Green Street, rooms now appropriated to the Cambridge Reform Club; and its present spacious and handsome quarters, which, says Mr. Skipper, 'were erected at a cost exceeding ten thousand pounds,' were first opened in 1866; the society being indebted for them, says the same authority, 'mainly to the labours of Sir Charles Dilke and Mr. R. D. Benett, both of Trinity Hall.'

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The first occasion in reference to which Mr. Bulwer's name appears upon the Minutes was a debate opened, November 18, 1823, by Mr. Farish, of Trinity College, on the following question proposed by Mr. Hildyard:—

‘Is a systematic opposition to the measures of Administration conducive to the happiness of the people?’

Mr. Bulwer and his friend Mr. Cockburn were among the speakers on the affirmative side of the question, which was carried by a majority of 57. The next year (March 30, 1824) he himself proposed the subject of debate, and opened the discussion. The question was: ‘Whether the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act in 1794 was justifiable?’ He maintained that it was not; was supported in that opinion by Ord; and was outvoted by a majority of 22. On May 3, 1824, the society, at its first Summer Term meeting, proceeded to the election of new officers; when Mr. Cockburn was unanimously elected to the office of President, and Mr. Haughton to that of Treasurer. Mr. Watson Thornton was proposed by Mr. Farish, and Mr. Bulwer by Mr. Haughton, for Secretary. Upon a ballot Mr. Bulwer was declared duly elected. The following question was then debated:—

‘Upon a general review of the leading measures of his Cabinets, can George III. be considered a monarch who favoured and enlarged the liberties of the subject?’

This debate was opened by Mr. Hildyard. Amongst those who spoke in the negative were Bulwer, Ord, and Kennedy. But the affirmative view of the question was carried by a majority of 32. The same year, on May 25, Mr. Townshend, of King's College, proposed the following question:—

‘Is the impress of seamen in this country a justifiable measure?’

The speakers in the affirmative were Messrs. Rawlinson and Helps,¹ Trin. Coll.; Jackson, Trin. Hall; and Clinton, Caius Coll. Those in the negative were Messrs. Townshend, King's

[¹ Thomas, elder brother of Arthur, Helps.—L.]

Coll.; Tooke and Wilson, Trin. Coll.; Bulwer and Aldridge, Trin. Hall; Churchill, Pet. Coll.; Rowe, Jesus Coll.; Hildyard, Cath. Hall. And although the approval of the measure appears to have been represented by a minority of speakers, it was affirmed by a majority of four votes. On November 2, in the same year, the question for debate was—

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‘Whether the Constitution of England or that of America was to be considered most favourable to the liberties of the subject?’

This was obviously the occasion referred to by my father in the passage of his Autobiography where he says, ‘My first signal triumph was on the conservative side of the question.’ The debate was opened by Mr. Hildyard of Catherine Hall. On the first night the speakers were:—For the American Constitution, Messrs. Hildyard, Cath. Hall; Praed, Trin. Coll. For the English Constitution, Messrs. Thornton, Trin. Coll.; Kennedy, St. John’s. It was adjourned to Tuesday, November 9, 1824, and on that occasion the speakers were:—For the English Constitution, Messrs. Kennedy, St. John’s; Bulwer, Trin. Hall; Haughton, Pemb. Coll. For the American Constitution, Messrs. Cockburn, Trin. Hall; Ord, Trin. Coll.; Smith, C.C.C. This debate seems to have interested a large number of members, for the voting was:—For the British Constitution, 109; for the American, 37. Majority, in favour of the British, 72. On November 30, 1824, my father again spoke on the question—

‘Did the Revolution in 1688 sufficiently consult the interests of the community?’

It was proposed and opened by Mr. Tooke, of Trinity College, and the speakers were:—Affirmative: Mr. Gedge, Cath. Hall; Mr. Bulwer, Trin. Hall; Mr. Helps, Trin. Coll.; Mr. Smith, Queens’ Coll. Negative: Mr. Tooke, Trin. Coll.; Mr. Ord, Trin. Coll.; Mr. Wilson, Trin. Coll.; Mr. Baylan, Trin. Coll.; Mr. Cockburn, Trin. Hall. Votes: For, 50; Against, 35. Majority, 15.

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In the following year my father's name again appears as a speaker on the affirmative side of the question debated (February 8, 1825): 'Whether it was desirable that the Spanish Colonies should throw off their yoke of allegiance to the mother country previous to the year 1800?' The subject was proposed by Praed, who was supported on the affirmative side of it by Messrs. Tooke, Ord, Baylan, Bulwer, and Haughton. On the negative side there was only one speaker, Mr. Vyvyan; but after listening to the speech of Mr. Baylan, he voted in the affirmative, and the question was carried *nem. con.*, in a House of 110. On March 1, 1825, Mr. Fitzgerald proposed the question: 'Is the political character of Burke deserving of our approbation?' The debate was opened by Mr. Ord, and my father spoke on the side of the majority, in approbation of the character of Burke. The last discussion in which his name appears upon the Minutes took place on April 19, 1825, when he proposed the following question: 'Is a reform in the present system of Game Laws desirable?' The debate was opened by himself, in favour of a reform of the Game Laws, and that view was affirmed by a majority of 57.

Some of the statements of accounts, and other business reports preserved by the society in its archives, are in the handwriting of my father, while he successively filled the offices of secretary and treasurer during the short period of his connection with it. Mr. Skipper mentions that when the Union was established its members were forbidden to discuss any event subsequent to the Reformation, and that their devices were manifold for discussing current political questions in the disguise of old ones. He relates a characteristic anecdote of the late Master of Trinity, Dr. Whewell, who, being President of the Union when it received from the Vice-Chancellor a message ordering the dispersion of one of its meetings, replied: 'Strangers will please to withdraw, and the House will take the message into consideration.' But the extracts I have quoted from the Minutes of the Society in 1824 and 1825

show that any restriction then placed on its debates was little more than nominal, and that the tone of its discussions was decidedly liberal.

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In his amusing explanation of the lines quoted by him from Praed's squib, Mr. Skipper says of one stanza, 'The question is Reform, and after the Opener has addressed the House, Lytton's rising is thus described:—

'Then the Church shakes her rattle, and sends forth to battle
The terror of Papist and Sinner,
Who loves to be seen as the modern Mæcenas
And asks all the poets to dinner.'

But there is certainly nothing either in any record of my father's speeches at the Union, or in any youthful writings or notes of study referable to this period of his life, which throws a ray of light on the origin of this, apparently inappropriate, description of him as the undergraduate champion of the Church, or the denouncer of 'Papists and sinners.'

In his own reminiscences of college life he mentions the arrival at Cambridge of the present Regius Professor of Greek, Benjamin Hall Kennedy; whom he describes as 'an ardent, enthusiastic youth, a young giant in learning, who carried away the prize from Praed,' and who was one of the speakers at the Union when he himself was a member of it. To him (who of all my father's college contemporaries was by far the greatest scholar) I am indebted for a few further recollections of that brilliant little undergraduate world.

I entered (he writes) as a freshman in 1823, and took my Bachelor's degree in January 1827. As your father, the late Lord Lytton, whom we then called Bulwer, was one year my senior in standing, the years 1824 and 1825 are those during which we were intimate; for in 1826 he had ceased to reside in college. In those days, mathematical studies were the sole avenue to a degree in Arts. A Classical Tripos was constituted in 1824; but its examination was confined to those who had taken the B.A. degree in mathematical honours. Classical men might gain University Scholar-

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ships, or Composition prizes ; but, as these were not numerous, many good scholars passed through the University without distinction, for want of mathematical talent.

Many of my Cambridge contemporaries, however, who took no rank of honour in the examinations of that time, acquired in after life high distinction. This remark does not apply to Macaulay, for he gained a Craven Scholarship and a Trinity Fellowship. It does not apply to Cockburn, for he took a degree in Law, with a place in the First Class, and became Fellow of Trinity Hall. It applies to the world-renowned name of your father ; to the names of Alfred Tennyson, of William Makepeace Thackeray, of my illustrious schoolfellow, Charles Darwin, and to others who became more or less eminent in public or professional life, or as literary men : such as your kinsman Mr. C. R. Villiers, still M.P. for Wolverhampton ; Charles Buller ; Hutt (Sir William lately deceased) ; Mr. S. H. Walpole, our late excellent representative ; Monckton Milnes (Lord Houghton) ; Trench (Archbishop) ; John Stirling ; Frederick Maurice ; Derwent Coleridge ; Ord ; and perhaps a larger list. Of my large acquaintance thus described or indicated, I can recognise thirty-five as now surviving ; all, like myself, septuagenarians. A few probably may be added who have escaped my recollection.

The star of first magnitude in Cambridge undergraduate society, when I went to College, was Winthrop Mackworth Praed ; than whom I have known no man in my experience more generous and noble-minded. He came from Eton, where he had been a leading speaker in its Debating Club (Pop) and Editor of its famous Periodical 'The Etonian.' At Cambridge he was a great prize-winner, gaining four medals for Greek and Latin verse, and two for English poems, 'Australasia' and 'Athens.' He was also, with Macaulay and others, a writer of eminence in 'Knight's Quarterly Magazine ;' and in the Union Society he was certainly the leading debater ; at least, during my time, when it had lost Macaulay. I had no good opportunity of comparing the two men ; but I think it more than probable that Praed's ready wit and free sprightly manner would make him the more effective skirmisher in debate ; though in a set speech on a great subject Macaulay's massive and powerful eloquence, fed by large and accurate knowledge, placed him beyond the reach of any rival. I think I have heard your father say that Plunkett alone could be regarded as Macaulay's superior : on this ground, that while he expounded the general

question with the highest eloquence, he could also grapple victoriously with the strongest arguments of preceding speakers on the opposite side. In my first term Praed sought my acquaintance with the utmost courtesy and kindness, through a common friend, Outram, an Etonian. After the Christmas vacation he proposed my name for election at the Union; and, by his introduction, the best and most intellectual society of Cambridge undergraduate life was at once opened to me. Among the rest, it was then that I became acquainted with your father.

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I well remember seeing him for the first time at some wine party. I caught his eyes accidentally at a moment when they seemed to be scanning me; and I quite remember the almost electric feeling conveyed to me by the circumstance. I did not know who he was, but I thought I had never seen a face so strongly individual, or one wearing so probable a stamp of original genius.

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After this, we must have met pretty often, both at the Union debates and in each other's rooms or the rooms of friends. I do not think I often walked out with Bulwer as I did with Stirling and other friends. He kept a horse or cob, and rode out usually for exercise: a luxury beyond my means. His College rooms in Trinity Hall were on the ground floor to the left after entering; and many a pleasant hour have I spent in them.¹ The Union debates were on Tuesday evenings from 7 to 10 P.M. Subjects were chosen a fortnight, I think, beforehand. Any member might enter a subject on a paper hung up for the purpose, with his own name as Opener. These were read out by the President in the half-hour of business, and a show of hands, or division, if required, was taken for the choice. It was the President's duty to close the debate in time to divide on the question discussed before ten o'clock if possible.

The Union Society met in a large room behind the Red Lion in Petty Cury, not being then provided with that handsome and convenient house which was built for it many years subsequently by the architectural skill and taste of Mr. Waterhouse. Your father was not, so far as I remember, a very frequent speaker in the debates of the Union; but when he did speak, he was always heard with lively interest, for he had studied his subject, and my

[¹ Since then they have been destroyed by fire, and the rooms which now occupy exactly the same position are of more recent date.—L.]

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impression was that, to some extent at least, he had prepared his speech. In his later life, as I have heard from an experienced Member of Parliament, when it was known that he would speak in a debate of the House of Commons, he always drew a full House to hear him.

Cockburn also spoke with great fluency, power, and precision, and I have no doubt he had well thought over and, in great measure, had prepared his language. He was very short-sighted, and I once or twice saw him, in the most retired part of the Trinity grounds, slowly pacing and moving his lips, as if reciting to himself, on a Tuesday morning. 'We shall have a good speech from him to-night,' I thought to myself; and so it came to pass. In fact, he was simply exercising and training himself for that warfare of words which carried him to legal, parliamentary, and judicial eminence.

Praed's style was different. He was always sufficiently at home in his subject-matter to escape any semblance of shallowness or incoherence, yet so pleasantly discursive, and often witty, that he did not seem to have prepared his thoughts or language, but to have found an occasion on the moment, and to have used it with instinctive readiness. He appeared to have the qualities and accomplishments of a good debater; yet, on entering the House of Commons, in 1830 and 1831, he did not at first command much attention.

In 1825, I had written and sent in, for the Chancellor's Medal, a poem on 'Sculpture,' an extract from which is printed on p. 243 of my little book called 'Between Whiles.' I well remember that your father, who had also written, called on me and asked if he might read my lines, and that I put them in his hands, saying that I had no expectation of the medal, and wished him success. He was the winner, and great pleasure it gave me that he would leave his name on the Prize-boards of the University; we little knew that within a few years it would be graven on the tablets of world-wide fame. I was in the Senate-house when he read his Prize-poem, having something of my own to read at the same time. What I next remember of him is that he sent me, soon afterwards, a volume of poetry, not, I think, published. It contained a piece called 'Almack's' in which some of the beauties and some of the wits of the day were commemorated in flattering or unflattering terms.

It was not till long after they had left College that my father and Canon Kennedy (though as members of the Athenæum Club they continued to meet occasionally) renewed their acquaintance with each other on a closer footing. But they had then added to their common recollections of College days so many mutual sympathies that the acquaintance thus renewed soon ripened into an enduring friendship.]

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CHAPTER IV.

(Supplementary.)

NON-ACADEMICAL STUDIES. 1822. ÆT. 19.

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[My father mentions in the opening chapter of this part of his Autobiography, that English history was the first subject studied by him 'in the earnest spirit of a scholar;' and he says that, during his first term at Cambridge, he filled common-place books with abridgments from all the authorities he was then able to consult, adding comments of his own upon them. These common-place books have been preserved. They merit a word or two of notice. Three bulky tomes are filled with 'notes and observations' on the history of England from the earliest British period down to the beginning of the reign of Henry VII.; and two, of slenderer size, are devoted to the history of Ireland down to the reign of King John. All five volumes are dated 1821, and must have been written between the ages of eighteen and nineteen. Considered in relation to their date, the notes and observations are altogether remarkable. They make but little reference to events which occupy the foreground of history. The main subject of them is the condition of the English people at each stage of its national development. The point of view thus adopted is copiously illustrated, with a range and variety of research wholly unindicated by my father's statement in his Autobiography, that, taking Rapin for the guidance of his main course, he diverged by the way into the study of contemporary authorities whenever they were accessible to him. The note-books are rich in extracts carefully copied from the

early chroniclers, French and English, from monkish records, and Scandinavian songs, from the literature of the several eras, from original documents, and from modern text-books on the laws and Constitution of England. They deal with the structure and aspect of English society at different periods, the influences which shaped its character, the laws which embodied its legal conceptions and regulated its social relations, the classes of which it was composed, and the literature which reflected its ideas. They abound in contemporary anecdotes relating to the manners and customs of the people, the houses they dwelt in, the food they ate, the industries they practised, the amusements in which they delighted. The sources and distribution both of national wealth and political power are examined with care ; and the personal reflections upon suggestive facts or characteristic anecdotes are sometimes singularly shrewd and far-reaching. Special pains appear to have been bestowed upon the reigns of the Plantagenet kings ; and in the abundance of the anecdotes and the vivacity of the observations about the social condition of England under Edward IV. may be found perhaps the first germs of those thoughts and studies which long afterwards shaped themselves into the historical romance of 'The Last of the Barons.'

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A sixth common-place book, begun in 1821 (probably at Ramsgate) and finished at Cambridge early in 1823, is filled with notes of desultory and promiscuous reading. These books, however, are confined to a brief period of my father's student life, and only indicate the works containing matter he thought worth extracting. They are far from showing the whole range of his reading at that time ; and to learn the full extent of the indiscriminate eagerness with which he devoured books of all kinds in his youth, we must refer to a letter he wrote in middle life to an intimate correspondent, in which he describes his 'forays into literature' both at school and college.

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Before the age of thirteen I was a very fair English scholar. I had read all the most popular of our authors, and my knowledge of English history and the progress of English literature was perhaps both copious and minute. One of my masters, observing in me this inclination to general reading, opened to me the stores of his private library. But, unluckily for me, he insisted on recommending the perusal of particular books and examining me in their contents. I remember that in this way he forced upon me Sully's 'Memoirs : ' a book in which I could not persuade myself to take the smallest interest. And, as I saw it was in vain to attempt to get from him other books till I had satisfied him of my knowledge of this one, his library soon became to me a sealed treasure. If boys are fond of reading, the less any particular books are forced upon them the better it will be for them. One of the classic authors tells us of a man who used to cut the wings of his bees and then set flowers before them. He was surprised that they made no honey from posies the most daintily selected, while the bees of his neighbour, flying about wherever they pleased, stocked their hives from weeds and wild thyme.

Certainly that detestable Sully was a great obstacle to me. But when I was at home for the holidays I read, as Montesquieu says he wrote, *à pas de géant*. I cast myself upon a circulating library as a sloth upon a tree. First, I began with the gay buds and tender leaves of poetry, novels, and the drama. But when these were all devoured, I attacked the harsher branches of history, criticism, and the *belles lettres*. When I once got upon one of these Trees of Knowledge I never stopped till I had devoured all. I think I entirely consumed three of the largest and most miscellaneous circulating libraries then accessible to me. And I purchased, out of my pocket-money, books of every description, whenever I had the opportunity of picking them up cheap. The only works excepted from my hungry forays into every province of literature that lay within my reach were voyages and travels. And this was not from dislike of them, but from a passion that I feared to cultivate. A romance, however adventurous or exciting, I felt to be a work of pure fiction ; and it contented me to *imagine* myself an actor in its scenes. But the real romance to be found in books of travel threw me into a fever. I burned to visit the lands described, and to participate in the adventures told. After reading one of these works (I think by a Captain Irwin) I actually resolved to run away. I even packed up secretly a bundle of clothes and left the house with it. But I

had not gone many yards before remorse at my ingratitude seized me, and I returned. From that time I eschewed the reading of travels and voyages : and to this day there is no part of miscellaneous literature which I more shun, or which, nevertheless, more attracts and enchants me.

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At school I had become familiar with the poetry of my own time, and knew by heart the greater part of the poems of Byron, Scott, Moore, Campbell, and Southey. Of these, from the age of twelve till I went to college, Scott and Campbell were my favourites; and their rhymes were always humming in my ears. A fatal familiarity ! No man destined to be a writer should become early imbued with the works of the authors immediately preceding him—especially if they are of transcendent genius. Their influence overpowers his natural faculty just as it begins to struggle into self-assertion and original expression.¹ As I read with pleasure, so I studied with ease. But at all times I was no less fond of sport than of study : and, throughout my life, books have been to me either incentives to action, or stimulants to the pleasures, the interests, and the emotions, connected with personal experiences and relations, rather than that all-sufficient society or occupation which is found in them by the habitual student.

His temperament and his tastes (as truly described by himself) were certainly not those of the scholar or the bookworm. He threw himself with ardour into the pleasures of youth ; he relished even its frivolities. And, though the shyness of his nature unfitted him in many respects for the enjoyment of general society, no man ever more largely responded to the charm of congenial companionship.]

[¹ This reflection touches a fringe of that far-reaching truth to which the genius of Schiller has given one of the finest images in literature. 'The artist,' he says (meaning the poet or creative writer), 'is no doubt the son of his time. But ill is it for him, if he be also its pupil or its darling. A beneficent Divinity snatches the suckling in time from his mother's breast, nourishes him on the milk of a better age, and lets him ripen under distant Grecian heavens to his maturity. Then, when he has grown into manhood, he returns to his own century in the image of a stranger : not to please it by his presence, but, terrible as the son of Agamemnon, to purify it. The substance of his work he will take from the present, but the form of it from a nobler time, yea, from beyond all time, out of the essential, invariable individuality of his own being.'—Schiller, *On the Æsthetic Education of Mankind*. Ninth letter.—L.]

CHAPTER V.

*(Supplementary and Illustrative.)*LITERARY WORK AT CAMBRIDGE. 1820-23. *Æt.* 18-20.BOOK
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[A SMALL volume of verse entitled 'Delmour, or a Tale of a Sylphid, and other Poems,' was written by my father at Cambridge, and published in 1823 by Messrs. Carpenter & Son. The dedication, dated Cambridge, April 19, 1823, was addressed to Lord Holland, who acknowledged it in a letter dated May 11 of that year:—'Your very obliging letter and valuable present reached me on Friday last, and I am really at a loss how to express my sense of the honour you have conferred on me by dedicating your work to me, and the still greater favour of conveying your motives for doing so in such flattering terms. Accept my best thanks, and allow me to hope that you will give me some opportunity of expressing them *viva voce* when you come to town.' This appears to be the first letter received by the author from Lord Holland; on whose subsequent letters, later in life, he endorsed the following remarks:—

Lord Holland does not quite deserve the eulogies of Macaulay. He was very accomplished and well read. But his mind was narrowed by intense partisanship in politics, and the contracted views in criticism and philosophy which belonged to the French Revolutionary school. In his good nature there was something indolent and frigid. Lady Holland had more energy and more warmth of nature. He would serve a friend if it did not put him out of his way. She would go out of her way to serve one. No English house

ever excelled theirs in social charm. But it owed more to Lady Holland than to him.

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This description of Lord Holland's character coincides in the main with what is said of it by one of the many eminent men of his own generation who were intimately acquainted with, and warmly attached to, him. Lord Brougham, in his memoirs, says that Lord Holland, like his illustrious uncle, Charles Fox, 'had the genuine Whig predilection for the kind of support given by the union of great families. . . . They both had, with the simplicity, the defects, of children; their feelings were strong, but not deep; the impression made on their hearts was soon effaced. I have often rallied Holland for regarding men with the eye of a naturalist, rather than of a brother, and interesting himself in observing their habits, rather than regarding them as their relation to us required.' Lord Brougham speaks elsewhere of the delight felt by all who approached Lord Holland, 'in the amiable disposition of his heart, and in a temper so perfectly sweet, so perseveringly mild, that nothing could ruffle it for an instant, nor any person, nor any passing event, make the least impression upon its even surface.'

My father's portrait of Lady Holland is very different from, and much less unpleasant than, the one drawn by Mrs. Butler. But the difference probably proceeds from his better knowledge of her real character.

It was during the latter part of his residence at Cambridge that he 'sketched the outline of the tale of "Falkland," and wrote the commencing chapter of "Pelham."' Two other compositions belonging to the previous part of his undergraduate time (one of them unfinished, and both unpublished) were undoubtedly his earliest attempts in narrative prose. The first of these manuscripts is a letter describing the experiences and sensations of a freshman at Cambridge. It seems intended for the beginning of a series, of which the sequel has been either lost or never written.

THE MISERIES OF A FRESHMAN.

You wished me to write you a detail of my adventures here. Lo, I comply. The day after I arrived. . . . No, that is not methodical enough for the writer of an important and faithful history. I must begin *ab ovo*. The coach deposited me safely at the door of the 'Eagle and Child'—facetiously denominated the 'Bird and Baby.' Here there were two or three gownsmen, loitering with an air of easy indolence, and eyeing the new passengers with a look half careless and half inquisitive. It was with some trepidation I dismounted the steps, and waited on the pavement for the delivery of my portmanteau. Nor could I resist an unpleasant sensation of awkwardness stealing over me, as I caught the glances of the sons of Alma Mater. This, however, I strove to get rid of, by looking round with a big air, and calling to the coachman to make haste, in an imperative tone. At length, all was settled; and I followed the waiter into a room on the ground floor. After I had ordered dinner, pulled up my collar at the glass, arranged my neckcloth, and harmonised the chaos of my hair, I sat down to write a note to our friend Mr. — (who, you know, is a Fellow of Trinity), informing him of my arrival, and requesting his company at dinner, or tea, as might suit him best. Having despatched this note, I felt rather easier: looked out of the window, envied the nonchalant mien of every gownsmen who passed, longed yet dreaded to go for a walk, looked again at myself in the glass, and sallied forth, murmuring the air of 'Who's afraid?' The appearance of the town was less displeasing than had been my first impression of it. The streets were certainly dirty and narrow; but this only seemed to heighten the venerable magnificence of the colleges; and the gothic grandeur of King's, and the more modern splendour of the Senate House, more than made up for all the imperfections of the town. Although the term had not yet commenced, Cambridge seemed pretty full; and I could not help admiring the business-like air and meditative mien which were unconsciously assumed by the collegians. This was afterwards explained by the information that the gownsmen I had seen were principally of that description denominated 'Reading Men:' who either stay up out of term or are more early in their return. When I got back to my quarters, I found a note from Mr. — saying I might

expect him to tea at seven. I pass over the time till then, for I scarcely remember how I got through it. But I do remember that I was feeling very lonely, anathematising Shenstone's eulogy on an inn, and repeating Byron's lines on solitude, when our friend entered. After an hour's chat (chiefly questions on my side and answers on his), we went out in search of lodgings. For I need scarcely tell you that Trinity is too full to admit any freshmen, I might almost say any undergraduate, to the advantages of rooms in College. Having seen several others, I at last fixed on some very tolerable lodgings near Trinity, for which I am to pay twenty-three shillings a week, and which I agreed to enter on the following day. Our next concern was with the tailor; by whom I was presently equipped with those ugly indispensables, a cap and gown. You remember how you used to laugh at me for my attention to dress—a habit which I think I defended with great ability. A few words from me, therefore, on the subject of the academic costume will not be out of character. If the whole wit and invention of man were employed to discover a dress which should deprive the human figure of

[There is here a gap in the MS.]

. and I then returned to the rooms of Mr. — ; where in sober converse we wore away the evening till I began to think of retiring to my own apartments, and recruiting my strength for the important morrow. But here have I scribbled through more than half my paper, and yet told you nothing. I must change my style, and adopt the *Laconic*. I spare you all description of my introduction to my college tutor. I spare you all the little formalities previous to my becoming a confirmed collegian; and I come to that awful moment when the voice of the clock proclaims a quarter after three, and dinner is on the table. There was a crowd collected on the steps leading into the Hall; and, as I walked up the immense quadrangle, I felt as if every eye was fixed upon me. You know how nervous my private education has made me. But when I found myself actually last in the throng of purple gowns which haunted the approach, and stunned by the clatter of dishes and babel of voices, I felt very much as a shoeblack might feel if transplanted to Almack's, or the Man in the Moon if dropped down, dog, bush, lanthorn, and all, in the centre of Bond Street. When the dishes were all placed on the table, there was a hungry and eager look, a murmur, and a

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sudden rush. I found myself borne down the current, till, following the example of my immediate precursor, I dropped into a place by an enormous sirloin of beef. This was abruptly seized, and a fork stuck into it. A pile then suddenly rose on the plate of my opposite neighbour. Scarcely had he relinquished the sirloin before it was pounced upon by another. The same operation took place. A third succeeded, and I began to cast a disconsolate glance at a hacked and maimed shoulder of mutton (I always hated mutton) which was rapidly approaching me, when I found the beef (*ehou, quantum mutatus ab illo Hectore !*) before me, and, so far as I could in my inexperience perceive, no rival fork at hand. I therefore brandished mine, and was just going to make up for lost time—when, like the Fata Morgana, it vanished in a trice. Looking round with a certain elongation of face, I beheld the fruit of my wishes and the abode of my hopes carried away with the utmost rapidity by one of the waiters to another end of the table. I was quite aghast at his audacity, but could not summon up resolution to call him back. So, after another forlorn survey, I took up with the mutilated mutton. This I found in that luxurious condition which may be called the temperate : neither hot nor cold ; the gravy not quite grease, and the fat not quite as hard as a brickbat. You may be sure I did not commit any imprudent excess on so delicious a viand. But soon after, following the example of my neighbours, I resolved to *size*. This is a practice peculiar to our tables. You are supplied with various joints of meat and vegetables for commons. The customary superfluity of tart and pudding will, on application to the Ganymedes and Hebes of the Hall, be obtained, at a separate charge, from the cook. This is called *sizing*, and this, as I before said, I resolved to do. So, seizing a favourable opportunity, I requested the same fellow who had purloined my beef to procure me some apple tart. For I thought that so bold and dexterous a genius would do as well for me as for another. ‘Your name, sir?’ said my procurator ; and I was forced to let all my companions into that mystery. This to me was a great bore : especially as all who heard it looked up at me. Fast flew the minutes. All around me were supplied. I alone remained with idle knife and fork. So, thinking I was in the land where all things are forgotten, I made the same demand of a little girl who tripped by me ; and I was again forced to undergo the ordeal of delivering my name. A due time having elapsed without my sight being

blessed by the appearance of the desired acquisition, I ventured to apply to a third waiter, and gave him particular injunction to be expeditious. In the meanwhile I had sufficient time to inspect the physiognomies of my fellow-eaters and academicians. There was nothing peculiarly interesting to a Lavaterian in the survey—except one face, of which my impressions afterwards proved just. It was his whose poetry we have both of us so much admired, and who as a schoolboy gained such a reputation.¹ While I was studying his countenance, the man to whom I had addressed my first petition for some apple tart, appeared with the unhoped-for object. I had just commenced a hungry attack upon it, when, lo! the second handmaid also appeared, and deposited her load, more apple tart! and at the next moment my third messenger arrived, with still more apple tart. What a moment! All my neighbours in sheer astonishment simultaneously suspended the progress of the various mouthfuls which at that tremendous moment were half-way to their lips: all of them fixed their wondering eyes upon so inordinate an eater: and there was I, famished, blushing, stammering, and utterly at a loss what to do. Alas! apple tarts, like misfortunes, do not come singly.

So much for the comforts of College living. On quitting the Hall, I resolved to take a walk before returning to my solitary lodgings. As I went along, I could not but observe that I was, to use a vulgar phrase, ‘uncommonly stared at.’ Many turned round to look again: many, as I passed them, smiled with a peculiar expression. This I attributed to some ‘freshness’ about my walk, or look, or manner. There is a certain *nescio quid* very odious in the word Freshman; and this idea made me of course feel twice as awkward. I turned down a narrow lane, called Green Street (which was the first I came to), that I might escape this hateful scrutiny. Scarcely had I got three doors down it, when, looking on the left side of the street (I was on the right), I saw a house open, and two or three impudent baggages looking at me and laughing. How I wished them at the devil! Presently one, who, I suppose, thought her age and looks sufficient security, crossed over the way and thus accosted me—

‘Oh, sir, he! he! he!’

Judge my consternation.

‘Well, mistress?’

[¹ Presumably Præd.—L.]

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'He! he! he! Oh, sir, excuse me, sir, but it is so droll. He! he! he!'

Beginning to think it a premeditated affront, and setting down the Cambridge people as the most brazenfaced in the world, I turned on my heels in a rage, when another peal twice as loud-resounding, made me look round, and I heard—

'Pray, sir, don't be angry, but, . . . he! he! he! you have got . . . he! he! he! . . . your cap on the wrong way.'

Here let me drop the pen. Imagination shudders at the memory of that moment too much to allow me to dwell any longer on its misery. I must bid you *farewell* for the present. In my next, if I survive the effect of them, I will continue the chronicle of my embarrassments.

Yours truly.

P.S.—I open my letter to say that, as I was hurrying down the street to chapel, my sleeve was twitched by a Fellow, who, with a quizzical leer and a voice chuckling with delight, said, 'You are a Freshman I presume, sir?' 'Yes, I am. What then?' 'I thought so, sir, by the way you wear your gown.' I turned round. My gown, like my cap, was put on the only way in which it could be wrong. Oh, the impotent wrath of that moment! I adjusted my gown, feeling, and doubtless looking, inexpressibly silly. I tried to laugh it off, but my laugh sounded to me like the mocking echo of a laugh not mine. These adventures sickened me of walking. That night, when my tea things were laid, my sofa wheeled to the fire, and my favourite 'Gil Blas' open on my knee, I said to myself, 'Well, to-night at least I shall be comfortable.' Scarcely had I made that soothing reflection ere there came a gentle tap at my door, and a being entered, with a book under his arm. But, my dear —, the post will not wait for another word from me, so the being and the book must. Adieu!

The second prose manuscript is a slight fiction founded on the legend connected with the tree still shown in the garden of Christ's College, Cambridge, as Milton's tree. By this legend my father's fancy appears to have been long haunted; for he treated it in verse as well as prose. But the juvenile tale is of no biographical or other interest sufficient to claim a place

for it in these illustrations of the literary products of its author's college days. I subjoin a facsimile from the original manuscript of the poem written at the same time on the same subject. This poem he afterwards published in 1831, incongruously coupling it with 'The Siamese Twins,' a burlesque which he has justly described as 'a very jejune and puerile' performance, and which he never republished. Of the poem on Milton he thought more highly. He retouched it again and again. His final version of it was published by Mr. Murray in 1865; and in a letter written a few years later to Mrs. Leo Schuster, he says, 'It has always been a favourite child of mine, though it is very little known even to the few who read my other poems.' His predilection for it is easily explained. The situation, and the feelings, described in the poem are distinct reflections from that supreme experience of his boyhood which never ceased to haunt him with the recollections of its brief romance.]

CHAP.

V.

Æt. 19

CHAPTER VI.

(Supplementary.)

HISTORY OF THE BRITISH PUBLIC. 1824. Æt. 21.

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[My father's diversified intellectual efforts during his Cambridge time were in keeping with the practice of his after life. He had succeeded as a speaker at the Union; he had written poetry, and obtained the prize for his poem on sculpture; he had turned the Milton legend into a prose fiction, and had commenced two of the novels he afterwards completed and published; one of them, 'Pelham,' being the foundation of his fame. He did not stop here. His historical studies, and his disposition, from opening manhood, to revolve the graver problems of political and social life, found expression in a scheme for a 'History of the British Public.' The outline of the work was drawn up at Windermere in the summer vacation of 1824; and, as the only means of conveying an adequate idea of his speculations on such subjects at the age of twenty-one, I print here a portion of the manuscript in which he sketched the general scope of his design. The subject was of a high, ambitious order, and the proposed treatment of it original—the result of his own reflection, and not the reproduction of his reading in an altered form.

HISTORY OF THE BRITISH PUBLIC.

(FRAGMENTS.)

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Plan of the Work.

DEFINITION.—Distinction between Public and People. It will follow that in different ages the Public is still a class, and only a class. At one time it is the Barons, at another the Clergy, at another the Middle Class; rarely the Populace.

1st Period: The Public to King John. 2nd Period: To King Richard II. 3rd Period: To Henry VII.

Portraits of Becket, Henry, Warwick, Clarence, and all the popular idols. Chivalry, Witchcraft, Lollards. Treatment of those who would enlighten the Public. The People corrects the errors of the Public; that is to say, one generation corrects another.

From Henry VII. to Charles I. Reformation. What did the Public do with regard to Authors, &c.? House of Commons rarely, if ever, represents People: pretty generally a fair representative of Public.

Public from Charles I. to George I. From George I. to middle of George IV.

View of Public since. Summary and results. Great reforms, whether for good or evil, always worked by Minorities. Theory of Reaction. Public estimate of Authors. Authors moderately popular in their time generally the most durable. Books that enchant the public, and theories that enchant the Public, have seldom kept their ground. The highest degree of Art must wait long before the Public can understand it. Fault of popular Parties, to go with the Public, and not penetrate the People. Astonishing fact that, after a thousand years since the Conquest, no education for People, no law for People.

Review of the principal Histories of England. Authors not of most general popularity in their time: Roger Bacon, Chaucer, Qu^y. Shakespeare, Milton, Jeremy Taylor, Burke in House of Commons. Authors of highest popularity: Skelton, De Foe, Bunyan, Swift.

BOOK I.—SECTION 1ST.

It is a mistake, common alike to those who legislate for the present and those who narrate the past, to confound the Public with the People. It will be new, and it may be useful, to illustrate

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the distinction between these two bodies; and it is my intention, in the following pages, to trace the history of the English Public throughout the various periods of our monarchy, from the Norman Conquest to the accession of William IV. From time to time I shall pause in this task, however, to contrast the steady silent progress of the People with the fickle changes and noisy follies of its unworthy representative, the Public.

The distinction I would establish between them will be best understood by the illustration of it from particular instances.¹

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All internal revolutions—that is to say, revolutions not produced by conquest or foreign interference—arise from one or other of the following sources: 1st, the People; 2nd, the Aristocracy; 3rd, Faction. The last is generally induced by the energy of particular individuals; and may therefore be said to have its origin rather in those individuals themselves than in the factions they form or govern. To revolutions of this third class the People is generally indifferent. In the majority of instances they have been initiated by the Capital, not by the Country. In countries where subsistence depends largely on the wisdom, and may be seriously diminished by the errors, of Government, the People is roused by famine into action for forcible change in the political system. Hunger, the mother of all energy, has taught men to be free. Fortunately for England and France, the soil of these countries does not produce a superfluity of provision for the sustenance of their population. Hence the errors of a bad Government are soon felt in a deficiency of food. An unjust tax produces discontent. Want provokes insurrection, and famine culminates in revolution. For a people will always rebel rather than starve. Unfortunately for the liberties of Italy and Spain, their soil produces so much subsistence in proportion to the small number and abstemious habits of its consumers that the population of these countries is rarely *compelled* to revolution. For even under the worst Governments want is almost the only evil consciously suffered by the People. It is an old and true observation that even in Turkey the despotic power which often strikes down the Pasha seldom interferes with the Peasant. Philosophers, in devising schemes for the moral improvement of the

[¹ The remainder of this chapter has been destroyed.—L.]

People's character, do not sufficiently consider the material amelioration of its condition.

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Now, whenever revolution is the work, not of the People, or the Aristocracy, but of a Faction, the permanence of its result is extremely uncertain. And when I speak of the Revolutions of Faction, I do not mean those which have originated in a faction (for that has been the case with most revolutions), but those which rest upon faction, and are only supported by it. Their only probable or calculable chance of perpetuation lies in the influence or talents of the persons composing the Party which has brought them about.

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That liberty of opinion which has divided the English Community into various religious sects has created its own conservative limits. The concomitant existence of an Established Church, which maintains a certain standard of educated intelligence, has served to preserve Dissent, upon the whole, from running riot into fanatical excesses. It curbs that inflammatory action on the imagination which results from the emulous desire for converts; it stimulates, and to some extent necessitates, a competent learning in Dissenting Ministers, and prevents that jealous war which theological sects would be apt to wage with each other, if mutual tolerance and concord were less practically impressed upon the common sense of their common interests by the presence of a powerful Church Establishment.

So far, therefore, the Establishment and the Dissent Act work reciprocally to the benefit of the Common State.

On the other hand, no doubt, there are to be found in Dissent principles antagonistic to the more perceptible objects of Conservatism in England. The nature of this antagonism can be more conveniently examined hereafter. At present it suffices to admit that the influences of Dissent have been favourable to the conservatism of religious faith in populous towns, to a lively respect for the fundamental tenets of Christian ethics, and to that standard of practical common sense in political matters which seems to be always abandoned by modern societies when the checks of Christianity are removed from them. In fine, Dissent promotes, on the one hand, the general spread of Democracy; but, on the other hand, it discourages the more dangerous speculations with which, in

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Continental communities, Democracy has connected its social aspirations. Democracy may or may not be a bad form of government, but it is not necessarily subversive of religion, of property, or of the recognised conditions of existing civilisation. Socialism, Communism, Owenism, Fourierism, and all the other social sects which have branched out of a common root of Infidelity, would certainly annihilate the foundations of existing States, whatever else they might eventually reconstruct upon the ruins of them. Dissent in England counteracts this tendency.

Thus, independently of schools, Education in this country proceeds from the influences of home, the example and the habits of those amongst whom the generations are born. And these causes combine to give to the general national character an idiosyncrasy favourable to industry, to fortitude, to domestic affection, to respect for established laws, and to reverence for the hereditary religion. As the child grows up, and enters upon life, life itself becomes the Voluntary Teacher. Everywhere in the midst of vices, some of them inseparable from civilisation, and some incidental to humanity, he perceives at least a common respect paid to integrity and honour. The prodigious vital energy of the Commonwealth compels him to action of some sort. Intense competition nerves his faculties and keeps them on the stretch. The practical results to which, in commercial communities, invention and thought are commonly directed, and the contagious principle of self-government which prevails throughout the People in all its ramifications, from the national legislature to a parochial vestry—all these create out of the freedom of public opinion a certain harmony of common sense. Hence, that tendency to the practical, which Goethe justly regards as the permanent characteristic of the English, and the main secret of their ascendancy amongst the various races of the earth. It is not truly said of us that we are disinclined to theorise. If it were so, we should be inimical to progress; for every step in progress starts from a theory. But this is true of us: that no People has ever been more happy in its selection of theories; no people has theorised so little in vain.

We have, indeed, been subjected, early in the manifestation of our national character, to the reproach of being fond of novelties. And it is perfectly true. But novelties, with us, are soon tested. If they lead to nothing valuable they fall into disuse and contempt. Utility, like the truth, of which it is a part, always prevails. If we are less inclined than the French to political Utopias, and than the Germans

to metaphysical problems, still the most valuable political axioms have come from us. From us every sound thinker desirous of founding a free State (whether the form of it be monarchical or republican) borrows the groundwork of his plan. With us the ideas which retain the most enduring sway over the widest range of intelligence have either originated or borne their most substantial fruit. Nay, if no Kants, or Schellings, or Hegels, agitate the intellect of our Universities, still the leading conceptions and most valuable propositions, even of these philosophers, are perhaps less generally taken up into the actual life and working intelligence of the ordinary German Public than into those of large numbers of Englishmen who, in all probability, have never surmised the existence of their systems, or heard of their names. Through their influence upon the minds and works of the few English writers who have taken them into their own theories or sentiments about human destinies and relations, these ideas work indirectly over a wider field of social activity : and I have heard an English mechanic talk pure Kantian philosophy without the least suspicion of the sources whence it had flowed into his mind.

Every English thinker or statesman who is capable of looking forward a little into the continuous operation of organic forces which in every free community, more or less, and in our own at least very perceptibly, are engaged in the displacement of the centre of political power, must earnestly desire the greatest possible increase of activity to this infiltration of knowledge and the results of educated thought throughout the body of the People. And for the acceleration of this process there are only two really efficient agencies. These we should spare no effort to promote. One is the cheapened publication of valuable books ; the other is the establishment of popular Literary Institutes. In a word, we shall never educate the children till we have educated the parents. The sentiment with which education is habitually regarded by the latter will practically determine the quality and the amount of it provided for the former. When the parents of the People have learned from their own experience to appreciate the value of Education they will no longer be satisfied with any government or political system which provides no adequate education for the children of the People.

The intelligence which may be collected and directed by means of such popular Institutes as I shall presently describe will infallibly radiate over a very wide circle ; reaching far beyond the lowest verge of the Trading Class, and well into the higher divisions of the

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Working Class. Indeed, the English Mechanic often exhibits a greater extent of general information, and combines with it a more habitual exercise of reflection, than the average type of opulent tradesmen. It is a mistake to judge of the intelligence of the Operative Class by the errors into which it is occasionally led by incorrect views of self-interest. A man in the highest class of general scholarship may have false notions of political economy: and education does not always suffice to correct the impulses of passion; least of all, the impulses of that passion which emanates from the organ of acquisition, and inflames the sense of loss or the desire of gain.

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The most important of those questions which first present themselves under the head of Social Improvement are, at the present moment, the state of education in England, and of employment in Ireland.

Before touching any others, let us dwell a little upon these.

Care for education consists, 1st, in providing for it; 2ndly, in the encouragement of all distinctions which education produces. In vain to dwell on the advantages of literature, the delights of art; in vain to open schools and galleries, if the community still sees its men of letters starving and its artists slighted. It is not irrelevant, therefore, to examine, in the first instance, the encouragement given to art and letters by the character and habitual conduct of the Public; as, also, by the attitude of the State, which reflects the character of the Public, being formed in the image of it.

Review Pension List for Literature and Science.

Social respect for artists and men of letters.

Condition of the Drama.¹

Remedies: Increase Pension List. Order of Merit. Gallery for living artists; not dead only. For Drama: bring all theatres under one control, and pay rent of one great national theatre.

Two kinds of knowledge required for operatives: intellectual

[¹ These notes show that at the age of twenty-one my father was already interested in the state of the drama and popular literature; that he had turned his attention to various plans for their improvement, and that he had conceived, while still a boy, the outlines of ideas afterwards embodied in his parliamentary speeches and measures on 'The Monopoly of the two great Theatres,' 'Dramatic Copyright,' and 'The Taxes on Knowledge.'—L.]

knowledge, and industrial knowledge. Add to last industrial establishments in every district, comprising schools for females.

Having thus provided for the industrial progress of the People, you must open to them as much as possible the markets of their industry. Poor laws. Abolish law of settlement. Remove unequal burdens on land. *All* property should be taxed for the poor. All facilities given to landlords for improvement of estates. Not loans only, but compensation for railways; promoting improvement as well as purchase of land. Specially important to develop railways.

Turn now to Ireland. *Résumé* of its real evils: Don't ask too much from landlords. It is impossible from their means. Provide employment that brings profitable return, to wealth of country. Purchase lands for Government, or encourage companies for that purpose on a large scale, and in every district. Introduce all improvements that can increase demand for labour. Lay the foundation of orchards in the rich valleys—each small owner, some fruit trees. Spread the cultivation of flax. Introduce hops. Try the mulberry and silkworm. Trust, in all these, the irresistible effect of example. Industrial schools everywhere. Put political questions at rest for a while. Let the Church sleep. Say boldly, 'Whatever our opinions on these matters, we must first give bread to the People. We must lay the foundation of those industries and habits on which national happiness depends.' In proportion as Ireland thus advances in industrial prosperity, the difficulty of adjusting religious differences will be diminished. In proportion as you increase the wealth of Ireland, you will be able to do that which is the only means of meeting the difficulty without straining the conscience of England. You can tax the Irish People for the maintenance of their own ecclesiastical establishments. Be firm in putting down crime. Go back to analogous states of society. Divide into districts. Make each district responsible for the crimes committed in it.¹

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[¹ Perhaps some readers may find in these suggestions of a youth of twenty-one more indication of political wisdom than is yet generally perceptible in the latest experiments of septuagenarian statesmanship upon the government of Ireland.—L.]

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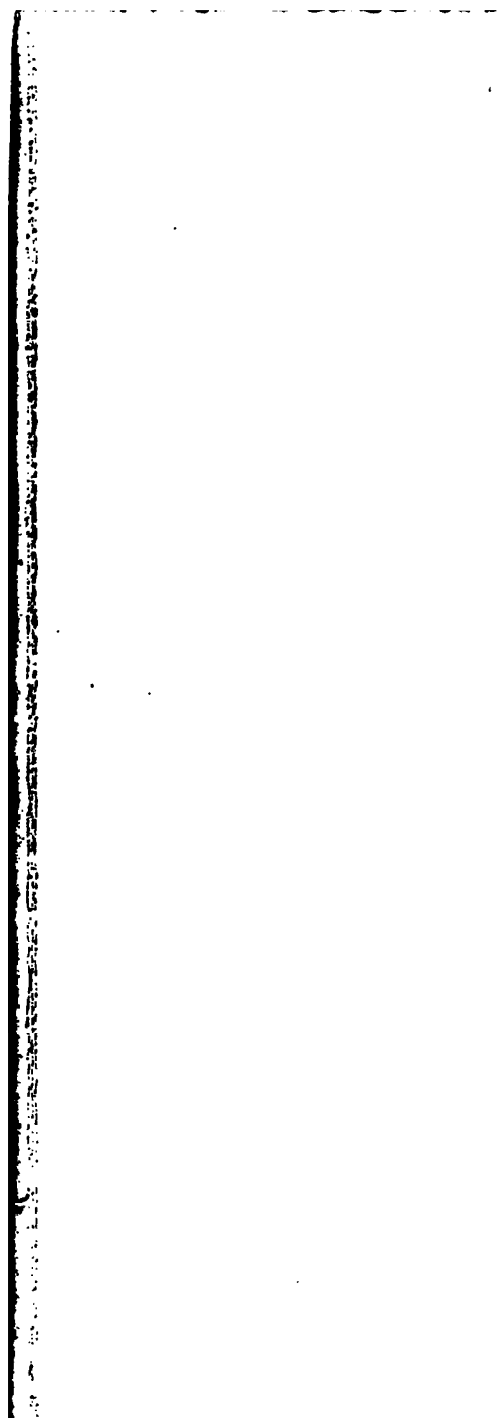
Upon the many hitherto unpublished writings, or fragments of writing, by my father which will occupy no small portion of the present work, it is not my intention to say more than may be necessary to place them before the public in their right relation to his feelings and circumstances at the time when they were written. I therefore abstain from lengthened comment on the character of this paper ; but I would, at least, invite attention to the closeness with which the course of popular education during the last half-century has followed the direction indicated, adopting the methods suggested, and exhibiting the results predicted, in it. The support given by the working classes to Mr. Forster's Education Act has fully justified the anticipation that 'when the parents of the people have learned from their own experience to appreciate the value of education, they will no longer be satisfied with any government or political system which provides no adequate education for the children of the people.' And beyond all question the two agencies which, during the last fifty or sixty years, have done most to educate 'the parents of the people,' are 'popular literary institutes' and 'the cheap publication of valuable books.' In the year when these observations were written Sir Edward Baines was founding the Mechanics' Institute of Leeds. The country is now covered with similar institutions ; and it is fortunate for its people that the enterprise of cheap publications fell, at the outset, into the hands of men animated by a genuine affection for the masses, and a strong belief in their capacity to appreciate the benefits of knowledge. Circumstances denied to Henry Brougham a political reputation commensurate with the activity of his intellect and the force of his eloquence ; but it is the lasting and fruitful achievement of that remarkable man to have breathed a popular spirit into what might otherwise have remained a doctrinaire theory, and given to the praiseworthy labours of Birkbeck and other educational philanthropists a vitality of success such as genius only can bestow. Wider

still, if less conspicuous, has been the good effected by Chambers of Edinburgh, and Charles Knight. Their example has since been followed by many of the leading publishers, with the assistance of some of the leading writers, of Great Britain. But if all that has been done, in the present and previous generations, for the improvement of the masses by political demagogues could be collected and weighed, it would be as dust in the balance to the substantial benefit conferred upon the English people by the comprehensive enterprise of those two men.]

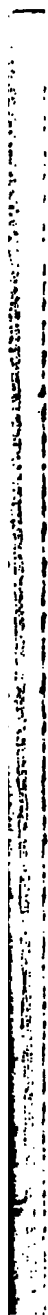
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ÆT. 21



BOOK IV.
WANDERJAHR
1824—1825



CHAPTER I.

(Autobiographical.)

THE GRAVE OF A DREAM. 1824. Æt. 21.

At the commencement of a long summer vacation, I accompanied one of the friends my share in the Union debates had procured me, on a visit to his parents in Northumberland. Poor William Ord! I see him now—his small stature, his dark, intelligent eyes. He was an instance of a mind cultivated beyond its powers; of ambition disproportional to the usual faculties that advance it—except application and hope.

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I.

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His parents moved in the best Whig society, and my young friend, from his childhood, had been brought up among wits and statesmen. He had already that tone of conversation which characterised the literary coteries of the day, at Holland House and Lydia White's. That mixture of the worldly and the intellectual; anecdote and *persiflage*; scorning political economy and statistics; a would-be freedom from prejudice; but such a contempt for the understanding and the honesty of those entertaining opposite opinions!

I spent a fortnight at his father's house, and thence I went to Penrith, and proceeded to travel on foot over the scenery of the English Lakes. Leaving my portmanteau, to follow me when settled where the whim might seize me, with my knapsack on my shoulders, I took my way along the shores of Ulleswater.

I had one object in this tour, far beyond any thought of pleasure and adventure. There was a spot amidst these dis-

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tricts which I had long yearned to visit, with such devout and holy passion as may draw the Arab to the tomb of the Prophet : a spot in which that wild and sorrowful romance of my boyhood, which had so influenced my youth, lay buried for evermore. And until I had knelt alone, and at night, beneath the stars at that shrine, I felt that my life could never be exorcised from the ghost that haunted it—that my heart could never again admit the love of woman, nor my mind calmly participate in the active objects of men. I performed that pilgrimage. What I suffered, in one long, solitary, night, I will not say. At dawn I turned from the place, as if rebaptised or reborn. I recovered the healthful tone of my mind ; and the stage of experience and feeling through which my young life had passed contributed largely to render me whatever I have since become.

CHAPTER II.

(Supplementary and Illustrative.

THE TALE OF A DREAMER. 1824. Æt. 21.

[‘THE Tale of a Dreamer’ (dated in the first printed copy of it ‘Windermere, 1824’) is the poetical record of that night, to which my father briefly refers in his Autobiography—of the sufferings, the memories revived by it, and the hopes and resolutions they awakened. It is here alone that we have the continuation and completion of the pathetic story of baffled love which no one who has been touched by it would wish left imperfect, or think any summary a substitute for the authentic language of its author. To the young, poetry (even when unconsciously imitative) is the spontaneous language of emotion; and this ‘Tale of a Dreamer,’ notwithstanding the Byronic influence that pervades it, has in it, perhaps, more true poetic feeling than most of my father’s later and less passionate utterances in verse.

CHAP.
II.

Æt. 21

THE TALE OF A DREAMER.

(Written in 1824. An. æt. 21.)

My childhood scarce had glided into youth
 When my soul felt its secret depths, and drew
 The forms of fancy into life and truth.
 The thousand dreams of beauty that would bless
 My musing moments felt the spell, and grew
 Into one mortal mould of loveliness,

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Whose influence in my fervid spirit became
A deep pervading energy like flame,
Filling the earth beneath, the heaven above,
With a diviner life. That life was love.

And thou wert beautiful, my Viola !
The hues of morning slept upon thy cheek ;
The morning, ere man's step hath dash'd away
One dewdrop from the virgin flowers of earth.
Youth, health, and innocence had made thee gay ;
And the heart's smile, and happy laugh, would break
Forth from the springtide of thy maiden mirth.
We met, we saw, we loved, and we were blest.
We loved ! Ye heavens, within whose glories move
(Kindling the east and curtaining the west)
The everlasting ministers of love,
When have ye witness'd more voluptuous hours,
Diviner days more perfectly possess'd,
Or bliss more innocently bold than ours ?
Ah, brief, sweet, daybreak of the heart, when youth
Is fragrant still with childhood's freshest dew,
When every fair illusion is a truth,
And every charm, save innocence, is new !
And thou, sweet Love, round thy discoverers wreathing
The branches perfumed by thine odorous sigh,
And o'er the bright earth still more brightly breathing
The cloudless warmth of thine Italian sky,
Tho' thou art gone, and gone with thee the hues
Of life's young rapture, lost in long regret,
I will not, with the heartless herd, accuse
The power that blest, betray'd, and lures me yet.

A mist comes o'er the beauty of the past,
And I recall the day when bliss was torn
From this wrung heart with Viola. Aghast,
Baffled, and bleeding, I beheld her borne
Away, I knew not whither. Lonely there
The stream still roll'd beside me, murmuring,
And on my brow still breath'd the air of spring ;
But my dim sense was blinded by despair,

And I saw nought before me. Like a pall
 Life's darkness cover'd me; my world's one light
 Was suddenly gone out for ever, and all
 The tracts of time were stricken into night.
 Months pass'd away, and brought no word of thee.
 I drifted down the darken'd days, as they
 Who in the fable sail upon the sea
 For ever and for ever. A lone way
 Without a change, a dread monotony,
 A dreaming slumber in a living grave,
 A sunless sky, a sea without a wave !
 If I had lost thee *now*, I should have sought
 O'er the wide world, and found thee : thou hadst been
 Free, and mine own once more. But I was then
 A boy, whose spirit felt, and loved, and thought,
 And would have *dared*, but might not *act*, as man.

* * * *

What do the wise with knowledge, that false tool
 Which forges misery for its master ? Why
 To store it nightly toils the labouring fool ?
 What profits the wan cheek and sunken eye
 Worn out with learning, in a barren school,
 To know life's folly, and, this known, to die ?
 In my young days, when thou and love were near,
 Perchance I was ambitious. That is past.
 There's nought in fame, or honours, to endear
 The solitude that Love hath made at last
 Of his own paradise. The night is drear,
 The fount is frozen, and the bower a waste
 Where no bird sings. What needs the mourner here
 Of lights that gild, but cannot break, the gloom
 Where in himself he hides his own heart's tomb ?

* * * *

Day darkens from the earth, and tenderly
 Steals the sweet eve into the silent sky.
 ' Cheer thee, my Viola ! One effort more,
 We reach yon wood, and then the danger's o'er.
 Our horses wait beside that hoary tree,
 And if—— Ah ! death alone can set us free !
 Vain, vain the conflict, vainer still the flight
 But hate may slay, it cannot disunite.

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Flash'd the fell tube, and rung the bickering blade,
Well sped the bravoës at their holy trade.
One wound—another—the short strife was o'er :
Earth swam around me, and I knew no more.

Not even death ! Yet felt I in my soul
What the grave's inmates feel perchance—a dense
Convulsive slumber of the shuddering sense ;
Slumber that slept not, but pursued its prey
With ravening horrors ; shapes of dread and dole
That sigh'd, and snatch'd, and gaped, and waned away ;
And many a ghastly sound and terrible cry
(Which none methinks have heard upon the earth)
Rocking abysses of silence, rose and fell :
Now the wild laughter of unholy mirth,
And now the shriek of some vast agony
That welter'd drowning in the nethermost hell.

Alas ! too soon upon that hideous night
Arose returning reason's wretched light.
Oh, how I long'd, as caged birds for their nest,
For that calm home beneath the grassy sod
Where woe at length hath wept itself to rest,
And, if we dream, our visions are of God.
I woke to sense,—and anguish : woke to feel
The winter of a heart without a flower ;
The wound time deepens while it strives to heal ;
The dull weight of the slow down-dragging hour ;
The overwhelming sense of loneliness
Which, in the wilderness, is said to rush
Over the soul till, in its fearful mood,
It maddens for a step, a look, a tone,
Even tho' it be a foeman's, to intrude
On that unearthly silence—and finds none !
But shrinks and shudders as it dares, alone,
The vast solemnity of solitude
Where its pent awe and gathering terror gush
Into a shriek which manhood vainly smothers,
A shriek without an echo. How methinks
My coward spirit from that memory shrinks !
I waked, I breathed, and knew—*she was another's.*

I did not blame thee, Viola, although
 For me no joy was left beneath the sun.
 I did not blame thee, for I knew, and know,
 What arts thy life and mine have thus undone.
 Thy sire hath yet between his soul and me
 A dread account to render. Lo, I stand
 Here, in the halls of midnight, girt with powers
 Of dreadful birth, that my familiars be :
 The spirits of the dark and stormy hours
 My grief hath fought and conquer'd. I command
 These ministers of my revenge to hear
 The curse to them confided. Let him live
 To long for dissolution, and to crave
 A never-granted quittance. Let him give
 An hourly promise to the gaping grave,
 Yet still crawl on, the crippled fugitive
 From a fear'd life, to find a deadlier fear
 In that which follows life. Before his eye
 Stand thou, and haunt him in the hour most drear
 With the most ghastly terrors of the tomb,
 Thou his own daughter, and around him wave
 The fires that devastate but not consume.
 Be every sin that he hath sown in me
 Fruitful of some fresh torment to his soul.
 So let him, unforsaken, unforgiven,
 Be dogg'd by his own doing to the goal
 Where Hell is hottest with the fear of Heaven !

Ah, wretch ! and wretchedest of all in this
 Unhallow'd wish, which was not even mine,
 But some delirious cry from that abyss
 Where there is nothing human ! You divine
 And griefless guardians of the realms above,
 If your mysterious happiness she shares,
 The sinless victim of my sinful love,
 Let her not hear my voice save in the prayers
 Her memory hallows. What have I, unblest,
 To do with curses ? This was blindly wrung
 From the fierce madness of a tortured breast.
 But that which vents its vengeance on the tongue
 Is far less vengeful than the vow suppress ;

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And so be this all vacant as the air
Where it dissolves, a soon-recanted prayer !

' My way of life is past into the sere
And yellow leaf '—nor care I now to know
Where it may lead me. For it is not year
Stealing on year, but woe succeeding woe,
And griefs, the ghosts of joys untimely slain,
That wither youth. The summers come and go,
The blossoms flower, and fade, and flower again,
But never more the springtime of the heart
Once gone returns. Ay, even the very pain
Of bliss departed shall itself depart,
And loss forgotten be life's only gain.

* * * *

I mix'd among the thoughtless and the gay,
A wither'd branch 'mid summer's glossy boughs,
A moth left wingless in the month of May.
But, when from nights of revel uprose the sun,
Softly rebuking the prolong'd carouse
Of hearts as light and joyous as the day
That o'er them dawn'd, in the dark heart of *one*
Still dwelt a grief that sought by bitter jest
And barren laugh, and simulated tone,
To keep its nameless misery all unguess'd.
Alas, how seldom are these worlds akin,
The world without us and the world within !

One night, amid the wonted festival
By Pleasure held in her illumined hall,
Last of her votaries there, my step and glance
Had not been all the duldest in the dance ;
And wan the lamps above the lingerers burn'd,
Ere from the ebbing revel I return'd.
As forth I pass'd, the dawn breath'd on me, sweet
And silent ; and the solitary street
Was silent too ; but, while the east grew red,
The dim vast city that around me spread
Rustled ; and its stirr'd silence seem'd to swell
With thrills, and spasms, and pulses audible,

Where the vex'd heart of it wax'd cognisant
 Of man's returning masters, Work and Want.
 Far off, where Morning from her orient brows
 Was scattering pearls among the hawthorn boughs,
 Back to their furrows troop'd the sons of toil
 Who sow, not reap, the sternness of the soil ;
 Wringing vile food for wretchedness from earth
 Yet boasting of the charter of their birth.
 But far more wretched in their squalid cells
 Their brethren of the city sleep, or hush
 Their children's moans for bread, where misery dwells
 In sight of splendour. What dark instincts rush
 Into their spirits, when they wake to hear
 That bitter murmur bickering at their ear,
 Or dying in disease ! Poor serfs to hell's
 Most tyrannous tempter, Want, 'tis yours to weep
 The day of toil without its night of sleep,
 The strong temptation, and the weaken'd will,
 The soul's sick struggle with the thoughts of ill,
 The breadless board, the fireless hearth, the wail
 Of woes that from the gibbet or the jail
 Shall win at last a silenced wretchedness.
 Oh, for one brief day of a seraph's power,
 Though death stood, at its evening, in the dress
 Of his most horrible torment,—could I shower
 Plenty on want, and solace on distress,
 I would embrace the torturer's rack, and while
 Its pangs were sternest, think of joy and smile !

I reach'd my home. I stood beside my bed
 But had no thoughts of slumber. There I found
 That fatal letter. And how listlessly
 I broke the seal, how motionless I read
 The words that told me where beneath the ground
 What *was* my life lay buried. *She was dead.*
 Dead. And I knew it, and I did not die.
 Not die, if this be life. My hand laid bare
 And falter'd not (without a groan, a cry,
 I read, as though in some wild dream it were)
 The page that letter folded. Yet mine eye
 Well knew the characters that, faintly fair

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And weaker than their wont in days gone by,
The hand that now was dust had written there :

' It is permitted in this hour, when death
Wins thy dear image from my parting breath
And human ties are severing, that the last
Of thoughts long chid should dwell upon the past,
And, ere my soul from life and love be free,
Return once more on wearied wings to thee.
Through solitudes of suffering I have trod,
Seeking in sorrow none but Sorrow's God ;
Shrinking from thoughts of thee and happier times,
Thoughts turn'd by law from blessings into crimes.
But now the struggle ends. For three long years
My soul was a seal'd fount of frozen tears,
And the first hope this aching heart hath known
Was when they whisper'd " Life's last hope is flown."
Wilt thou behold my grave ? Tears wept by thee
Its only truthful epitaph would be.
And yet if sad, not thankless, be the sigh
That mourns her death who but desired to die.
Death weighs me down. Ah, death but deepens more
The love still beating in my bosom's core ;
And, as the past comes o'er me, from my sight
Fades this sick chamber,—balmy breathes the night,
The sweet green fields, the starlit stream, are near,
Where first we met, and thy dear voice I hear.
In vain ! my weak hand fails. In vain I dwell
And linger o'er the lines that bid farewell.
But one word more—my weakness fails my will—
Bless thee, mine own love ! Bless . . . my heart is still.'

And *mine*, what was it ? One surpassing sense
Of infinite desolation, far too deep
For mitigating tears, and too immense
For bitterness. A pain that could not weep
Or pray, or minister to its own need
Of tears and prayers, by any word or deed.

* * * *

I stood beside her grave. The night was still
And sweet and starry. Not a single cloud
Dimm'd the exuberant moon. The little rill
Revell'd and babbled to himself aloud.

Wild weeds and lowly shrubs were cluster'd there ;
 And underneath a happy sisterhood
 Of little purple flowers had found a fair
 And quiet cloister. The embowering wood
 Was full of whispers. In the moonlit air
 Serenely shone the gray church spire hard by,
 Pointing the way for simple faith and prayer
 From graves and griefs below, to joys on high.
 Around me life's fresh loveliness lay spread :
 My thoughts, my steps, my tears, were on the dead.

Oh, that the lore of legendary lay,
 The marvels of a mortal's might, were true !
 Oh, that the voice of magic could recall
 The vanisht spirit to the mouldering clay
 That once was life, or for one hour renew
 The ruin'd past, and lift the sable pall
 Hiding death's hoarded secrets, so to steal
 One happy moment from them ! Viola,
 Come with the charnel weeds around thee waving,
 Come in the wanness of thy blighted bloom,
 And I will bless the gift my soul is craving,
 Nor chide the churlish usage of the tomb !
 I only ask to see thee. Dost thou hear ?
 For I am weary with long want, and grown
 Gray at the core from grief's monotony,
 Dead to all hope, and callous to all fear,
 And I would fain behold thee once, and die.
 I only ask to see thee. Art thou near ?
 Or is the vague and voiceless air alone
 The unheedful witness of a mourner's raving ?

* * * *

Enough ! my soul shall sink not. Well I know
 How bootless seems all sorrow for the dead.
 And if I err not wholly,—if the woe
 And thought, which are more deadly to our life
 Than years or sickness, do not falsely speak
 In the worn spirit and the faded cheek,
 Pall'd by thy joys, and weary of thy strife,
 O Earth, full soon within thy silent breast
 Thy son shall hush remembrance into rest.

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There was a simple stone upon the mould
 Where all my hopes were buried. It but told
 The day of first and second birth, and took
 One text of comfort from the Holy Book.
 Ah, grateful was the promise! 'Come, oppress
 And heavy-laden: I will give you rest.'
 And there she lay, the beautiful, the young,
 The broken-hearted victim of her vows;
 And wild and weeping the cypress hung
 Over her grave its monumental boughs,
 And the poor slumber'd round her: they whose ways,
 Obscure and rough, to reach that common rest,
 Her little life's brief, soon-extinguish'd, days
 Had brighten'd as they pass'd. The place was blest.
 A holy quiet hover'd in the air
 As though her gentle spirit linger'd there.
 And as I turn'd, reluctant, to depart,
 Its influence stirr'd that frozen deep, my heart.
 'The sweet and bitter thoughts' which long had slept
 Woke, and I fell upon her grave,—and wept.

Soul of the pure made perfect! Even above
 Still lived the memory of thine earthly love;
 Kind Heaven vouchsafed to thee, what earth denied,
 The power to comfort, though thou could'st not guide.
 I wept; and, melting through the frosts of years,
 Life's human hopes return'd to me in tears.

* * * *

My tale is done. Amid the world alone
 I stand, the martyr of my memory.
 But, though the spirits, around me there, are not
 Wild, free, and fierce perchance, as is mine own,
 And though still oft I yearn for wings to fly
 Far from my kind, to some sequester'd spot,
 Even as the wild bird, wounded, seeks his high
 Lone tarn where other wanderers linger not,
 Yet mine no more such solitary joy.
 Grief hath not sear'd my soul to selfishness.
 The wise alone can shine, the great destroy,
 But even the meanest have the power to bless.

O thou, my soul hath worshipt from my birth
 In the pure mountain air, and morning beam,
 Thou only goddess lingering still on earth
 Of all that blest the Grecian's golden dream,
 Eternal Freedom ! in this far retreat
 Where the unbounded heaven looks down to see
 The cityless soil uncurs'd by servile feet,
 A spirit drunk with thy divinity,
 Lone amid night and silence, calls thee ! Thou
 Throned on the rocks and waters, hear its vow !
 Though rude my harp, for thee its chords shall quiver :
 Though weak my voice, thy word it shall deliver :
 Though cold to love, for thee my heart shall burn
 With fires not quench'd, but purified, by sorrow.
 And so from days that are no more I turn,
 And to thine altars dedicate Tomorrow.

The brightest earthly hopes the author of the poem had ever formed for himself were shattered : he now resolved that he would labour to be a blessing to others. Strong in this resolution, he turned away tranquil from the grave of his Ealing heroine. He had conceived an object that would anew give purpose to an almost aimless existence, and his spirits revived at the prospect of devoting his energies to the interests of mankind. To battle for 'freedom' was the idea natural to his youthful prime. The special ends he set before him necessarily varied as his mind matured ; nor is it to be supposed that conflicting currents did not sometimes divert him from his main course. But the great fact remained that out of that grave of buried hopes sprang a second life, partaking to the last of the source to which it owed its being. So, when we turn from the love story in the early poem to the last of its author's finished works, we find in 'Kenelm Chillingly' the same incidents and emotions producing the same effects, and culminating in the same elevated aims. The poem was

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composed within the opening gates of life, the prose romance under the hovering shadow of death ; and, between the date of the first and that of the last, the author had passed through nearly half a century of incessant intellectual labour. Yet 'Viola' is the prototype of 'Lily.' Her epitaph was written, not in the summer of 1824, but in the winter of 1873. And these are the words of it :—

'How strange it is,' said Kenelm, still bending over the parapet, 'that throughout all my desultory wanderings I have ever been attracted towards the sight and sound of running waters, even those of the humblest rill ! Of what thoughts, of what dreams, of what memories, colouring the history of my past, the waves of the humblest rill could speak, were the waves themselves not such supreme philosophers—roused, indeed, on their surface, vexed by a check to their own course, but so indifferent to all that makes gloom or death to the mortals who think, and dream, and feel, beside their banks.' And he adds : 'Ah ! perhaps we must, at whatever cost to ourselves—we *must* go through the romance of life before we clearly detect what is grand in its realities. I can no longer lament that I stand estranged from the objects and pursuits of my race. I have learned how much I have with them in common. I have known love ; I have known sorrow.'

Those thoughts, those dreams, those memories, awakened by the murmur of the humblest rill, and colouring the whole history of his past, were not Kenelm's only. They were his also who conceived the character of Kenelm in some aspect of the image of his own. Nor were they the figments of a poetic imagination, but the voices of a personal experience still mingling with the sound of running waters some cherished echo of an old romance, first vocal to the writer's heart in the summer days of his boyhood, among those 'green sequestered meadows through which the humble Brent crept along his snake-like course,' and under 'that singular dwarfed tree which overshadowed the little stream, throwing its lonely boughs half-way to the opposite margin.'

My father read the manuscript of 'Kenelm' to my wife and myself, and at particular parts of it he could not restrain his tears. Throughout the day (it was New Year's Eve—the eve of the year of his own death) on which he finished the chapter describing Kenelm's sufferings above the grave of 'Lily,' he was profoundly dejected, listless, broken ; and in his face there was the worn look of a man who has just passed through the last paroxysm of a passionate grief. We did not then know to what the incidents referred, and we wondered that the creations of his fancy should exercise such power over him. They were not creations of fancy, but the memories of fifty years past.]

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CHAPTER III.

(Autobiographical.)

WINDERMERE. 1824. Æt. 21.

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THE sun shone brightly over the Lake of Windermere as I came to its gradual shores. I stood long by the margin, the gentle waves surging at my feet, and the trees reflected dark and deep upon the mirror. And 'Here,' I said, 'Peace revisits me; here will I fix myself for a time.'

As I walked on towards the inn at Ambleside, I passed by a solitary house, in the window of which was written 'Lodgings to Let.' I entered; was shown by a dark-eyed, smiling, maid-servant into an old-fashioned parlour, that looked along the still greensward towards the still blue lake, and a roomy clean bedroom on the first floor. The apartment pleased me. I inquired the terms. The maid could not say; the master was out. I said I would call in the evening, and went on to my inn. At dinner I asked the waiter, who lived in the house I had thus seen.

He stared at me, and changed colour. 'One Mr. W.,' he said, after a pause.

'Any family?'

'No. He is quite alone.'

The waiter was hurrying out of the room.

'Stop, I think of lodging there for some weeks.'

'Better not,' said the waiter quickly; 'you are very young, sir.'

Away he went, and in a few minutes the landlady entered.

'The waiter says you want lodgings, sir,' said she, eyeing me with an attention that gradually became more respectful. 'Will you allow me to recommend you what I think would suit?'

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'You are extremely kind; but I have taken a great fancy to an apartment I have already seen.'

'Mr. W.'s? Oh! don't go there, sir.'

'Why not?'

'Mr. W. has a bad character. Nobody speaks to him.'

'That proves nothing. Pray go on.'

'They say he was a smuggler or pirate once.'

'Is that the reason why nobody speaks to him?'

'No. There are worse stories.'

'What of?'

'Murder!' said the woman, whispering, and left the room.

That word certainly gave me a chill, and I resolved to renounce the lodgings. Meanwhile, I strolled forth, and, wandering along the margin of the lake, passed by a small boat moored to the side. I stood there, gazing on the placid water, and lost in reverie, when a voice behind me said,—

'Would you like a row? Shall I lend you the boat, sir?'

I turned, and beheld a man, middle-aged, and striking from the muscular development of his frame and the rugged power of his features.

'I am very much obliged by the offer, and will accept it.'

The man began to unfasten the boat. As he presented to me the oar, he surveyed me wistfully.

'I beg your pardon, sir; but are you the young gentleman who looked at the rooms to let in the house yonder—my house?'

My eye followed the direction towards which he pointed, and I saw the quiet, dull, house which I had visited, half hid amidst heavy foliage.

'Yes,' said I shortly; 'but I think I shall now take a lodging elsewhere.'

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‘I understand—they have set you against me.’ The man spoke bitterly. ‘But it is no matter, you are welcome to the boat all the same; it will be at your service whenever you like to use it. Be good enough to moor it in the same place. Good evening, sir.’

‘Stay—I will look again at the lodgings; perhaps I may be your tenant after all.’

‘Tenant to wicked W.!’ cried the man, with a hollow laugh. ‘Don’t think of it.’ And he strode away.

I entered the boat, and pushed from the shore. The man’s voice and manner moved me much. I felt an irresistible desire to become his lodger. So, when I had made my excursion, I refastened the boat, and walked up the grassy fields towards the house. The maid-servant was again at the threshold, and welcomed me with a smile. She had a lively but innocent expression of countenance that prepossessed me. She did not look as if she would have served a very wicked man.

After a second glance over the rooms, I asked to see Mr. W., in order to know the terms, and Mr. W. appeared. He named a price for board and lodging, which I thought moderate; and I agreed to enter the next day. Then, leaning towards him, I held out my hand.

‘Mr. W., it is true they have given me a bad character of you; but it does not seem to me possible that you can have any wish to harm me. At all events, though you are a very strong-looking fellow, I don’t fear you.’

I laughed as I spoke. The man coloured. He pressed my hand roughly.

‘I wish you could guess what I feel,’ said he, with a voice that trembled. ‘But if ever I can serve you——’ He hurried away.

The next day I was settled in my new apartments. I wrote to Penrith for my luggage, and soon made myself at home.

I had hoped that I should see much of my host, and hear

his own account of his life—his own version of the stories against him; but in this I was disappointed. He systematically avoided me as much as possible. When I made some pretext to send for him, he confined himself strictly to replies to my questions, and showed, in short, a reserve that would have baffled a curiosity and damped an assurance much more obstinate than mine. I now ceased to trouble my head about him. I had brought with me few books—the works only of two authors: Musgrave's edition of Euripides (a very bad one), and a pocket Shakespeare, without note or comment. Upon these two great masters I lavished all my attention. I read and pondered over them again and again, with that earnest assiduity which leaves behind it durable, though often unconscious, influence. They who view my fictions with a partial criticism may perceive, perhaps, the effect that study has produced upon their character: a desire to investigate the springs of passion and analyse the human heart, which is begotten in one who contemplates Shakespeare as a model; and a tendency to arrest narrative, often to the injury of its dramatic progress, by moralising deductions and sententious aphorisms, which the young student of Euripides might naturally contract. It might be supposed that these authors would incline any attempts at composition towards poetry; but I had now made a resolute compact with myself to face the future, and poetry led me back to the past. I determined to see what I could do in prose; and, without a single prose book at hand, sat down to form for myself a style. I found it exceedingly difficult; but the difficulty piqued my pride and nerved my perseverance. I wrote at first very slowly, turning and returning sentence after sentence; never satisfied till the thought I desired to convey found its best expression, and the period in which it was cased glided off into harmonious cadence. At first, I considered a page a day to be a grand achievement; gradually ease came. But it was not till years afterwards that I attained to rapid facility; and in doing so, forced

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myself to resign much that would better please the taste, in order not to lose that dash and intrepidity of diction by which alone (at least in works of imagination) we can hurry the reader into passion. For art in fiction is somewhat like art in oratory; the language it uses must often, with purpose, be rough, loose, and slovenly. The evidence of impulse must preponderate over that of preparation.

In these first essays of prose composition I wrote much that has since been turned into use. A slight tale called 'Mortimer' made the groundwork of 'Pelham;' and some 'Sketches of Men and Manners' will be found incorporated in 'England and the English.'

These studies occupied me till the afternoon, when I dined simply enough. Afterwards, I either pushed my boat into the lake, or wandered forth amidst the hills and valleys—a volume of Shakespeare or Euripides always with me, to take out if my thoughts, in spite of myself, became gloomy. By the moonlight I returned home, and, seated by the open window, studied again till I heard the clock strike one. I did not seek acquaintance with the great men who then adorned those scenes. What I sought, and what I wanted, was solitude—the quiet comporting, as it were, of my own mind. This was what I found.

CHAPTER IV.
(Autobiographical.)

AN ADVENTURE. 1824. Æt. 21.

I HAD here but one adventure worth, perhaps, the recital. I had been told of a spot little visited at that time by ordinary tourists, for the way was long and the road bad, but of which the picturesque beauties were said to be sufficient to repay all toil. One day I hired a horse and took my solitary way across the mountains towards this place. I rode very slowly; night closed in before I reached the spot; but night bright and starry, and more suited to the sombre sublimity of the landscape than the beams of day. Few scenes ever impressed me more than that which now awed my eye. A lake that seemed 'as ebon black and yet as crystal clear' (like the pool described in the first book of 'King Arthur'), surrounded by sheer, abrupt, dismal cliffs. Unlike landscapes of wide extent, the effect of which is never definite, in the aspect of this spot there was a singular concentration of savage gloom. The eye took in the whole, and the whole produced its single stern impression on the mind. It seemed a place fitted for the rites of enchantment, or for deeds of crime. I turned away at last with a superstitious dread.

My horse, but a very sorry animal, was thoroughly wearied out. I expected every moment that he would fall under me. I had been informed that there was no inn in the neighbourhood; but that there was a cottage near at hand, at which I might find accommodation for the night. I must have passed

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the cottage unawares during the fit of absence or abstraction in which I had left the dark, solemn lake. For I had already gone some miles and not noticed a roof-top, when suddenly I saw a light at a little distance. I made my way towards it, and came to a large lonely cottage; from the window of which the light streamed.

I knocked at the door repeatedly before a voice asked 'Who's there?'

I replied that I was a traveller who wanted shelter. The door was unbarred, and a tall, lean man, in a peasant's dress, stood at the threshold. The man surveyed me from head to foot, shading a candle with his hand, as I repeated my request. At length he said, very surlily,—

'You may come in.'

'But what shall I do with my horse?'

'There is a shed at the back; put him there.'

'Will you show me the way?'

'No. You can't miss it, if you have eyes.'

'You are very uncivil.'

'I don't keep an inn. I'm not in the habit of taking in travellers.'

'Perhaps, then, I had better go on? Is it very far to Keswick?'

'Yes.'

'How many miles?'

'I don't know.'

It was a vain boast of mine to proceed to Keswick; the horse could not have gone another mile. So I made a virtue of necessity, and went round in search of the shed. I found a tumbledown place, with some dirty litter, on which reposed a sow, that grunted very indignantly at my entrance. I took off the bridle and saddle, discovered some mouldy hay in a corner, and strewed it before the horse. The poor animal laid himself down at once, and bent his head languidly over the untempting food. I then went back to the cottage.

The man was standing by the hearth; and upon it burned a tolerable fire.

‘You can give me a bed, then?’ said I, doubtfully.

‘Yes; quite good enough, I should think, for you. I have had gentlemen stop here before, though I don’t make a practice of it. But they paid me handsomely.’

‘So will I.’

‘Humph! you may have the bed. I will go and put on the sheets.’

‘Stay—can you give me anything to eat? I have not tasted food since morning.’

‘Well, I believe there is some bread in the larder, and some milk. I’m very poor.’

‘The bread and the milk will do. But, since I see a fire and a kettle, perhaps without much trouble I can have some tea?’

‘Yes; but it *is* trouble, this hour of the night.’

‘But I will pay for the trouble. Come, my man, be good-natured, and don’t speak to me as if I was a beggar.’

Not a bit less sullen, the man went to his cupboard, took out some bread and the requisites for tea, and in a few minutes more I was at my simple meal.

‘You do not live here quite alone?’

‘Yes I do.’

‘Have you no family?’

‘What’s that to you? I don’t ask you questions. Make haste and finish. I want to go to bed. You must be away early; I’m off to my work at six. Now I’ll go and put on the sheets.’

My surly host opened a door in an angle of the room and went upstairs. Left alone, an uneasy suspicion seized me. I could not tell why, but I thought there was danger near. I had half a mind, even now, to proceed to Keswick on foot, leaving my horse behind me. Revolving this idea, I walked mechanically towards the cottage door, and found it locked—

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the key gone. The man must have taken this precaution while I was engaged on my supper of crusts. I had not time to consider how far this circumstance was a natural security against robbers from without, or an ominous design upon the guest within, when my host reappeared. I then examined him more carefully than I had yet done. His countenance was very sinister, with high cheek bones, and so pale as to be almost cadaverous. He had small, cunning, fierce eyes, ragged, bushy eyebrows, and a nose beaked like a bird of prey's. But I did not regard his countenance so much as his frame. Naturally enough, I desired to estimate his physical strength in comparison with my own. He was an inch or so taller than myself; very bony, though so lean, with great powerful hands used to work, and at the age when man is strongest—between forty and fifty. I was not rendered more assured by my survey; still, I thought he would find it hard to overpower me, provided I was not taken by surprise. And, after all, my suspicions seemed to my common sense so improbable.¹

'You have not only locked your door but taken away the key,' said I. 'Did you wish to prevent my leaving you?'

The man scowled, but I met his frown with so careless and determined an air, that he soon quailed.

'What do I care if you leave me? That is your look-out. Go, if you like; but you'll pay me all the same for my trouble.'

'No; I'll stay. Show me the bedroom.'

My host nodded, and took the way up the narrow stairs. He showed me into a room cleaner and neater than I had hoped for, sulkily wished me 'good night,' and in spite of my remonstrance took away the candle. He was not going to run the risk of having the curtains take fire and his house burned down.

[¹ There would seem to be some reminiscence of this adventure in the opening scene of 'Ernest Maltravers.'—L.]

However, the starlight shone through the lattice; I was not quite in the dark. I examined the door; it had no lock, and would not shut close. I took the precaution to drag, as noiselessly as I could, a chest of drawers from the opposite side of the room, and placed it against the door; then I undressed and went to bed; but, tired as I was, I could not sleep. An irresistible foreboding kept me wakeful and vigilant. I was haunted by the thought of murder. If I closed my eyes I saw again the black lake, and a voice seemed to arise from it and cry 'Beware!' I had but one weapon about me—a case-knife; but that weapon was sufficient to harden my nerves, with the consciousness that I was not without self-defence. I opened the knife and laid it at hand on the chair beside the bed. Two or three hours must have thus passed; and I was rendered the more wakeful because at times I heard steps moving about the room below. At length these steps began to mount the stairs; the stairs creaked under the tread. Does he sleep above? Strange, if so, he should have sate up thus late. The steps passed by my door, and presently I heard the handle turn, and the door made a dull sound against the barrier I had placed. I called out aloud, 'Who is there?' The sound ceased; all was still. By-and-by I heard the steps descending. I breathed more freely. I thought I was safe now, and in a little while allowed myself to doze, though uneasily. I soon caught myself starting up in my bed. The hand was again at the door; again the same dull sound against the chest of drawers; it groaned and yielded gratingly to the pressure. I sprang to my feet, grasping my knife. 'Take care how you come in, I am armed!'

Silence again: and again the steps crept down. But I was now fairly exasperated. My nerves were set on edge, as it were; I could not endure the repetition of this dastardly kind of danger. I felt ashamed of myself, that I did not go forth to brave and finish it at once. Was it not, indeed, safer so to do? Obeying the abrupt impulse, I pushed aside

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the drawers, and, knife in hand, went boldly down the stairs. Perhaps it is well that I did. The man was bending over the fire, his back turned to me. He had evidently not heard my step. He seemed in thought. Upon the table before him a candle still burned, and by the candle lay a bill, such as is used in chopping wood. My eye took in all at a glance. I advanced with a rapid step up to my host, and laid my left hand on his shoulder.

‘How come you to be sitting here at two o’clock in the morning? How dare you attempt to enter my room? Go to bed this instant, or——’

The man slipped from my hand, and stretched his own towards the bill on the table. Aware of his intention, I drew back and upset the table with my foot. The bill fell to the floor, and the candle, falling too, was extinguished. We only saw each other by the dull light of the dying fire.

‘If you attempt to stoop, to lay hand on that bill, you are a dead man! I will stab you to the heart; take care!’

The man was taken by surprise. He stood still, staring at me with his jaw dropping. The wild beast in him was daunted. I set my foot firmly on the bill.

‘You are a fool!’ said I; ‘you meant to murder me; but had you done so, you would have been seized. I am known in the neighbourhood—it would be known where I had slept—you would have no chance to escape detection. As it is, I am armed; you are not. Go to your room this moment, and thank Heaven on your knees that you are saved from a great crime and the gallows!’

‘I am very poor,’ said the man falteringly. ‘I did not mean it at first. I’m very sorry.’

He began to sob. I took him by the arm and led him to the stairs, like a child. He then went up the steps of his own accord, and I left him in a kind of loft under the roof. He had thrown himself on his pallet, muttering indistinctly, though he had ceased to sob.

I returned to the kitchen, picked up the bill, and carried it to my own room. I was disturbed no more, and fell asleep for an hour or two towards daybreak. I was awakened by the sun shining on the lattice. I dressed, and went downstairs. My host was already in the room, seated at the table, his hands drooping on his knees, and a stolid, insensible expression, almost that of imbecility, on his hard features. He had opened the cottage door, and I went out at once, without heeding him; thinking it best to secure my horse before he came to parley. To my surprise, I found the animal already saddled and bridled; it even seemed to have been rubbed down. I led the horse to the cottage door, and then called out to the man to come forth. He came very slowly, and looking down. I spoke to him seriously; but my eloquent preaching seemed quite thrown away. He attempted no excuse: he made, indeed, no answer. He gave me the notion of idiocy. But when I said, 'If you are so poor that poverty tempted you, you might have appealed to my benevolence,' a kind of wistful, avaricious glance shot from his eye, and he stretched forth his hand. I took out some silver. He clutched at it eagerly, then nodded as if satisfied, and turned back into his house. I mounted my horse and rode on. I passed through the fantastic defiles of Borrowdale and reached Keswick.

I found an occasion afterwards to make some inquiry about the character of my intended murderer; but nothing seemed known against it. He was considered a harmless, industrious peasant, but rude in his manners, and defective in understanding. Had I been older I should have judged it a duty towards others to inform a magistrate of what had passed; but the propriety of doing so did not then occur to me. Very likely it was a single devilish idea that had blundered into the man's dull head, and never appeared there again. However, I could not help thinking, 'I left at Windermere a host against whose character everyone speaks ill, and I have found nothing to blame in him; to find

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another host who designed my assassination, but against whose character not a syllable is said.'

After this adventure I did not remain long in those beautiful districts. When I took leave of my landlord, on paying the bill, he said to me with some embarrassment—

'I doubt if I have not charged you too high, sir; I did not think you would be contented with such simple fare.'

'Indeed, my fare has been excellent, and your charge most moderate.'

Wicked W. still seemed embarrassed.

'You are very fond of reading, sir?'

'Yes; that is true.'

'And young gentlemen must want money for their studies. In short, sir, if you would only pay me half, and keep the rest to buy books, I should be very much obliged to you, and much better satisfied. You see, sir, you have been kind to me, and came here in spite of what was said of me, and other lodgers will come now.'

'Mr. W., you have a good heart; I believe nothing said against you. I only wish you had let me see more of you. Why did you avoid me so much?'

'It might have done you harm, if people hereabouts said you had grown intimate with wicked W.; otherwise, I did wish to talk to you very much. But do take back this money!'

'I will take back one sovereign, and buy some books with it, as a memorial of you and Windermere. I would do as you wish, but I am well off. And now, will you tell me something of your history, and explain why people say of you what I am sure you do not deserve?'

But Mr. W. sighed, and shook his head.

'If ever you fall in love, sir,' said he, after a pause, 'don't be too much in love—not enough in love to be jealous. Jealousy makes a man mad, and brings the devil into his heart; so that if he does not commit crime, he may think it.'

So saying, he left me musing.

CHAPTER V.
(*Autobiographical.*)

VISIT TO MR. OWEN. 1824. *Æt.* 21.

I SET out on foot as before, bending my way northward. The pretty little maid-servant bade 'God bless me,' with tears in her eyes. My host did not appear, but I saw him at the window. He waved his hand to me kindly.

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And so hey for the Borders! and on with firm step into Scotland. But I did not walk all the way. On the last stage or two towards Edinburgh I took a place in the coach, and made acquaintance with two brothers, who seemed to be in trade. One, much older than the other, was evidently snubbing the cadet; but to me they were both of them pleasant, and I found their conversation instructive. We took up our abode in the same inn at Edinburgh—an excellent inn it was. I am sorry to say I forget the sign.

I came to the Falls of Clyde, and was shown over the grounds that then belonged to Lady Mary Ross. The guide took me to see the leap across the river which Scott, in 'Old Mortality,' ascribes to Morton, on escaping from Burley's Cave.

'The leap does not strike me as very formidable,' said I.

'I should like to see you take it!' replied the guide sneeringly.

The sneer put me on my mettle. Without a moment's reflection, I drew back a few paces, and sprang lightly across. When I was on the other side, and looked at the depth of the

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stream below, and remembered that I could not swim, a sort of *ex post facto* terror came over me. I turned sick and trembled. I would not have leapt over again for a king's ransom.

I went thence to the house of Mr. Owen, the celebrated philanthropist. I had no letter of introduction to him ; but I had heard enough of his hospitality to know that I should be received with welcome, as a student of Cambridge. Mr. Owen was from home at his mills. Mrs. Owen with great courtesy pressed me to stay to dinner. I talked to her about her husband's schools and his schemes. She did not seem, poor woman, to approve much of either. By-and-by Mr. Owen came in : a man of singular simplicity in appearance and manner, with a quiet, low voice, a logical mode of arranging his sentences, and altogether as unlike an enthusiast as a man could be. I listened with wonder to his projects for upsetting society and remodelling the world. To upset society and remodel the world might be very desirable. I did not wonder at the idea : I wondered at the sublime confidence with which Mr. Owen anticipated its speedy realisation.

'I have made great progress within the last year,' said he, with a sobriety of tone that was very imposing. 'Before 1830, Parliament will have come round to my opinion. All men are guided by self-interest : my system is for the interest of all men.'

Mr. Owen insisted on my passing the night at his house, and the next morning he accompanied me over his schools. It was a spectacle worth the seeing. The education seemed to me admirable. Never at any more aristocratic school have I beheld so many intelligent faces, or witnessed the same general amount of information. And the children, in their neat, uniform dresses, looked so clean and so happy ! I stood by his side observing them, with the tears starting from my eyes. Involuntarily I pressed the hand of the kind enthusiast, and began to think he was here, in good earnest, laying the founda-

tions of a system in which evil passions might be stifled from childhood, and serene Intelligence govern the human race without Kings, Lords, or Commons.

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Towards the afternoon I left the philanthropist, and renewed my pedestrian tour. I stopped at a cottage to rest and refresh myself on the way. An old woman reading her Bible received me very hospitably.

Full of Mr. Owen and his schools, I began talking of both in high praise. The old woman fired up.

‘Eh, sir, a vera bad man!’

‘Bad man!’

‘And has done a deal of mischief. The bairns turned out vera ill!’

‘How is that?’

‘They have never been taught *this*,’ and she laid her locked hands on the Bible. ‘They have no religion, and what is to support them, I should like to know, when they go into the world?’

I was silent. Mr. Owen, indeed, had said tranquilly, that he would not be so wrong as to instil belief. Belief was voluntary; it should be left to the judgment of men full grown. I fear the old woman was right, and that few of those poor happy children kept the promise with Fortune that their intelligence had pledged to her.

CHAPTER VI.

(Autobiographical.)

AN ADVENTURE IN THE HIGHLANDS. 1824. ÆT. 21.

‘Edina, Scotia’s darling seat,
All hail thy palaces and towers!’

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I CHANTED these words aloud as I entered beautiful Edinburgh! I was sensible at once to the poetry of the capital. All youth, nurtured by Romance, must love Scotland. Her stormy history, her dark legends, her passionate poets, her luminous philosophers, all inspired me with tender veneration as I stood gazing across the stream upon the tall gables of the old town.

‘I wish,’ said I to myself, ‘that I had some Scottish blood in me; that I was something to this city and this people.’ I little thought then that a day would come when literature would give me the tie that birth denied; that I, lone and obscure young Englishman, should one day be elected by the Scottish youth president of the renowned University which was the boast of that famous capital, and in preference to the Ducal head of the Campbells. After a short sojourn at Edinburgh, I proceeded towards the Highlands, still on foot.

One day, as I was striding lustily along the high road and talking aloud to myself, a young man leaped over a hedge or fence, lighting so close to my side that it seemed like an attack. I sprang back and raised my stick in involuntary self-defence.

‘Don’t be alarmed—no cause!’ said the stranger, taking

off his hat carelessly, and wiping his brows. 'I was trying for a short cut across the fields, and lost it.'

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I saw no necessity for reply to this remark, and walked quietly on. My first quick glance at the stranger's countenance had prepossessed me against him. I am not sure that first impressions are not true forewarnings—at least nine times out of ten. To my surprise and displeasure, the young man overtook me and walked by my side; talking easily, with an impudent, familiar air, upon the weather, the roads, the country, what not. At first, I replied only by dry monosyllables, which by no means abashed the young man's assurance. By degrees the assurance itself began to amuse me, and my answers grew less repellent. At length we were conversing as sociably as if we had known each other for years; my first impressions were worn away; nay, they seemed to me preposterously unjust, for certainly the countenance that had inspired me with distrust and dislike was acute in its expression, rather handsome in its contour, very striking altogether. The lad was dark and pale, with long heavy curls, raven black; his eyes were brilliant, his features aquiline and Jewish. He might be two or three years older than myself; his frame very slight but very wiry; he was about the middle height, or a little below it; he walked with a stoop. His style of conversation puzzled me extremely. I could not the least make out what he was; of what calling or what rank. At times he quoted songs and novels, so he was not without education; and now and then came an eloquent, quaint sentence, which imposed on me as original and clever. But then, he used a great many slang words I never heard before, though I had heard slang enough at Cambridge. His talk soon glided on to that topic in which young men generally feel most at home with each other—women. He spoke of the sex like a man of supreme *bonnes fortunes*, and with a strange mixture of cynicism and warmth. Thence he diverged to London life in general, especially theatres—seemed to know the peculiar

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merits, failings, and private history of every actor and actress. He spoke much, too, about places of amusement of which I knew nothing—'Shades,' and 'Cider Cellars,' and 'White Conduit House.' Nothing could be less in harmony with stern, severe Scotland than the talk of this tourist from the regions of Bow. He seemed London born and bred all over. Not exactly what we call cockney—too wild and lawless for that tame animal; nor had he the cockney pronunciation, nor the cockney way of viewing things; still, Londoner he clearly was, and a kind of Londoner wholly new to me.

In return for many questions as to myself—my condition, my birth, my plans, the contents of my knapsack—which he had bluntly put to me, and which I had as bluffly parried, I asked him point blank 'What brought *him* into Scotland?'

'Oh, a lark,' said he; 'and, besides, I have business here—looking after property,' he added, with a mock air of importance.

'You have property in Scotland?'

'I did not say that! I said I was looking after property.'

'I don't quite understand you—looking after property to buy!'

'Well, I rather guess it will be property to sell. Aren't you thirsty? I have some capital whisky here.' He pulled out a large dram-flask, and after rallying me for my refusal with a licence of expression that might have justly offended a prouder man, emptied the contents at a draught.

'Not raw whisky, I hope,' said I.

'Spooney,' quoth my new friend, contemptuously; 'raw, and no mistake! Water spoils whisky.'

After he had taken this villanous potation, the stranger's tone and manner began to alter notably. Hitherto, if impudent, there had been about him a kind of swaggering good-humour; now he grew sneering and offensive, and seemed evidently disposed to pick a quarrel.

The evening had already darkened. We were descending

a long hill, at the bottom of which, about a mile distant, lay the town that I designed for my night's resting-place.

Hitherto carts, horsemen, foot-travellers, had passed us pretty often. Now, the road seemed quite deserted save by ourselves—both behind and before. The stranger's obvious intention to affront me did not much rouse my anger, but it wakened my prudence. He must have some motive for it—it was not intoxication. The whisky had not made him drunk. His step was as firm as mine. I observed him glancing at me from time to time, and sidling close and closer to me. I grasped my stick with a firmer hand, and looked him full in the face very gravely; but I kept silent. Certainly I had no wish to quarrel; I saw no credit to be got by it. He was obviously much my inferior in rank; no gentleman wants to fight with an inferior if he can help it. If fighting were to come, it must be an honour thrust upon me.

Presently my companion fell back a little behind me. I turned sharply round and saw, for the first time, in his hand, a short, black, murderous-looking weapon—a life-preserver.

'Walk on before me, sir,' said I, halting.

The young man crouched down as if intent to spring, his eyes glittering and his teeth set. I raised my stick, which was a very stout one, and awaited the rush he appeared to meditate. Suddenly he returned his weapon to his pocket, and burst out laughing.

'Oh, oh! I've frightened you, have I? What fun! Ha! ha! you took me for a highway robber! How my granny will laugh when I tell her!'

'Well, sir, at all events, I neither like nor understand these tricks upon travellers; you have been very rude and impertinent for the last quarter of an hour, and I must now decline any further conversation with you. If you are going the same road, please to walk first.'

The young man folded his arms as if with a tragic air, and scanned me from head to foot majestically. Nevertheless,

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beneath that theatrical dignity, I fancied I discovered a furtive, stealthy meaning. He was examining, perhaps, whether or not his strength and activity, with the aid of his weapon, would enable him to master me, and possess himself of my knapsack, about the contents of which he had been so inquisitive. I must own the truth. I am ever habitually fearless, but I never felt so much in fear of any man as I did then of that boy.¹ Strange! for I believe I was stronger than he, quite as active, and my stick was a match for his life-preserver; but it was the sort of dread one has of some smaller kind of wild beast—a mountain cat, for instance. I felt at once that this creature was out of the pale of society, that he belonged to another world than the human honest world of Law. He stood there, an image of fraud, and cunning, and violence. My breath came quick; another moment, I should have rushed at him, less from valour than apprehension—from the quick tremor of the nerves and the fear of being taken unawares. The stranger suddenly dropped his arms, whistled, went on a few paces, then laid his hand on a gate and swung himself over into the fields. I did not like this movement, but walked forward, in the very centre of the road, looking behind and before, expecting him to jump forth every moment, and hastening my step, that I might reach the town before it was quite dark. However, I gained my goal safely, and saw the stranger no more—until many years afterwards.

[The sequel of this story may as well be given here. During the composition of 'Pelham' my father occasionally visited the thieves' quarters in London, with a view to the descriptions of them given in that novel. From the frequenters of a 'bouzing-ken' thus visited, he heard admiring anecdotes of the

[¹ I have seen my father more than once under conditions of imminent danger, but never saw him evince the least symptom of fear, except in the presence of a wasp. His terror of wasps was constitutional and uncontrollable; he inherited it from his father, and so did his eldest brother. He frequently dreamt of those insects, and always reckoned such dreams as ominous of coming evil or trouble to him.—L.]

cleverness, courage, and brilliant social qualities, of one of their absent comrades or leaders, whom, so far as I can recollect the story often told me by my father, they named Wolfe, and seemed to regard as their professional hero. Presently this man entered the room ; where he was received with enthusiasm. He immediately recognised my father, approached him, and with a somewhat patronising cordiality claimed his acquaintance as an old travelling-companion. ' Sorry,' he said, ' that our last meeting in the Highlands was so short. But my ears were quicker than yours, and I had heard along the road sounds which made me apprehensive that our agreeable intercourse might be interrupted. Two's company, you know, three's none. Delighted to renew so pleasant an acquaintance in such distinguished society. All friends here, you see. Charming women, and men of the rarest accomplishment. I do the honours.'

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And he did do the honours of the filthy place, with the airs and graces of a Charles Surface of low life.

My father never saw this man again, but some years after his marriage, he read in the newspapers an account of the pursuit and capture of Wolfe by the police on the charge of having murdered a woman.]

CHAPTER VII.

(Autobiographical.)

SCARBOROUGH. 1824. ÆT. 21.

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I HAVE little more to say as to my Scottish expedition. I continued it, chiefly on foot. I lay down to rest one night under a hedge in the field of Bannockburn. My enthusiastic reveries kept me from sleeping. I remember that night well—the moon was so clear and splendid, the wide landscape looked so still and ghostly. And there I lay, wide awake yet dreaming—dreaming back the glorious battle, and, fonder of Liberty than of England, calling up the image of victorious Bruce! Indeed, I often passed the nights (in the Highlands especially) in the open air—and happy nights they were! Ah, youth, youth!

I did not penetrate far into the Highlands—for a very good reason. The money I had brought with me from Cambridge (about 16*l.*) was expended; and, retracing my steps, I found myself one day in the streets of Glasgow without a shilling in my pocket. Musing what to do in that dilemma, all of a sudden, to my astonishment, I saw my eldest brother walking leisurely towards me. He, too, had been visiting Scotland, in a more aristocratic fashion than I—paying visits, &c. He laughed at my penniless condition, and lent me all I wanted to continue my travels. But I was now bound homeward. I returned to Edinburgh, and, resolving to reach London by sea, engaged a place in a vessel from Leith. I suffered, however, so much from sea-sickness one dreary night, which seemed the

commencement of eternity (and not a blissful eternity), that I made them put me on shore at Scarborough. Myself and my luggage were conveyed to a small commercial inn. I was too dead to the things of this world to care what they did with me. After an hour or two's repose in a very small, dingy bedroom, I heard a bell ring, and a dirty waiter came to tell me that dinner was served. I then learned that it was the custom at the inn (as it was at most inns at Scarborough) to take one's meals at a *table d'hôte*; and the waiter obligingly informed me that I was at no great expense for my livelihood—board and lodging (three meals in twelve hours besides tea) at 3s. 6d. a day.

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Much marvelling whom I should meet at the *table d'hôte*, and finding, to my great surprise, that my stomach had recovered its late loathing at all suggestion of food, I descended into the dining-room and took my place at the bottom of a long and crowded table. A gentleman seated next to me, who (as I afterwards learned) had 'a good business in the hat line,' began to break the ice sociably,—

'A foreigner, I presume, sir?'

'Who is a foreigner?' said I, looking round innocently.

'Beg pardon, surely you are; but you don't speak English amiss. Something betrays you in the accent, though!'

Accent! the man was talking broad Yorkshire, which I do not pretend to render in my translation of his dialect.

I resolved to humour his mistake, and replied, in half-broken English, that I did not think he could have found me out before I had opened my lips. My gentleman was mightily pleased at his acuteness.

'We Yorkshiremen are keen,' said he, rubbing his hands and chuckling.

What was there about me that betrayed the foreigner?

My long curling hair, I suppose, and my moustache; which last I had suffered to grow, with a virginal pair of whiskers, during my travels.

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'But surely you ben't a Frenchman?' he said, rather in alarm and disgust.

'No.'

'A German? He knew many Germans at Manchester, very like me—that is, they had all fair hair and blue eyes.'

'No.'

'A Pole, then—banished by that horrid tyrannical Emperor of All the Russias?'

I sighed and nodded assent. My friend, with this, became very compassionate and friendly. 'How did I support myself? Did I teach languages? Did I play the piano, or what?'

I supported myself by—conjuring! The man stared aghast, and I took that opportunity to monopolise the last potato in a dish which the waiter was about to hand to my new friend. The act was in character with my profession.

'Was it a good livelihood?'

'Very!'

'What could I do?'

'Creep into a quart bottle. I had crept into one when the armies of the Czar were in pursuit of me.'

Here the Yorkshireman began to look incredulous; but I ate my potato with imperturbable gravity, and, to change the conversation, began to admire the ladies, of whom there was a goodly array of all sizes, shapes, costumes, and ages.

'Well,' said the latter, 'I should think you had better conjure yourself a rich wife; you are a good-looking young fellow enough!'

'The very thing I want to do; I'm not mercenary, but still, some money, just to keep the pot boiling.'

'To be sure. You see that lady opposite in the yellow turban? she's a young widow—rich as a Jew! Her husband was a great tinman, and left her lots of——'

'Tin,' said I, dryly.

The fun pleased my friend mightily, and he offered to pre-

sent me to the lady ; in return for which courtesy I promised that he should be my bridesman, if ever I came to marry her. His young widow was about the same age as my mother, looking very hot and very swarthy ; but a fine woman—as women go—much too good for a Polish conjuror.

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After dinner a formal introduction between myself and the lady took place, and I flatter myself that I might, had the stars consented, have been her second choice. But 'life is thorny, and youth is vain,' and the next day I conjured myself off to the head hotel of the place. Here, if I lost the love of the widow, I made the acquaintance of a very disconsolate widower, who served me afterwards as a hint for Mr. Graves, in the comedy of 'Money.' He seemed the most melancholy of men, and secured my interest by his pathetic allusions to his recent irreparable loss—his sainted wife—and the indifference with which he henceforth regarded all womankind. A handsome, portly man, nevertheless ; with a very good appetite. Shortly afterwards, I formed a familiar flirtation with a pretty and lively girl, who informed me that I must take great care not to speak to her if she met me in the streets, for she had 'a friend' who was very rich, but very jealous.

One day, as I was walking along the sands with the inconsolable widower, and striving in vain to comfort him, this young lady tripped by us. Forgetting her admonition, or rather looking upon my friend, the widower, as a man who had no eyes on this side the grave, I smiled and nodded at her. She made no reciprocal signal of acquaintance, but blushed scarlet and hurried on.

'I am shocked at you, young man !' said the widower, very abruptly.

'Shocked ? young man ? what do you mean ?' said I, my dignity much offended.

'At your age—a profligate already ! I grieve for your poor mother's sake—a most excellent woman ! My lost wife's uncle, the bishop, knew her well.'

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‘Really, sir, you will provoke me to say something rude.
What have I done?’

‘Done! Ah! what indeed? How did you know that
young woman? Are you trying to seduce her?’

‘Seduce her, no! But you must excuse me if I say that,
though I respect your griefs—and years——’

‘My years, sir!’

‘We shall quarrel, I see, if we talk longer. Good day.’

‘Good heavens!’ cried my young flirt, when we next met
as appointed, in the dusk of eve, ‘how could you behave so
cruelly? I am afraid you have ruined me.’

‘What now?’

‘Why, you nodded to me when you were walking
with——’

‘A disconsolate widower?’

‘MY FRIEND!’

CHAPTER VIII.

(Autobiographical.)

LIFE WITH THE GIPSIES. 1824. Æt. 21.

ONCE more on foot, homewards. Time, sunset. Scene, the highway road; so curving as to be lost from sight at the distance of fifty yards, between a wood on one side, a broad patch of common sward on the other.

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Æt. 21

‘Shall I tell you your fortune, my pretty young gentleman?’

The voice, young and silvery, startled me from my reverie; and by my side stood a gipsy girl. She was so handsome! The most beautiful specimen I have ever seen of a race often beautiful in youth.

‘Pray do!’ said I, and I crossed her small palm with silver. ‘Only, pray, give me a sweetheart half as pretty as yourself.’

The girl was, no doubt, used to such compliments, but she blushed as if new to them. She looked me in the face, quickly but searchingly, and then bent her dark eyes over my hand.

‘Chut! chut!’ she said with a sound of sorrowful pity, ‘but you have known sorrows already. You lost your father when you were very young. You have brothers, but no sister. Ah! you have had a sweetheart when you were a mere boy. You will never see her again, never. The line is clean broken off. It cut you to the heart. You nearly died of it. You have conquered, but you’ll never be as gay again.’

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I snatched away my hand in amaze.

‘You are indeed a witch!’ said I, falteringly.

‘Did I offend you? I’ll not say any more of what has passed; let me look for your good luck in the time to come.’

‘Do so, and say something pleasant. Conceal the bad fortune as much as you can.’

I felt very credulous and superstitious.

‘Chut! chut! but that new star thwarts you much.’

‘What new star?’

‘I don’t know what they call it. But it makes men fond of strange studies, and brings about crosses and sorrows that you never think to have.* Still, you are a prosperous gentleman; you will never come to want; you will be much before the world and raise your head high, but I fear you’ll not have the honours you count on now. Chut! chut!—pity! pity!—you’ll know scandal and slander; you’ll be spoken ill of where you least deserve. That will vex you much, but you are proud, and will not stoop to show it. Your best friends and your worst enemies will be women. You’ll hunger for love all your life, and you will have much of it; but less satisfaction than sorrow. Chut! chut! how often you will be your own enemy! but don’t be down-hearted, there is plenty of good fortune and success in store for you—not like me. Look at my hand. See here, where the cross comes against the line of life!’

‘What does that mean?’

‘Sorrow—and it is very near!’

‘Nay, you don’t believe for yourself all that you say to others. Our fortunes are not written in the palm of our hands.’

‘For those who can read them—yes,’ said the gipsy. ‘But very few have the gift. Some can read fortunes by fixing their eyes on anything—the gift comes to them.’

I don’t pretend to give the exact words of the girl. They

* The astrologers attribute these effects to Herschell.

were spoken quickly, and often in florid phrases ; but, to the best of my recollection, I repeat the substance. We continued to walk on, and talk ; we became familiar, and she interested me greatly. I questioned her as to the women of her caste, their mode of life, their religion, their origin, their language. Her replies were evasive, and often enigmatical. I remember that she said there were but two genuine clans of gipsies in England, and that the one bore the generic name of Fahey, the other of Smith, from the names their first dukes or leaders bore. She said that many of their traditions as to their origin and belief were dying out—that some of them had become what she called Christians ; though, from her account, it was but a heathen sort of Christianity. She took great pains to convince me that they were not wilful impostors in their belief that they could predict the future. I have since learned that though they placed great faith in the starry influences, their ideas were quite distinct from the astrology known to us. Nor was their way of reading the lines in the hand at all like that described in books of chiromancy.¹

From these subjects we passed on to others more tender and sentimental. The girl seemed to have taken a liking to me, but she was coy and modest.

‘I should much like,’ said I, abruptly, ‘to pass a few days with you and your tribe. Do you think I might?’

The young gipsy’s eyes brightened vividly.

‘That I am sure you can, if you can put up with it—the like of you, a real born gentleman. Grandmother does as she will with the men, and I have my own way with her. Oh, do stay ! Stop—I don’t see that in the lines in my hand—I only see the cross.’

I could not help kissing the little hand. She would not let me kiss the lips, which were pursed up in pretty, wistful doubt.

By-and-by, on a broader patch of the common land, and

[¹ He afterwards studied both astrology and chiromancy ; and seriously.—L.]

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backed by a deeper mass of the woods, I saw before me the gipsy encampment. Just then the sun set. The clouds around it red and purple, the rest of the sky clear and blue, and Venus, the love star, newly risen.

We passed by some ragged, swarthy, children lolling on the grass; they rose up and followed us. Three young men, standing round an older gipsy, who was employed in tinkering, stared at me somewhat fiercely. But the girl took me by the hand and led me into the spacious tent. A woman, apparently of great age, sat bending over a wood fire, on which boiled a huge pot. To this woman my young companion spoke low and eagerly, in a language at which I could not guess my way to a word—the old woman looking hard at me all the time, and shaking her head at first in dissent; but gradually she seemed talked into acquiescence. The dear little gipsy, indeed, seemed to me irresistible; the tones of her voice were so earnest yet so coaxing. At length she turned round to me and said joyfully,—

‘You are welcome to stay as long as you like. But stop—what money have you got about you?’

I felt as if an illusion was gone. It went to my heart to hear the girl refer to money. Was her kindness, then, all sordid? Was I to buy the hospitable rites proffered to me?

I replied very coldly, that I had enough money to pay for any civilities I might receive.

The girl’s face flushed, and her eyes sparkled angrily.

‘You mistake me. I did not think you could. I spoke for your safety. It may be dangerous to have money. Give it all to grandmother’s care. She will return it to you, untouched, when you leave us.’

With an inexpressible feeling of relief and trust, I instantly drew forth all the coins about me (about 14*l.*) and gave it to the old woman, who took what must have seemed to her a large sum without showing any emotion, and slid it into her pocket.

'You don't think I shall let you lose a sixpence?' said the girl, drawing up her stature proudly.

'Oh, no! I wish it were thousands.'

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Æt. 21

Poor child! At these words the pride vanished; her eyes moistened.

Then the old woman rose and took some embers from the fire, strewed them on the ground, and bade me stand in them. She said something to the girl, who went forth and called in all the other gipsies—men, women, and children. There were about a dozen of them altogether. As soon as they were assembled, the old woman, taking my right hand in hers, and pointing to the embers beneath my feet, began to address them in the gipsy tongue. They all stood listening reverently. When she had finished they bowed their heads, came up to me, and by word and sign made me understand that I was free of the gipsy tent, and welcome to the gipsy cheer.

Resolved to make myself popular, I exerted all my powers to be lively and amusing—hail fellow, well met! The gipsies said little themselves, but they seemed to enjoy my flow of talk and my high spirits. We all sate round the great fire—a primitive Oriental group. By-and-by the pot was taken off, and its contents distributed amongst us; potatoes and bread, fragments of meat stewed to rags, and seasoned with herbs of a taste before unknown to me. Altogether I thought the *podrida* excellent.

The old crone, who seemed the Queen of the camp, did not, however, partake of this mess. She had a little dish of her own broiled on the embers, of odd, uncouth form. I did not like to be too inquisitive that night, but I learned from my young patroness the next day, that her grandmother was faithful to the customs of the primitive gipsies, and would eat nothing in the shape of animal food that had not died a natural death. Her supper had been a broiled hedgehog found in a trap.

CHAPTER IX.

(Autobiographical.)

HOW IT ENDED. 1824. Æt. 21.

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I SPENT with these swarthy wanderers five or six very happy days, only alloyed by the fear that I should be called on to requite the hospitality I received by participating in some theft upon poultry-yard or drying-ground, that would subject me to the treadmill. Had I been asked, I very much doubt if I should have had the virtue to refuse. However, the temptation, luckily, was never pressed upon me, nor did I witness anything to justify the general suspicion of gipsy errors as to the *meum* and *tuum*. Once only a fine goose, emerging from the pot, inflamed my appetite and disturbed my conscience. The men generally absented themselves from the camp at morning, together with a donkey and their tinkering apparatus, sometimes returning at noon, sometimes not till night.

The women went about fortune-telling; the children watched on the common for any stray passenger whom they might induce to enter the camp and cross with silver the hand of the oracle; for the old woman sate by the fire all day. My young gipsy went forth by herself—also on pretence of telling fortunes; but we had fixed a spot on the road at which I always joined her; and we used then to wander through the green lanes, or sit on some grassy bank, talking to each other with open hearts.

I think that the poor girl felt for me, not exactly love, but

that sort of wild, innocent, fondness a young Indian savage might feel for the first fair face from Europe that had ever excited her wonder. Once the instinctive greed of her caste seized her at the sight of a young horseman, and she sprang from my side to run after him, not resting till he had stopped his horse, crossed her hand, and heard his fortunes.

When she came back to my side she showed me half-a-crown with such glee ! I turned away coldly, and walked off. She stood rooted to the spot for a moment, and then ran after me and threw her arms round my neck.

‘Are you angry?’

‘Angry, no; but to run after that young man——’

‘Jealous? oh, I’m so happy! then you do care for me?’

As if with a sudden impulse, she raised herself on tiptoe, clung to me, and kissed my forehead. I clasped her in my arms; but she glided from them like a serpent, and ran off, back to the encampment, as if afraid of me and of herself.

One morning she was unusually silent and reserved. I asked her, reproachfully, why she was so cold.

‘Tell me,’ she said abruptly,—‘tell me truly, do you love me?’

‘I do indeed.’ And so I thought.

‘Will you marry me, then?’

‘Marry you?’ I cried, aghast. ‘Marry? Alas! I would not deceive you—that is impossible.’

‘I don’t mean,’ cried she impetuously, but not seeming hurt at my refusal, ‘I don’t mean as you mean—marriage according to your fashion. I never thought of that; but marry me as we marry.’

‘How is that?’

‘You will break a piece of burned earth with me—a tile, for instance—into two halves.’

‘Well?’

‘In grandmother’s presence. That will be marriage. It lasts only five years. It is not long,’ she said pleadingly.

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‘And if you want to leave me before, how could I stay you?’

Poor dear child! for child after all she was, in years and in mind; how charming she looked then! Alas! I went further for a wife and fared worse.

Two days after this proposition, I lost sight of her for ever.

That evening and the next day I observed, for the first time, that I had excited the ill-will of two out of the three young gipsy men. They answered me when I spoke to them with rudeness and insolence; gave me broad hints that I had stayed long enough, and was in their way.

They followed me when I went out to join my dear Mimy (I don’t know her true name, or if she had any—I gave her the name of Mimy), and though I did join her all the same, they did not speak as they passed me, but glared angrily, and seated themselves near us.

The girl went up and spoke to them. I saw that the words on both sides were sharp and high; finally, they rose and slunk away sullenly. The girl refused to tell me what had passed between them; but she remained thoughtful and sad all day.

It was night. I lay in my corner of the encampment, gazing drowsily on the fire. The gipsies had all retired to their nooks and recesses also, save only the old woman, who remained on her stool, cowering over the embers. Presently, I saw Mimy steal across the space, and come to her grandmother’s side, lay her head in her lap, and weep bitterly. The old woman evidently tried to console her, not actually speaking, but cooing low, and stroking her black hair with caressing hands. At length they both rose, and went very softly out of the tent. My curiosity was aroused, as well as my compassion. I looked round—all was still. I crept from my corner, and went gently round the tent: everyone seemed fast asleep; some huddled together, some in nooks apart. I stepped forth into the open air. I found Mimy and the old crone seated

under the shadow of the wood, and asked why Mimy wept (she was weeping still). The old woman put her finger to her lips, and bade me follow her through a gap in the hedge into the shelter of the wood itself. Mimy remained still, her face buried in her hands. When we were in the wood, the old woman said to me,—

‘You must leave us. You are in danger!’

‘How?’

‘The young men are jealous of you and the girl; their blood is up. I cannot keep it down. I can do what I like with all—except love and jealousy. You must go.’

‘Nonsense! I can take care of myself against a whole legion of spindle-shanked gipsies; they’ll never dare to attack me; and I don’t mind rude words and angry looks. I’ll not leave Mimy. I cannot——’

‘You must,’ said Mimy, who had silently followed us; and she put her arms fairly and heartily round me. ‘You must go. The stars will have it.’

‘’Tis not for your sake I speak,’ said the old woman, passionately; ‘you had no right to touch her heart. You deserve the gripe and the stab; but if they hurt you, what will the law do to them? I once saw a gipsy hanged—it brought woe on us all! You’ll not break her heart, and ruin us all. Go!’

‘Mimy! Mimy! will you not come too?’

‘She cannot; she is a true-born gipsy. Let her speak for herself.’

‘No, no, I cannot leave my people!’ she whispered. ‘But I *will* see you again, later. Let me know where to find you. Don’t fret. You’ll have crosses enough without me. I will come to you later; I will indeed!’

She had drawn me away from the old woman while she spoke, and with every word she kissed my hands, leaving there such burning tears.

At length I promised to depart, believing fully in Mimy’s

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promise to return—the promise that we should meet again. I gave her my name and address. She pledged herself to find me out before the winter.

They were both very anxious that I should set off instantly. But my pride revolted at the idea of skulking away from foes that I despised, in the dead of night. I promised to go, but openly and boldly, the next day. I was in some hopes that meanwhile the old woman would talk the jealous rivals into good behaviour. She assured me she would try. I told her to give them all my money, if they would but let me stay in peace for a week or two longer. She nodded her head, and went back with Mimy into the tent. I remained without for an hour or so, sad and angry, then I crept back to my corner. The fire was nearly out—all around was dark. I fell into an uneasy, haunted sleep, and did not wake till an hour later than usual. When I did so, all were assembled round the tent, and, as I got up, the three young men came to me and shook hands, their faces very friendly. I thought they had taken the bribe, and were going to bid me stay. No.

‘You leave us!’ said the tallest of the three. ‘And we stay at home to accompany you part of the way, and wish you speed and luck.’

I turned round. No Mimy was there. Only the old woman, who set before me my breakfast.

I could not touch food. I remained silent a few minutes, then whispered to the crone. ‘Shall I not even see her again?’

‘Hush!’ she said, ‘leave her to take care of that.’

I took up my knapsack sulkily enough, and was going forth, when the old woman drew aside and slipped my money into my hand.

‘But you must take some.’

‘Not a penny. Mimy would never forgive it. Off, and away! There will be storm before noon. Go with light heart. Success is on your forehead!’

The prediction did not cheer me, nor did the talk of the gipsies who gathered round me, and went with me in grand procession to the end of the common; which I suppose, they considered their dominion. There they formally took leave of me. I might have gone some three miles, when the boughs of a tree overhanging the neighbouring wood were put aside, and Mimy's dark eyes looked cautiously forth. Presently she was by my side. She only stood a minute, holding me tightly in her arms, and looking me in the eyes, then drawing back her hand and kissing fondly my face and my hands—my very garments. At last she sprang away, and, pointing with her forefinger to her open palm, said, 'This is the sorrow foretold to me. See, it begins so soon, and goes on to the end of life!'

'No, no, Mimy! you have promised we shall meet again.'

'Ha, ha! a gipsy's promise!' cried Mimy, between a laugh and a screech.

She darted back into the wood. I followed her, but in vain. From that day to this I have never seen, never heard of, her. I have sought gipsies, to inquire after her fate; but one told me one thing, one another. I know it not. Probably she was consoled sooner than my vain young heart supposed, and broke the tile with one of her kin. How, even if we met again, should I ever recognise her? Gipsy beauty fades so soon—fades like all illusion, and all romance!

CHAPTER X.

(Autobiographical.)

LADY CAROLINE LAMB. 1824. Æt. 21.

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I RESUMED my wanderings, still on foot, and meeting with no adventures worth recording, till at last I took my place in a stage coach starting from one of the northern towns, and arrived in London, on my way to join my mother at Broadstairs. While in London my eye was caught by the singular beauty of an Andalusian jennet for sale. The price was not high, but far exceeded the money I had about me; however, I had the courage to ask my mother's banker to advance it, which he kindly did; and I rode my new purchase down to Broadstairs. I mention this incident, because I have formed few friendships among my fellow-men so intimate and so enduring as I formed with this black-maned Andalusian. It lasted me for more than twenty years, and died then, not of old age, but of an inflammatory disorder, preserving its beauty and spirit to the last. It was small, but of that Arab form and constitution which can go extraordinary distances without evincing fatigue. I have ridden it above seventy miles a day, and the next morning it was equally fresh and full of fire. I never found another horse which I had the same pleasure in riding, and, indeed, I have cared little to ride at all since its loss.¹

The life at watering-places was much more gay and

[¹ He rode it all the way (on the journey subsequently mentioned) from Paris to Dieppe; and it is the subject of an ode in *Weeds and Wildflowers*.—L.]

sociable at that time than it is now. At the little village of Broadstairs, which affected select gentility, the Assembly Rooms formed a place of general reunion. They were open every evening for cards and conversaziones, and two or three times a week for dancing. Nor was dancing itself at that day the listless operation it is now. To combine spirit with dignity, was an art of movement that held high rank among the accomplishments of young men. The best male dancer of my day was the present¹ Lord Hertford; the next best was a Mr. Reynolds. The style of dress worn of an evening by gentlemen contributed, perhaps, to forbid slovenliness of step and maintain a certain stateliness and grace. Tight pantaloons or kneebreeches with the *chapeau bras* (the same dress still worn at Court as evening undress) was then almost universal; and a fine shape, with correspondent elegance of movement, was more admired than even a handsome face. Fast talk and slang came in with trowsers and turned-down collars.

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I enjoyed the quiet gaieties of this little watering-place, with its innocent flirtations—as was natural to my youth; and the companionship of my mother sufficed for all graver interest. She was at that time more thoughtful and melancholy than usual, and her reflections found vent in verse and prose tinged with deep religious sentiment.

On quitting Broadstairs, I was under an engagement to pass a week or so with Lady Caroline Lamb at Bocket, before returning to Cambridge. My acquaintance with this singular woman had commenced in my childhood. Some poor man had got injured in a crowd, and, with the impulsive benevolence that belonged to her, she had had him placed in her carriage and took him to his home. Knebworth and Bocket are but a few miles distant from each other. The story reached and touched me. I wrote some childish verses on it and sent them to her. She was pleased; wrote to my mother, begging

[¹ Now the late.—L.]

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her to bring me over to Bocket ; and, when I came, took a fancy to me, and even painted my portrait—as a child seated on a rock in the midst of the sea, with the motto under it, ‘*Seul sur la terre.*’ From that time to the date at which my record has arrived I had seen little of her, beyond a visit for a day or so, once or twice a year.

The more familiar intimacy that commenced with the visit I now made to Bocket was destined to have a marked effect on my future life.

Lady Caroline Lamb was then between thirty and forty, but looked much younger than she was ; thanks, perhaps, to a slight rounded figure and a childlike mode of wearing her hair (which was of a pale golden colour) in close curls. She had large hazel eyes, capable of much varied expression, exceedingly good teeth, a pleasant laugh, and a musical intonation of voice, despite a certain artificial drawl, habitual to what was called the Devonshire House Set. Apart from these gifts, she might be considered plain. But she had, to a surpassing degree, the attribute of charm, and never failed to please if she chose to do so. Her powers of conversation were remarkable. In one of Lord Byron’s letters to her, which she showed me, he said, ‘You are the only woman I know who never bored me.’

There was, indeed, a wild originality in her talk, combining great and sudden contrasts, from deep pathos to infantine drollery : now sentimental, now shrewd, it sparkled with anecdotes of the great world, and of the eminent persons with whom she had been brought up, or been familiarly intimate ; and, ten minutes after, it became gravely eloquent with religious enthusiasm, or shot off into metaphysical speculations—sometimes absurd, sometimes profound—generally suggestive and interesting. A creature of caprice, and impulse, and whim, her manner, her talk, and her character shifted their colours as rapidly as those of a chameleon. She has sent her page the round of her guests at three o’clock in the morning, with a message that she was playing the organ that stood in the

staircase at Brocket, and begged the favour of their company to hear her. Strange to say, it was a summons generally obeyed, and those who obeyed did not regret the loss of their sleep; for, when the audience had assembled, she soon relinquished the solemn keys of the organ, and her talk would be so brilliant and amusing, that the dawn found one still listening, spell-bound, without a thought of bed.

She interested me chiefly, however, by her recollections and graphic descriptions of Byron; with whom her intimacy had lasted during the three most brilliant years of his life in England, and whom, when they had fiercely quarrelled, she had depicted in a wild romance, 'Glenarvon,' as a beautiful monster—half demon, and yet demigod. He never forgave it, though he ought to have been flattered, for it represented him very much as, during the zenith of his social fashion, he had wished the female part of the world to believe him. At the time I now speak of, there was no bitterness in her talk of him, and whatever faults she found in his character, she fired up in his defence if anyone else abused him. Of the hideous calumnies concerning himself and Mrs. Leigh (indeed, of all calumnies involving the charge of crime) she certainly acquitted him. She thought, with most others who knew him well, that from an affectation of *rouerie*—which was by no means uncommon with the fine gentlemen of that day, especially if they belonged to the political creed of the Mirabeaus and Foxes—he had pleasure in shocking people, and making himself out worse than he was. She was no mean judge of human character; and, viewing Byron then from a point of view no longer obscured by the passions, I think her estimate of him was sound—as a being somewhat akin to herself in strange caprices and wild affectations—spoiled by too early a reputation for other things besides genius—but, on the whole, with many redeeming qualities, lovable and noble. And I am bound to add that, in his letters to her, despite the evident passion that dictated and coloured them, there was no trace

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of the selfish and heartless libertine ; rather a desire to save her, as it were, from herself, and a consideration for her happiness chastening and predominating over the thought of his own. Whatever the connection between them, and however blameable, regarded from the mildest point of view, I cannot think him the seducing party ; and certainly, from her own confession, he was not the betraying one.

During the few days I stayed at Bocket, a very intimate friendship grew up between this singular woman and myself. We corresponded regularly on my return to Cambridge ; and in our correspondence there was a great deal of sentiment and romance which looked like love, but it never came to that. Indeed, it was not many months before this correspondence was brought to a close, and any feeling beyond the interest which a clever woman, with time heavy on her hands, and systematically (though perhaps not always consciously) a coquette, might have conceived for a youth of some promise, was absorbed in a livelier sentiment for another.

I was invited to come from Cambridge to join a party assembled at Bocket for the purpose of going to a ball given at Panshanger. I arrived, and before the evening was over I saw that I was supplanted. A singularly handsome man, in the prime of life, Mr. Russell, a natural son of the Duke of Bedford, was among the guests. I had wit enough to see that Lady Caroline and this gentleman were captivated with each other. The next morning I had a private conversation with the lady, which ended in my bidding her farewell ; and, feeling too severely wounded (rather, perhaps, in pride or vanity than in heart) for an immediate return to the University, I went straight to Brighton, where I knew I should find a college friend whose conversation was the antidote of all morbid sentiment.

Frederick Villiers was a natural son of a gentleman of ancient birth by a young lady of rank, whom he had seduced when on a visit at the Duchess of D.'s. He was pledged to

marry her, but broke the pledge, and died later of an accident in hunting. Two sons, of whom Frederick was the younger, were the issue of this unhappy *liaison*. The secret of their birth was carefully kept by the families concerned. The sons were sent, under the name of Villiers, to Eton. On leaving that school the elder was put into the army, and went to India with his regiment; the younger was destined for the diplomacy, and sent abroad to learn foreign languages. But the death of a Minister, who was a friend of the mother's family, destroying the hope of advancement in the diplomatic career, Frederick was recalled from the Continent, and placed as a fellow-commoner at Trinity College, Cambridge, with a view to his ultimately adopting the profession of the Bar.

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He was somewhat older than the generality of freshmen, and his premature experience of life in foreign capitals, conjoined with a familiar acquisition of modern languages, and a wonderful raciness of humour in his conversation, here obtained for him at once a kind of social ascendancy amongst his contemporaries, and a ready admission into our 'set;' which was composed of the *élite* of the young men likely to make some figure in future life. This young man, however, if he flashed on us as a meteor, vanished from us as a meteor, and was now amusing himself at Brighton, leaving it doubtful whether he should return to Cambridge or not.

I joined him in his lodgings, and his high animal spirits, and the gay, worldly philosophy of his talk, soon effaced from my mind the pangs I had felt at the resignation of my Platonic romance. I returned to the University in a healthier and manlier mood than that in which I had quitted it.

[A memorandum dated 1869, attached to the letters of Mr. Frederick Villiers, who had then taken his father's name of Meynell, gives some further particulars of him:—

'He created a sensation amongst us at Cambridge. Was very witty and amusing. Went to the Bar. Took good rooms in

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Lincoln's Inn Fields, where he kept a man cook as clerk. Got into Parliament; first for a close Borough, then for Canterbury. Lost the last seat on a charge, I think, of treating. Obtaining some money through an aunt, Lady A., and his mother, he invested it at fifteen per cent. in loans to the Duke of Buckingham, and went to live at Naples on the interest. There he flourished for some time in high fashion. The sudden crash of the Duke of Buckingham ruined him. Found a wife with some money. Ultimately got a sinecure in the gift of Cockburn. Well off at this date (1869). An extraordinary man, with much natural ability. Shrewd, and a keen observer. A good linguist, a logical arguer. Would have done well at the Bar or in Parliament, had he not wanted industry and motive power. The least ambitious man of talent I ever met. Singularly fearless in youth. I have been his second in two duels; and he fought many more, with as much *sang froid* as if he were playing billiards. Much of my idea of Pelham was taken from him. He is now becoming rather a bore. Never having refreshed his mind with new ideas, he repeats the old ones. His intellect has run to seed. Notwithstanding his cynical philosophy, he is warm-hearted and affectionate. A most indulgent father, a kind husband, and altogether a good man, despite errors and defects.']

CHAPTER XI.

*(Supplementary and Illustrative.)*LADY CAROLINE LAMB. 1825. *Æt.* 22.

[THE character of Lady Caroline Lamb in the Autobiography presents her in an aspect less absurd than the portrait given of her by critics and commentators who had never witnessed the charm of that amusing, impulsive, and capriciously kind-hearted woman. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that her ardent attachments were directed by a wayward excitement which not unfrequently passed the limits of sanity. She delighted to bring men to her feet, and when she had succeeded in enthralling them, she commonly hastened to pass on to fresh conquests. She exerted her fascinations on my father, then but a college youth. He was flattered that she should select him for the object of her attentions; and it was on his vanity, as he confesses, that her fitful fondness took effect. His heart at that time was thirsting for sympathy. It came in a form inconsistent with the sacred memories treasured up in the depths of his nature. But, exhausted by the prolonged strain of torturing emotions, he accepted the relief he would not have sought, and gave himself up for the hour to the intoxicating sense of a passion he seemed to have inspired. No one passes through experiences of this description without a certain deterioration of sentiment and feeling. Encouraged only to be repulsed, the mockery, the wounded self-esteem, has a hardening influence, increased by the nature of an affection which sullies the pure unadulterated conceptions of refined, generous, spotless love.

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Shortly after my father withdrew to Brighton in 1825, smarting under the mortification of Lady Caroline's neglect, he narrated the history of his brief reign and discomfiture in a letter to an intimate friend. From this letter I transcribe here all that relates to Lady Caroline.

I believe (says the writer of it) that what I had felt for her had its origin rather in gratified vanity than in anything else. On both sides this feeling had little to do with the heart, but a great deal to do with the imagination. When she supposed herself dying she sent for me; and there was nothing theatrical in this. The doctors told me there was everything to apprehend. I sat by her bedside for hours; and, if ever counterfeit tenderness seemed real, hers did. When I left her she wrote me a few words, though expressly forbidden by the doctors to do so. Well, when she was recovered I went to her. It was on Christmas day. She was kind and affectionate. But still, there was a coldness in her manner. She explained it to me by saying that she felt she acted wrong in loving me, and that she was endeavouring to overcome it. She wished I should be like her son, the dearest of her friends, but not her lover. She talks sentiment exceedingly well, and with singular grace. Of course she talked me over. I left her, half pleased, half piqued,¹ in doubt and anxiety and more in love with her than ever. When I went back, for Lady Cowper's ball, the house was full of company. I arrived at three or four in the afternoon. She never sent for me, nor saw me till we met at dinner. She then avoided speaking to me; did not let me accompany her to the ball in her carriage, but took with her Mr. Russell, a fashionable beau, extremely handsome, but dull, insipid, and silly. I was not then jealous of him; for I was conscious of my own superiority to him in everything but good looks. But I imagined (for, like most women, she is fond of coquetry) that she was only trying to make me jealous. At the ball, she took his arm, walked about the room with him, and never spoke to me till the end of the evening. I was very angry and very sarcastic when she did speak to me. I said to her, when we were all going to bed, 'I go to-morrow, before you are up. Good-bye.' She sent to my room a short note about 9 o'clock the next morning,

[¹ An old story. So Madame de Maintenon, in the commencement of her relations with Louis XIV., used to dismiss his Majesty '*toujours triste, jamais désespéré*.' In these situations youth and age are alike.—L.]

imploring me not to go till I had seen her. I went to her room. She entreated me to forgive her, threw her arms about me, and cried. Of course she persuaded me to stay. We rode out. R. went with us. Although she certainly did not try to make me jealous, I soon saw that she felt for him that love of the imagination which she had felt before for me. She could not help liking me still, in an affectionate way; but he was the idol of the moment. I was miserable. I left her before she got home, and repaired to my room. You know my stormy paroxysms when I am violently affected. I was in one of these when she came into my room. She implored me not to give way to my passions, and not to be deceived. I said to her 'I will believe you, and be happy, if you will only say that I have no reason to be jealous of Mr. R. Say this, and I will never again insult you by being so.' She would not answer me. She said that she had known Mr. R. for a very long time, and had once felt a love for him, but not the sort of love she felt for me. I was, she said, in all respects more worthy of her affections. I went downstairs. Russell sat opposite me. He wore a ring. It was one which Lord Byron had given Lady Caroline: one which was only to be worn by those she loved. I had often worn it myself. She had wanted me to accept it, but I would not; because it was so costly. And now *he* wore it. Can you conceive my resentment, my wretchedness? After dinner, I threw myself upon the sofa. Music was playing. Lady Caroline came to me. 'Are you mad?' said she. I looked up. The tears stood in my eyes. I could not have spoken a word for the world. What do you think she said aloud? 'Don't play this melancholy air. It affects Mr. Bulwer so that he is actually weeping.' My tears, my softness, my *love*, were over in a moment. I sprang up, laughed, talked, and was the life of the company. But when we broke up for the evening I went to her, and said, 'Farewell for ever. It is over. Now I see you in your true light. Vain and heartless, you have only trifled with my feelings in order to betray me. I despise as well as leave you. Instead of jealousy, I only feel contempt. Farewell. Go, and be happy.' I left Brocket the next morning, very early, was here the same night, and in a fever the next; lost twenty ounces of blood; but have taken your advice, and am endeavouring to forget what I have no wish to remember. My spirits are already much better; but, at times, I feel a distress so acute that I am forced by it to run out anywhere, and do anything to be rid of it. Still, daily I feel more and more myself. My feeling was chiefly

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the creature of vanity and imagination ; and such feelings, when the vanity has been wounded, and the imagination checked, are soon over. What I feel now is a sort of aversion. I wish it were indifference, but that will soon be, I hope. I am not dissipated. There is fortunately for me an old friend here. A very amusing clever man who has travelled to every country in Europe ; and I see a great deal of him. Lamb, by the by, was particularly kind to me. I think he saw my feelings. His is a singularly fine character for a man of the world.

The time soon came when the adventure could be recalled without a pang or a sigh, or any other sentiment than the amused interest of a student of the heart. Already he had begun the vocation in which his business was to depict and analyse sentiment ; and his recent experience supplied the material for one of his earliest attempts in fiction.]

CHAPTER XII.

(Supplementary and Illustrative.)

'DE LINDSAY.' 1825. Æt. 22.

[THE tale in which Lady Caroline figures under a fictitious guise, was very crude and morbid, but not without a certain gloomy power. It was written not long after the Brighton letter, and entitled 'De Lindsay.' It belongs to the author's Byronic period; when, in obedience to the law which governs immature genius, he was working his way through a measure of imitation into marked originality. The idea or sentiment of the whole is sufficiently indicated by the motto prefixed to it: 'Man walketh in a vain shadow, and disquieteth himself in vain.' The narrative opens with the observation that

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There is one feeling which is the earliest born in us, which accompanies us throughout life, and of which there is scarcely one among us who can say 'It has been realised according to my desire.' This feeling is the wish to be loved: loved to the full height and depth and fervour of the sentiment we imagine ourselves capable of embodying in a single passion. Who that has nicely weighed his own heart will not confess that he has never been entirely satisfied with the love given to him by the friend of his boyhood, the mistress of his youth, or the children of his age? And yet while we reproach the affection bestowed on us for its languor or its weakness, we ourselves are open to the same charge. It would seem as if we all possessed within us certain immortal spiritual tendencies to love, which nothing human or earthborn can wholly excite, or wholly satisfy. These are the instincts which make us conscious of a power never to be exercised, a want never

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to be appeased ; and with them we move through life mourning, resenting, or seeking to forget, the irremediable loss of a felicity never possessed.

The hero of the story, Rupert de Lindsay, is then introduced as

a man in whom this craving for a love beyond the ordinary loves of earth was so powerful and restless a passion, that it became in him the source of all the errors and vices which have usually their origin in the gross licence of the senses.

He is an orphan

of ancient family, and considerable possessions ; with a person that could advance but slight pretension to attract, yet with an eager desire to please, and a taste the most delicate and refined. He had early learnt the art to compensate by the graces of manner for the deficiencies of form. But Marmontel's exquisite tale of Alcibiades was applicable to him. He was loved for his adventitious qualities, not for himself. And he knew it. One loved his fashion, another his fortune. A third listened to him out of pique at some one else ; a fourth because she wished to decoy him from her friend. These adventures and discoveries brought to him disgust. They brought to him also, however, knowledge of the world ; and nothing hardens the heart more than that knowledge of the world which is founded on a knowledge of its vices, made bitter by disappointment and suspicious by deceit. I saw him (says the narrator) just before he left England, and his mind was then sore and feverish. I saw him again on his return, after an absence of five years, and it was then callous and even. He had now reduced to a system the art of governing his own passions, and influencing those of others. He had reached the second stage of experience when the deceived become the deceivers. To his indignation at the vices of human nature he added scorn for its weakness. Still, however, many good though irregular impulses lingered about his heart ; and still the appeal, which if addressed to a principle would have been fruitless, could find him responsive when it was made to an affection. Few men of ability who neither marry nor desire to marry, live much among the frivolities of the world after the age of twenty-eight : and De Lindsay, now near his thirtieth year, avoided the society he had once courted. He lived solely to satisfy his pleasures

and to indulge his indolence. Women were his only pursuit, and to succeed in that pursuit was his only ambition.

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The story then records some early incidents in the life of its hero, which serve to explain the gradual malformation of the character thus described. But there is only one of these descriptions which has any claim to resuscitation here. It is strictly autobiographical, as will be seen.

On the banks of Windermere, in the midst of that rich, half-southern scenery, which combines all the charms of wood and water, sky and mountain, Rupert regained for a while much of the purity of his boyhood. His occupations here were calm and thoughtful. The restless wanderings of the rivulet soothed him from their very resemblance to the temper of his own mind. He began to feel that it was not the departure but the revolt of youth, not the triumph of his worse, but the continued struggle of his better, nature which had put him on such bitter terms with himself and the world around him. In his lonely boat upon the still blue waters of that romantic lake he poured forth to the midnight skies the sadness of a spirit dissatisfied with itself, and still capable, perhaps, of the happiness it sought, had the search been less self-conscious, less premeditated, less misguided. But in Rupert de Lindsay there was no fixed principle, no root of steady purpose beyond the gratification of his own sensations. He was not exactly a sensualist, but he had become the sybarite of an imaginative selfishness.

In his boyish days Rupert had formed a visionary childish attachment to a person of singular talent and still more singular character, who lived in the neighbourhood of his own estate. His mind was not unresponsive to the charm of virtue, though, from its susceptibility to excitement, it was easily fascinated by vice. He had been, in these boyish days, enchanted by some traits of benevolence in the conduct of Lady Melton. She exercised her benevolence in a manner somewhat eccentric, but the eccentricity gave to it a novelty and curious grace. The boy had expressed in some verses, after the fashion of Lord Thurlow, the feelings excited in him by the exhibition of this peculiarity in Lady Melton's character; and, with the timid vanity of fifteen, he sent them to the lady of his lyre. The lady was not displeased with the offering, humble as it was; and from that moment there had existed between them a friendship,

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animated on Rupert's part by a certain romantic feeling, which was no unlikely parent to love. Early circumstances had thrown a tinge of melancholy over the life and habits of Lady Melton. She went little into that mixed and general society in which De Lindsay had lately moved, and it was more than a year since he had seen her.

Before he left London, however, he had written to her, requesting some trifling favour; and her answer (full of the kindest and most flattering expressions) had reached him at the Lakes.

'Lady Melton,' said Rupert, 'is exactly the woman I could love, and whose love would be a delightful combination of those graces of mind and heart which I have never yet found in another.' He wrote to her a long letter, obscurely hinting at his attachment, and suggesting thoughts well calculated to attract a woman of sentiment and genius. He was delighted, though not surprised, by the answer, from which he could draw no unfavourable augury. Letter produced letter; and, during his stay at the Lakes, the correspondence became regular on either side, getting gradually more tender on the part of the gentleman, and less reserved on the side of the lady.

When Rupert returned to his own county, he received from his fair correspondent a pressing invitation to spend a few days with her at Melton Park. It was accepted with delight. Lady Melton was less beautiful than any of his previous loves; but her large languishing eye, a lip which eloquently aided the magic of her glance, an exceedingly musical voice, and a form in whose delicate and fairy-like proportions a Phidias could have found no fault, invested her with a pervading undefinable charm, far more attractive to Rupert than the inanimate perfection of Lady Stanmore, or the sensual luxuriance of Mrs. Danvers Mountjoy.

Sir Henry Melton, the husband of this lady, was a man of rare intellectual powers and attainments, which he combined with a singular joyousness of disposition, and the irresistible charm of a thoroughly large, fine, and frank nature, careless in the nobility of its character, and noble in the carelessness of its expression.¹

The union of this couple had been, on both sides, a marriage of affection, but twelve years of it had left on each side little of the bridal tenderness remaining. Lady Melton, like most women of genius, was ever under the influence of her imagination. In a husband, however handsome, clever, and admirable, to whom she had

[¹ The likeness of this portrait to William Lamb is obvious.—L.]

been married twelve years, she found little left to excite this feverish propensity of her mind, and there was much to excite it in a youth who possessed the intellect of a man with more than the ordinary romance and sentiment of a boy.

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To De Lindsay, therefore, the imagination of Lady Melton soon became violently attracted. Nor was he backward in returning the feelings with which she seemed to regard him. In the absence of Sir Henry, who was from home, there were only two or three intimate friends at Melton Park. They were too intimate, or too indifferent, to pay much attention to the manner in which their singular hostess whiled away her time. If one less good-natured than the rest referred to it, the others invariably replied, 'Oh it is only her way.' Truly it is a fine thing to have the reputation of eccentricity.

As yet there had been many hints on both sides, but no actual disclosure upon either side, of the sentiment which had grown up between Lady Melton and her young guest. Matters, however, were fast approaching their crisis. Every morning fresh flowers were on Rupert's toilet-table. Every evening a note to him from Lady Melton glowed with the language of that vivid imagination, which Rupert, in his ignorance, mistook for the language of the heart.

It happened one evening that the small party at Melton Park were engaged upon that homely game in which whispering is a necessary ceremony. When it came to the turn of Lady Melton to whisper into the ear of Rupert, a faint kiss accompanied the warm and thrilling breath which left his cheek on fire. The next morning, instead of the customary flowers, he received from her a note. It spoke of regret, shame, passion. 'All levity,' it said, 'even all happiness, is gone. Leave me, my beautiful and still beloved friend. Leave me again to the misery of my solitude.'

Fie on it! this was a note of the Imagination. I have said that Lady Melton had no heart in her love. Rupert did not think so. He demanded to see her. She received him. He fell at her feet. He spoke of his passion: and sweet, from those sweet lips, was the acknowledgment he received in return.

And so he stayed at Melton Park. Day followed day, and still Rupert lingered. He loved, he was intoxicated, and he was happy. But never was the situation of a lover more singular in its character than his. He rode, he walked, he sate with his mistress. He was a privileged visitor to the secrecy of her boudoir: he was alone with her at all hours; he held her in his arms, and covered her

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with his kisses ; he looked into the languors of her eyes, and felt the heave of her bosom : and (tell it not in Gath !) this was all.

What an illustration of the motto *Beaucoup de bruit, peu de fruit* ! How it thus happened is a question which Rupert himself could not have answered. He only knew that whenever he assumed what seemed to be the natural privilege of his position, the lady fell on her knees, acknowledged the depth of her passion, declared that she should be miserable for ever if she yielded to it, implored him not to forget this even though she might forget it herself : and, in short, played her part to such perfection that Rupert, who (like all lovers of the orthodox stamp) loved with rather more tenderness than passion, yielded to her persuasions, and forewent the chance of to-day in the confident hope of to-morrow.

That morrow never came, however. De Lindsay was summoned away to attend the deathbed of a female relation. What a scene when the lovers parted ! What vows, what promises of constant correspondence, what overflowings of heart on the side of the hero, and of imagination on that of the heroine !

Throughout the wearisome confinement to which Rupert was now for many weeks condemned, not a day passed without the brightening consolation of a long letter from his Aspasia. And those letters, how brilliant they were in their wit, how glowing in their tenderness ; and in each, how intellectual, how *imaginative* !

Old people, however tough, cannot exist for ever. Rupert's relation died at last. He had attended her with unrelaxing care. He even lamented her death with a grief quite sincere in its vehemence, for two days ; though she did not leave him a farthing, and had been more peevish and disagreeable than she would have had any right to be if she had left him thousands. When the days of mourning were over, he returned to Melton. He was received with all the former kindness ; but at moments there was a wandering coldness in Lady Melton's manner, which he was unable to account for. He was soon to be enlightened, however, as to the cause of it. The flowers no longer bloomed as before upon his table every morning ; and with the flowers the first fragrance of love had departed. The evenings brought him no sweet writings breathing of perfume and passion. All loves of the imagination are short-lived. Lady Melton's was already on the wane. Sad and disappointed, Rupert again left her. He had some business to settle at his own place. He promised to return in a fortnight. He wrote to her

the day after his departure a letter, so warm and devoted that it produced a momentary effect. The reply to it was as passionate as in the early days of Lady Melton's affection for him. 'I was too inattentive, too gloomy,' thought he; 'when next we meet, I will exert all my powers of entertainment, and put forth all the eloquence of my love.' And at the end of the fortnight, he returned to Melton.

There was a ball that night in the neighbourhood. A large party had assembled at Melton to attend it. Rupert did not see Lady Melton before dinner. The carriages were at the door when he entered the drawing-room. 'I shall go with her,' he thought. But no: she had made a different arrangement. He went to the ball with a gouty General, an elderly Parson, and a little girl. Lady Melton was handed to her carriage by Sir Frederick Summers, a man celebrated for the cut of his coat and the beauty of his person. Upon Sir Frederick's arm she entered the ball-room. To Sir Frederick's words, for the rest of the evening, she listened, and on Sir Frederick's looks she fed her own. For the first time the vain and haughty Rupert felt the humiliation of witnessing the triumph of a successful rival. How he longed for some unlucky squire to tread upon his foot! He would have given worlds for an affront to punish. It is so provoking to be in a passion, and to have at hand nobody on whom to vent it. All things, however, have an end: even the duration of balls at which one is horribly bored. That night was to Rupert de Lindsay a night of moral storm and darkness. The passions which slumbered in his indolent nature had been violently roused. He rose at dawn, travelled all day and all the following night, without rest or food, till he found himself upon a narrow bed in the inn of a small country town, with a raging fever. The loss of thirty ounces of blood cured alike the fever and the passion which had caused it. And so ended Rupert's fifth amour. The lady might have held her young lover for ever, had she wished it, in a chain of iron: but it was the freedom of her own fancy, rather than the fidelity of his devotion, that she cared to retain. And in this she did well, if it be well to follow the law of one's own nature. For to her, affection was no sufficient or enduring source of happiness: and if she did not find happiness in the variety and enthusiasm of her brief attachments, at least she would have found it nowhere else. Kind, generous, and richly gifted, graceful alike in every motion of her form and every impulse of her mind, Lady Melton was drawn into all the errors and

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all the misfortunes of her life (of the latter, indeed, at a later period of her life she had many from which Rupert, had he lived, would perhaps have suffered much to save her) by that brilliant but betraying imagination which to a woman is the most dangerous, and yet the most delightful, gift.

Years passed away. They were passed by Rupert in pursuits as vague, variable, and aimless as those of his earliest youth. He went abroad, settling nowhere, and everywhere unstable in his humour, unsatisfied in the indulgence of his wasted desires. At one time he lived as a solitary 'poring on the brook that babbled by;' at another he was the gayest reveller at some dissipated Court; now plunging into wild excesses, now toiling at intellectual labour which had no definite or useful purpose; the master spirit of those who surrounded him, but still the subservient slave of his own unregulated passions. At length he returned to England with a person improved, an intellect developed, a heart corrupted. Latterly his life had been passed in that kind of licentiousness which is, of all, the most vitiating and the most alluring. Refined in his amours, as in all his tastes and pleasures, he had been in turn the deceived and the deceiver, and had learned from each experience to think ill of human nature, to ridicule virtue, to find no meanness in treachery, and to recognise no evil in sin. Yet, amidst all the pleasures and passions which had hardened his heart and debased his nature, he still sighed, as he had sighed at fifteen, for the love he had never found: a love pure, yet passionate, intense, yet enduring, a love virginal, vivid, transcending affection and transfiguring desire. Such a love he had perhaps become more capable of inspiring, from all the evil accomplishments which had rendered him less worthy to possess it. Such a love had been the dream of his ardent boyhood: it was still the vision of his aimless manhood. A voluptuary in habit, a cynic in principle, an adept in that sinister skill which reduces sentiment to a science, in recesses of his nature unpenetrated by the vices of his life he still cherished a passionate wish for such a love: and the time now came when that wish was destined to receive fulfilment.

In a small village not far from London there dwelt a family of the name of Warner. The father, piously christened Ebenezer Ephraim, was a merchant, a bigot, and a saint. The brother, more simply named James, was a rake, a boxer, and a good fellow. But she, the daughter, who bore the chaste sweet name of Mary, what *man* is good enough to describe her? Simple, modest, beautiful in form, more beautiful in heart, of a temper tender rather than gay,

saddened by the gloom which hung about the home of her childhood, yet softened by a serene charity of soul which took from its own sadness only a tenderer sympathy for others; ignorant of sin even in thought; loving all things with an innocent love that even sweetened and beautified what in that poor narrow life of hers was neither beautiful nor sweet,—Mary Warner moved among her coarse and sullen kindred, an unthanked sanctifying presence, lovely and fair as Faith's white image passing over thorns upon its earthly pilgrimage to heaven.

In the adjustment of a passing amour with the wife of an officer in the — Regiment (who, then absent in Ireland, had left his not disconsolate spouse to wear the willow in the village of T.), Rupert first met Mary Warner. Chance favoured him. He entered one day the cottage of a poor man whose wants had been relieved by his inconsistent charity. He found Miss Warner there, employed in the same charitable office. The opportunity was not neglected. He addressed her, accompanied her to the door of her home, used every art to please a young unawakened heart, and in that object he succeeded. Unfortunately for Mary, she had no one among her relations capable of guiding her conduct or winning her confidence. Her father was absorbed in the occupations of his trade and the visions of his creed. The repellent austerity of his manner, which belied the real warmth of his affections, unfitted him to replace the care of the anxious and tender mother whom Mary had lost in infancy. Nor was that loss repaired by anything in the coarser habits and harsher nature of the fraternal rake, boxer, and good-fellow. Thus in that gentle trustful heart those who should have developed, had repressed, the warmth of its natural affections. Mary's nature was a loving one, and found in everything some claim upon the tenderness which no discouragement could permanently check, and no restraint entirely conceal. But there was a vast treasure of tenderness as yet ungiven to others, unguessed even by herself, beneath the quiet surface of that shrinking modest character. It is not surprising, therefore, that De Lindsay, who possessed every fascination of manner that the gifts of experience can add to those of nature, and who devoted them all with consummate skill to the employment of the strongest and deepest passion he had ever felt, should so soon have acquired a dangerous sway over the movements of a heart too innocent for suspicion, when for the first time it experienced the inexpressible luxury of being loved. In all her daily walks, which had hitherto been lonely ones, Rupert

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contrived to join her; and in his tone towards her there was an inarticulate supplication, a respectful tenderness, she felt no inclination, and knew no reason, to rebuff. Mary had in her no great supply of what is called dignity; and even of girlish innocent coquetry she had none. Firmness, courage, and endurance, to suffer, were hers in a high degree. But she was wholly without the Eve-born instincts which prompt or reconcile a woman to the infliction of suffering. At first, some vague confused fear of impropriety in this companionship had mingled, in a faint indefinite way, with the distinct indubitable happiness it brought her. But from the peculiar nature of her education, she was unable to trace this hovering shadow to any substantial intelligible cause. If her thought followed it, it seemed to fade away in the clear consciousness of an innocent delight. Nor could she find in the simplicity of her experience any motive, and still less any means, to repel addresses so humble, so diffident, or resist a voice which only spoke to her in music. It is needless to trace the details of a process so simple. Mary at last awakened to the full knowledge of her own heart; and Rupert felt, for the first time in his life, that he was loved as he desired.

'Never,' said he, 'will I betray this affection: she has trusted in me, and she shall not be deceived. Innocent and happy, she has given me all I care for in this world. Misery and guilt she shall never learn from me.' Thus her innocence was reflected even from the soiled mirror of a soul on which life had cast no images that pass away without leaving some stain behind them; and Rupert's heart was purified while it breathed in the atmosphere of hers. So weeks passed away, until De Lindsay was suddenly recalled by urgent business to his estate. He spoke to Mary of his departure, and her quivering lip and tearful eye were to him ineffable delights. Yet when he pressed her to his heart, her innocence of guilt was her protection from it. In the chronicle of all his sins (and they were many) may this be remembered in mitigation of the unknown sentence which no earthly judge can now revoke.

Day went by after day upon its unreturning course into Eternity. Every morning came the same gentle tap at the post-office window in the little village: every morning the same light step returned gaily homeward through the meadows: every morning the same soft eyes, suffused with happy tears, sparkled over treasured lines the heart so faithfully recorded. Every morning of the week but one. For Monday was a day which could bring no letter to Mary,

and all that day her step was listless and her spirit dejected. She did not seek to struggle with her love. It was her life; and she lived it with a thankful heart, that made no bargain with the future. She read over and over again every word of the few books he had given her. Daily she paced the paths which his presence had made fairyland; and daily passed the house where he had lodged, that she might look up at the window where he had once looked down upon her.

Meanwhile, Rupert was finding that where farmers are not left to settle their own leases, and agents to provide as they please for their own little families, the possession of landed property is no sinecure. He had lived abroad like a prince, and his estate had not fared the better for his absence. He now inquired into the exact profits of his property. He renewed old leases upon new terms; discharged his bailiff; shut up the drives through his park which the whole neighbourhood had found more convenient than the turn-pike road: let off ten poachers and warned off ten gentlemen; and, as the natural consequence of these acts of economy and inspection, he became the most unpopular man in the county.

One day he had been surveying some timber intended for the axe. The weather was truly English, and changed suddenly from heat into rain. A change of clothes was quite out of Rupert's ordinary habits, and a fever of a very severe nature, which ended in delirium, was the result. For some weeks Rupert was on the verge of the grave. The devil and the doctor do not always agree; for, as the proverb saith, there is no friendship among the wicked. In this case the doctor was ultimately victorious, and his patient recovered.

'Give me fresh air,' said the invalid, as soon as he was able to resume his power of commanding, 'and bring me whatever letters have come during my illness.'

From the pile of paper spoilt by fashionable friends, country cousins, county magistrates, and tradesmen who take the liberty to remind you of the trifle which has escaped your recollection, the first letter that came under the sick man's hand was from the Irish officer's wife who had been the cause of his visit to the village of T., and thus, indirectly, the origin of his acquaintance with Mary Warner. In this letter the lady informed him that her husband had returned from Ireland, and learnt from some good-natured friend how his absence had been abused. Unhappily for all concerned, this man loved his wife, valued his honour, and was of that unfashionable temperament which never forgives an injury. Twice

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during Rupert's illness he had sent his Achates to Lindsay Castle. And the idea that the man who had wronged him might perhaps 'depart this life' without the aid of his bullet had so enraged him that he appeared to be a little touched in the head. His excitement was uncontrollable. He rambled about the country in prolonged paroxysms, sometimes of grief, sometimes of rage, weeping, gesticulating, and muttering incoherent oaths of vengeance. He shunned all society, and sate for hours gazing vacantly on a pistol which was constantly in his hand. All these interesting circumstances the unhappy fair one (who had picked up her information second hand, for she was now an alien from the conjugal bed and board) detailed to Rupert with considerable pathos.

'Now, then, for Mary's letters,' murmured the invalid. 'No red-hot Irishman there, I trust.' And Rupert took up a heap of letters he had selected from the rest, as a child who searches for sweetmeats after swallowing a black dose. Over the first three or four of them his face beamed; but presently it darkened and his lips and brows contracted. He opened another, read a few lines, and, leaping from the sofa as a man leaps when he has been shot through the heart, exclaimed to his bewildered attendant, 'Four horses to the carriage, and bring it round immediately! Do you hear? Too ill, you say? Never so well in my life. Not another word or . . . the carriage instantly—and the swiftest roadsters—I must be at T. before five this evening. Sharp! There's not a moment to lose.'

And the order was obeyed.

To return to Mary, however. The letters on which she lived in Rupert's absence had suddenly ceased. What could be the cause? Was he faithless? forgetful? ill? Alas, whatever the cause, the consequence was equally terrible to her. 'Are you quite sure there are none?' she asked every morning at the office, with a voice so mournful that the gruff postman turned to look again before he shut the lattice and extinguished the last hope. Her colour faded, her strength failed. She passed whole hours in tears, reading again and again every syllable of the letters she already possessed, or pouring forth in letters of her own, to her absent unresponsive friend, all the love and bitterness of her soul.¹ 'He *must* be ill!' she said to her-

[¹ No one can fail to recognise the original of Mary Warner. In this paragraph the parts of the lovers are reversed; and in the sickening expectation with which Mary watched for the letter that never came, the author of the tale transferred to her what had happened to himself.—L.]

self at last. 'Never else could he have been so cruel.' She could bear that idea no longer. 'I will go to him, soothe him, nurse him. Who else can love him, watch him, wait on him, as I?' And the tenderness of her nature overcame its modesty. She selected a few clothes, made them into a little bundle, which she could carry in her hand; and with it stole away one morning early, in the twilight, from the house. 'If he should despise me!' she thought. And she was almost about to return, when, in the silence of the dim skies and empty fields, she was startled and terror-struck by the loud harsh voice of her brother.

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Mr. James Warner had watched for several days, with a solicitude not wholly affectionate, the altered habits and appearance of his sister. He resolved to discover the cause of them, and this he had done. During her absence, he had entered her room, and opened her desk. In it he found a letter she had just written to Rupert on the subject of her design. He did not reveal to Mary the result of his fraternal investigations; but he watched her more narrowly, was up betimes that morning, saw her leave the house, followed her, and saved her. There was no mercy, however, and no gentleness in the rescue. James Warner, when he had replaced his sister under the custody of the parental roof, improved the occasion according to his lights, and after the fashion of his nature. He reviled her in the coarsest and most brutal language; denounced her to her father, and, after having effectually deprived her of the means of correspondence or escape, he entered the room which was henceforth to be her prison, and gave vent to the exultation with which he contemplated her heartbroken shame, and impotent despair. Then, in a glow of virtuous satisfaction, Mr. James Warner mounted his yellow stanhope, and took his way to the Fives Court. But these were trifling misfortunes compared with those which still awaited the unhappy girl.

There lived in the village of T. one Zacharias Johnson, a godly man and a rich. Zacharias Johnson was, moreover, a saint of the same chapel as Ebenezer Ephraim Warner. His voice was the most nasal, his holding-forth the most unctuous, his aspect the most sinister, and his vesture the most threadbare, of all that sacred tribe. To the eye of this man there was something comely in the person of Mary Warner. He liked her beauty, for he was a sensualist; he liked her gentleness, for he was a coward; and her money, for he was a merchant. He proposed for the daughter to the father and the son. The possession of her he looked upon as a

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concluding blessing sure to follow the assent of her two relations. To Ebenezer he spoke of godliness and scrip, of the delightfulness of living together in unity, and of the large receipts of his flourishing counting-house. To James he spoke the language of kindness and the world. He knew that young men had expenses. He should feel too happy to furnish Mr. James with something for his innocent amusements, if he might hope for Mr. James's influence over his worthy father. The sum was specified, and the consent was sold.

Among the many mysterious domestic phenomena which the inquirer seldom takes the trouble to account for, must be reckoned the magical power so often possessed by a junior branch over the main stem of a family, in spite of the contrary and perverse direction of the aforesaid branch. James Warner had acquired, and he exercised, a powerful influence over the paternal patriarch, although the father and the son had not a single sentiment or habit in common. But James had a vigorous and unshackled, his father a weak and priestridden, mind. In domestic life it is the mind which is the master.

Even before Mary's acquaintance with Rupert, Zacharias Johnson had once or twice urged his suit to Ebenezer. But as the least hint of it to Mary occasioned her a pang which went to the really kind heart of the old man; as, moreover, he was fond of her society and had no wish to lose it; and, above all, as Mr. James had not yet held those conferences with Zacharias which resulted in the alliance of their interests, the proposal seemed to Mr. Warner, like a lawsuit to the Lord Chancellor, as something to be discussed rather than decided.

Unfortunately for Mary, however, just about the time when her intercepted flight had exposed her to her father's resentment, Zacharias had made a convert of her brother. James took advantage of his opportunity. He worked upon his father's grief and anger. He stimulated the old man's mercantile respect for money, and his religious devotion to his sect. He obtained at last from Ebenezer a promise to enforce the marriage. Having secured this promise, he silenced the father's returning scruples, and fortified his endurance of the scenes which followed with the weeping and wretched daughter, until at last the day was fixed for the consummation of the sacrifice. It would be too painful to describe that series of minute yet inhuman persecutions which is far from uncommon in the secret records of any system of domestic authority founded on injustice. The system itself, like all tyrannies, tends to

defeat the object for which it is enforced ; for it generally ends in revolt from the oppression with which it begins. But in this case there was no active revolt ; nothing but irremediable misery.

Mary was too gentle to resist. Her prayers became stilled. Her tears ceased to flow. Her despair was like the incubus of an evil dream which paralyses the nerves of motion while those of sensation remain acutely active under the burden of a torture the victim can make no effort to shake off. She managed at last, however, three days before the one fixed for her miserable marriage, to write a line to Rupert and get it conveyed to the post-office.

'Save me!' it said ; 'I ask not by what means—I care not for what end. Save me, I implore you, my only guardian angel. I shall not trouble you long. God knows, this is no romantic appeal. I feel that I am dying. Only let me die unseparated from you. You who first taught me to live. Be near me—teach me to die. Take from me the bitterness of death. Of all the terrors of the fate to which they compel me, nothing is so dreadful as the thought that I may no longer think of you and love you as I do. My hand is so cold I can scarcely hold the pen. My head is on fire. I think I should go mad if it were not for the thought that you could no longer love me. I hear my father's step. O Rupert, on Friday next. Remember. Save me! save me!'

But the fatal Friday came, and Rupert came not. They dressed her in her bridal dress ; and her father went upstairs to summon her to the room below, where the few guests invited to the wedding were already assembled. When he kissed her cheek, it was so deathly cold and pale that his heart smote him. She turned towards him. Her lips moved, but she could not speak. 'My child,' said the old man, 'have you not one word for your father?'

With a shudder which shook her whole frame like the convulsion that disperses trance, 'Is it too late?' she cried. 'Can you not, will you not, preserve me from this awful fate?'

There were signs of relenting in her father's eyes. But at that moment James Warner entered the room. His keen intelligence had foreseen the danger to his plans. He eyed his father and his sister without speaking to either of them. There was no need for him to say a word. The old man's countenance relapsed into an expression of mournful stolidity.

'God forgive you!' said Mary ; and, half alive, the girl descended with the two men to the little gloomy ground-floor chamber which was the state apartment of the Warner establishment.

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At a small table of black mahogany two maiden saints were sitting. They were prim and stately, starched and whaleboned without and within, withered and fossilised at heart by a selfish bigotry and the ice of sixty winters. As Mary entered the room, the two old spinsters came forward slowly and noiselessly, kissed the bride's unshrinking cheek, and, without a word of blessing, returned to their former seats, where they resumed their former posture. There was so little appearance of life in the three persons of that silent action, the two caressing and the one caressed, that it looked like a supernatural salutation between three graves: two old ones and a new. The bridegroom sat at one corner of the chilly fireplace. His attire on this occasion was more gaudy than the customary habit of his sect; and it gave a grotesque, unnatural simulacrum of gaiety to his lean figure and saturnine face.

When the bride entered, there was a faint smirk on his greasy lip, an atrocious twinkle in his half-shut sinister eyes. With a sort of preparatory shuffle, as if he were hastily getting into marching order his straggling, ill-assorted limbs, he rose up, pulled down his long yellow waistcoat, made a solemn genuflection, and, like the maiden saints, returned in silence to his seat. Opposite to the bridegroom sat a little lank-haired boy, about twelve years old, mumbling a damp lump of heavy cake, and eyeing with a subdued, spiritless glance the whole dismal group, till at length his attention was rivetted by a large slate-coloured cat, which was sleeping on the hearthrug. He seemed to examine this creature with preternatural interest, and apparently wished but feared to awaken it by a suppressed ejaculation of 'Puss!' On the window-seat at the further end of the room sat, with folded arms and an abstracted air, a tall, military-looking man, apparently about forty years of age. He, too, rose slowly, made a low bow to Mary, eyed her for a moment with a strange look of deep sorrowful interest, sighed, muttered something inaudibly to himself, and relapsed into absolute immobility, his back leaning against the dark wainscot, his head drooped, his eyes fixed upon the ground.

This man was Colonel Monkton; the husband of the woman who had allured Rupert to T., and from whom he had recently received so ominous an account of her liege lord. Monkton had long known Zacharias; and, always inclined to a serious turn of mind, he had lately been endeavouring to derive consolation from the doctrines of that enthusiast. On hearing from Zacharias (for the saint had no false notions of delicacy), that he was about to bring

into the pale of matrimony a lamb which had nearly fallen a victim to the wolf that had invaded his own fold, Monkton expressed so warm an interest in the matter, and so earnest a desire to see the reclaimed one, that Zacharias had invited him to share the bridal cheer.

Such was the conclave assembled to celebrate the nuptials of Mary Warner. Never was a wedding party more ominous in its aspect.

'We will have,' said the father (and his voice trembled), 'one drop of spiritual comfort before we repair to the House of God. James, reach me the Holy Book.'

The Bible was brought forth, and laid upon the table. All, as by a simultaneous mechanical impulse, sank upon their knees. The old man read, with deep feeling, some portions of the Scriptures adapted to the day. The wedding guests listened to the reader in profound silence. Then he stood up, and began an extempore and fervent discourse. The attention of his audience was heartfelt. Even the lank-haired boy exhibited symptoms of intelligent and breathless interest.

'O beneficent Father,' said Ebenezer, as he approached the conclusion of his discourse (which had insensibly become the utterance of prayer), 'we do indeed bow before Thee with humble and stricken hearts. The evil spirit hath been among us; and she who was the pride and delight of our eyes hath forgotten Thee for a while. But shall she not return unto the ways Thou hast appointed for Thy children? And shall we not once more walk together in the happy communion of Thy pardoning grace? Melt, O Heavenly Father, the hardness of that heart which hath rejected Thy ways to follow after strange idols. Smite Thou, not in wrath but mercy, the rock whose springs have withered, and set free the healing waters of repentance. And now, O Father, let Thy merciful and strengthening hand be also stretched forth unto this Thy stricken servant.' (Here the old man looked at Monkton.) 'For upon his head the same affliction hath fallen, and his peace the same serpent hath destroyed.'

Monkton's sobs were audible. Ebenezer continued with increasing fervour.

'Let not all Thy waves and storms go over us. Give, we beseech Thee, unto him we pray for, the comforts of Thy Holy Spirit. Wean him from the sins and worldly vanities of his earlier days. And both to him, and to her who is now about to enter upon a new path of duty, vouchsafe that peace which the

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world cannot give, or the world's children take away. From evil suffer good to come. And, though the voice of gladness be mute among us, and the sounds of bridal rejoicing heard not within our walls, yet grant, O gracious and pitying Parent, whose love, though it reprove Thy children for their sins, yet redeems them when they stray, and uplifts them when they fall, grant that to us this day may be the beginning of a new life devoted to virtue, to happiness, and to Thee !'

There was a sob in the last accents of the old man's voice. They were followed by a long and deep silence. Even the saintly spinsters seemed affected. Monkton had returned to the window in silent but vehement emotion ; and, throwing it open, he leaned out as if for breath. Mary resumed her seat, and there she sat as before—speechless, motionless. At length James Warner said (and, though his harsh voice was softened almost to a whisper, the sound of it broke that silence like an unlooked-for and unnatural interruption), 'I think, father, it is time to go. The carriages must be coming.' He turned to the open window and looked out impatiently. Presently he exclaimed, 'Here they are !' And then in a half-inquiring tone of displeased surprise, 'No,' he added, 'that sounds like four horses.'

Almost in the same moment, as James Warner turned again to the window, a rush of hoofs and rattling of wheels were distinctly audible from the road outside. The sound increased, and suddenly stopped at the gate of Warner's house. The whole party, even Mary, started to their feet, and looked at each other. There was a noise in the hall ; the sound of a swift step along the passage ; the door was violently flung open ; and, so wan, so emaciated, so cadaverous in form and aspect, that only the eyes of affection could then have recognised him without hesitation, Rupert de Lindsay burst into the room.

'Thank Heaven,' he cried, 'I am not too late !' And, in mingled fondness and defence, he flung his sheltering arm about the slender, trembling form of Mary Warner ; who with a wild cry had thrown herself upon his bosom, and was clinging there with the desperate mechanical tenacity of a spent swimmer, when he clutches the rock to which the last effort of his strength has borne him.

Rupert's glance swept round the room with a swift, menacing gleam in it, which softened as it rested on the face of Ebenezer Warner. 'Old man,' he said, 'I have done you a wrong. I will

repair it. Give me your daughter as my wife. What to mine are the claims of her intended husband? Is he rich? My wealth trebles his. Does he love her? I love her more, ten thousand fold. Does *she* love *him*? Look at this wasted cheek, this stricken form, which shudders at the very mention of his name. Are these the tokens of her love? Does she love *me*? You know that she does. Each and all of you, you know it; and may Heaven forsake me, if by me she is ever forsaken. Give me my wife. Mine she is already, by every right that is sacred in the sight of heaven: the right to repair a wrong, to prevent a crime, to save a life, to rescue from irreparable ruin the most innocent of victims!

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'Avaunt, blasphemer!' cried Zacharias; and Ebenezer Warner, quivering with indignation, gasped 'Begone!' The two old ladies looked upon Rupert as if they were about to treat him as Cleopatra treated her pearl, and dissolve him in vinegar.

All this while, Monkton (who, from the moment when Rupert burst into the room, had instinctively recognised the long-sought author of all his calamities) was leaning in a sullen vigilant attitude against the sideboard. The only viand which graced that board was the remnant of the doughy cake lately cut for the repast of the lank-haired boy; and on the plate beside it lay the table-knife with which it had been cut: a knife worn sharp, and pointed by long use. Monkton took up the knife, examined it, and kept it in his hand, but said nothing.

James Warner now advanced towards De Lindsay, and attempted to tear from his arm the girl, who still clung to it convulsively.

'Ah, is it so?' cried Rupert; and, with an effort almost supernatural in one so lately stricken to the point of death, he dashed James Warner to the ground, caught up Mary in one arm, pushed Zacharias with the other into the laps of the two old ladies, sprang through the door, and with a light step bore away his treasured burden.

'Follow him! follow him!' cried Ebenezer Warner, in an agony of helpless consternation. 'Will no one save my daughter from that man?' And he wrung his hands, without moving; for the old man's bewilderment seemed to have left him incapable of action.

'I will save her,' said Monkton, who appeared to be the only person in the room still perfectly self-possessed. And, with the knife in his hand, he followed De Lindsay down the passage, swiftly indeed, but apparently undisturbed by any violent emotion. Monkton came upon the object of his pursuit just as Rupert had lifted

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Mary (who was completely insensible) into his carriage, and was placing his own foot upon the step of it. Rupert at that moment was overflowing with exuberant gaiety. Fever and weakness, followed by a swift succession of the most vehement emotions—surprise, grief, anxiety, hope, love—in their intensest form, had strung his sensitive nerves to the highest pitch of hysterical susceptibility. The apparent completeness of his success, the sudden reaction from the desperation of despair to the rapture of victory, had more than exhilarated, they had filled with intoxication, his wasted frame and excited spirit. With the exultation of a boy he was singing to himself—

‘She is won, we are gone over brake, bush and scaur,’

when the hand of Monkton was laid upon his shoulder.

‘Your name is De Lindsay, I think?’ said the soldier.

‘At your service,’ answered Rupert gaily, as he endeavoured to free himself from the unceremonious grasp which tightened as he spoke.

‘Take this, then, into your evil heart!’ cried Monkton. And he plunged the knife twice into the bosom of the adulterer.

Rupert staggered and fell. Monkton stood over him. The soldier’s eye brightened with a light fiercer even and more horrible than that of hatred, for it was lit by insanity. He brandished the blade still reeking with the heart’s blood of his betrayer. ‘Look at me,’ he said. ‘I am Henry Monkton. Do you know me now?’

‘It is just,’ murmured the dying man. In the dust where it had fallen the body of Rupert writhed feebly. Monkton set his foot on it. The next moment it was still for ever.

Mary recovered from her swoon, to see before her the corpse of her lover, soiled, disfigured, horrible; to be dragged across it by her brother into her former prison; and to relapse with one low moan into insensibility. For two days she lingered through torturing intervals of incoherent consciousness, falling from one fit into another. On the evening of the third day, the wicked had ceased from troubling, and the weary one was at rest.

It is not my purpose to trace to their end the lives of the remaining actors in this drama of real life. I ask not the readers of it to follow with me the brief passage of the broken-hearted father to his grave; to enter the jail in which the last days of James Warner were wretchedly consumed; or to witness the acquittal of Henry Monkton on the plea of insanity. The catastrophe of my

story is unconcerned with the fate of its survivors. There was no romance in the burial of the lovers. Death united not those whom life had put asunder.

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In the small churchyard of her native village, the brief inscription is still fresh upon the simple stone that marks the grave of Mary Warner. But already along the daily course of human passions and events no trace of what she was remains. The tale of her sorrows is unknown, the beauty of her life unrecorded. No footstep lingers where she lies. No mourner visits that spot. No stranger asks whose dust is laid beneath it.

And they opened for Rupert de Lindsay the scutcheoned vaults of his knightly fathers; and there, amid the bannered pomp of heraldic vanity, they laid him in his palled and gorgeous coffin. I attempt not to extract a moral from his life. It was the vain chase of a flying shadow that rested not till it slept in the impenetrable darkness of a tomb, to which its inmate brought no honour won, and from which he sought no promise fulfilled.

The portion of the tale which refers to Lady Melton and several particulars in the description of Mary Warner can alone be regarded as strictly autobiographical. For, in all essentials, nothing could be more dissimilar to my father's own character, at any period of his life, than the one assigned by him to Rupert de Lindsay. Yet it is not, perhaps, altogether fanciful to believe that, in this sketch of a wasted life, his imagination warningly presented to his reason an exaggerated image of what his own might become without the resolute observance of principles, and steady cultivation of qualities, which effectually counteracted in himself the epicureanism of sentiment, unrestrained by any such influences, in the character of De Lindsay.

To return, however, to Lady Caroline Lamb. Her identity with the 'Lady Clara' of 'Lionel Hastings,' and the 'Lady Melton' of 'De Lindsay,' and the exactness with which, in both stories, my father has followed his autobiographical account of the accident at the Hoo races and the presentation

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of his boyish verses, all manifest how forcibly she must have impressed his imagination. It will be seen a little later that some features of her character reappear in the portrait of Lady Bellenden, one of the personages who figure in the unfinished and unpublished novel of 'Greville,' which was begun after the publication of 'The Disowned.' The picture drawn of Lady Bellenden shows that his final impression of her, as embodied in his fictions, was, on the whole, a not unkindly one. Lady Caroline's own portrait of my father in his boyhood (that odd little drawing mentioned in his Autobiography, of a child upon a rock, surrounded by waves and clouds; symbolical, we may suppose, of the contrast between his nature and the sad conditions of life) is no inapt token of the intercourse between them. The subjoined engraving is a copy of it.]



SEUL SUR LA TERRE.

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CHAPTER XIII.

(Autobiographical.)

FIRST CONNECTION WITH A DUEL. 1826. Æt. 22.

In the autumn of that year I went abroad for the first time. Frederick Villiers was then staying at Boulogne; engaged, he said, in the study of Political Economy. And early one morning I burst into his room.

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‘My dear friend,’ he exclaimed, ‘you have come just in time to do me an essential service. I must fight a duel, and you must be my second.’

Herewith he commenced a narrative which I thus briefly condense.

He had been staying at a boarding-house near Boulogne. Among the boarders was General Wemyss, a tall, stout man, between fifty and sixty, accustomed to enforce authority, and fitted to exact deference. One day at dinner, my lively friend contesting one of his opinions, and having the best of the argument, General Wemyss said petulantly,—

‘Mr. Villiers, you talk too loud and too fast.’

‘Sir,’ answered Villiers, who occasionally stuttered, ‘that is a very imper-pertinent observation.’

Therewith the General waved his long arm so as to touch insultingly my friend, who was seated next but one to him.

Villiers rose, bowed to the company, and passed by the General to quit the room. Wemyss, perhaps mistaking his quiet silence for faint-heartedness, rose also, and struck him as he passed. Villiers then paused, and said,—

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‘Sir, when a gentleman forgets himself so far as to strike me in the presence of ladies, my proper course is to retire and call him out; but when a gentleman strikes me a second time, it becomes a matter of self-defence, and, instead of calling him out, I knock him down.’ Suiting the action to the word, he felled the General.

The General sent a Colonel Knight to him, demanding satisfaction. A young friend of Villiers’s, named Shafto, happened to be passing through Boulogne, and Villiers put the affair into his hands. Shafto was little more than a boy in character as in years, and no match for a veteran like Colonel Knight; who induced him to subscribe an apology to General Wemyss, without exacting a suitable apology in return. Villiers was furious on hearing this; but the second had bound the principal, and there was an end of the matter. The General, however, being, I fear, somewhat of a Bobadil, went about the *cafés*, boasting of the humiliation he had inflicted on the young hero, and reviving, in fact, the extinguished quarrel by those aspersions on courage which in that day no young man was accustomed to submit to. These aspersions had just been conveyed to Villiers, and with an intimation that they were beginning to prejudice him in the eyes of the chivalry of Boulogne. Thus stood the affair on the morning of my arrival; and the service exacted from me was to demand of General Wemyss a written denial or retraction of the injurious words ascribed to him, failing which—satisfaction.

New as I was to the philosophy of duelling, I saw that the affair was complicated; and that it would be difficult, on the strength of words reported by the gossips of *cafés*, to induce a wary and elderly soldier either to commit himself to any written declaration of a nature to content my friend, or to reopen a quarrel which had been formally closed. However, sympathising with my friend’s indignant feeling, and aware of the stigma which at that time rested upon any gentleman

who at the onset of life was suspected of showing the white feather, I undertook the mission, and waited upon General Wemyss. I found that gentleman (just as I had expected) very indisposed to enter into the matter at all; striving to treat me as a boy, boasting much of his own military reputation and services; magisterial, dignified, sullen. At length, however, thanks chiefly to some unguarded expressions indicative of disrespect to myself (which I took up very sternly—implying that if he escaped my friend, he would have to account with me), I forced him to change his tone, and he ended by referring me to his former second—Colonel Knight. I repaired to that warrior. He was as hard to manage as the General. But I succeeded at last, not in obtaining any written retraction or denial of words uttered before many witnesses, but in arranging a hostile meeting for the next morning. My friend's thanks and joy on my return with this intelligence were evidently unaffected, and strongly contrasted with my own anxiety and fear for his safety. But the practice of these encounters (especially abroad) was then so general that every young man of fashion visiting France made up his mind beforehand that he must pass through the ordeal of single combat. The next morning my friend, who was (and is to this day) a consummate epicure,¹ took especial pains in ordering the *déjeuner à la fourchette* to which we were to return from the encounter: after which we repaired to the field—I, grave and silent; my friend, light-hearted and voluble.

After waiting a few minutes, the two hostile warriors appeared. But what was my surprise, when the General approached me as I was measuring the ground, drew me aside, and said, with a fatherly air, at once lofty and tender, 'Sir, you are very young; do not have the blood of your friend on your hands. It will be a subject of remorse to you throughout life. My aim is unerring. Do not provoke it. Say that

[¹ Frederick Villiers was survived by his two friends, my father and the late Chief Justice Cockburn.—L.]

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your friend is sorry for the mistake he committed in sending you to me, and I pardon him. I can afford to pardon him. My courage is proved. My breast is scarred with wounds in the service of my country !'

'General Wemyss,' said I, 'I am not so young as not to know that a principal who addresses words like these to the second of his adversary is sinning against every rule which a General should inculcate on his officers. And you almost tempt me to believe that the wounds you boast of were received rather on the back than on the breast.'

The General stood speechless for a moment, and then faltered out,—

'Enough, your friend is a dead man !'

After this terrible prediction he slowly allowed Colonel Knight to place him at his post.

Two shots were exchanged. My friend's failed. That was natural, seeing that, before that day, I doubt if he had ever handled a pistol. But that a hero whose aim was so unerring should fire at least forty yards wide of the mark was more singular. Here Colonel Knight interposed, declaring that the laws of honour were amply vindicated, and that his principal was withdrawn.

'Not till he has either retracted or amply apologised for the words he has publicly uttered.'

Colonel Knight hesitated ; but the tall General approached with a majestic step.

'Young gentlemen,' he said to Villiers, 'it is true that I doubted your courage. I may so have expressed myself. I was in error. You have exposed yourself to face a British officer not unknown in the annals of his country. I retract. I apologise. I am deeply sorry for my mistake. Can I say more ? If so, I say it.' Tears rushed to his eyes, and coursed his manly cheeks. 'Young men, may you both be spared to serve your country, as I have done ! Accept an old man's blessing, and his hand.'

Thus ended the first duel in which I was engaged. We returned to the *déjeuner* Villiers had so carefully ordered. Naturally enough, my friend rose greatly in my estimation after this adventure. The *sang froid* that characterised his courage—free from all nervous excitement and all truculent swagger—was a quality that, however misapplied in the instance of duelling, might well in itself be admired. Indeed, I should doubt if a man more constitutionally brave than Frederick Villiers could be found. I have seen him on many occasions in positions of danger that might somewhat shake the hardest nerves, and in these his fearless and cool self-possession was perfect. Much in this and other attributes of the man—such as his lively humour, his playful satire on ‘common people,’ contrasted by a logical philosophy that made him, if aristocrat by temper, democrat by reason, assisted me in finishing and completing the character of Pelham. He differed from that worthy chiefly in the utter absence of the ambition which supplies motive power to Pelham, and impresses the reader with the belief that he is destined to outlive and redeem all his more frivolous feelings and affectations. But nothing could ever have induced Frederick Villiers to undergo the persevering trouble necessary to a successful career. *Le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle*, was his answer to all encouragement to him to develop and put forth his natural abilities. Perhaps the circumstances of his birth had something to do with this spirit of inaction. His mother and aunts, poor women, were always afraid that he should do something that would make the world inquire who he was.

After a short sojourn at Boulogne, during which neither of us made much progress in Political Economy, I hired a carriage and persuaded Villiers to accompany me on a tour through the principal Flemish towns, including Brussels, intending to close at Paris.

In this journey we might have enjoyed ourselves much as other young men, but for the chilling nature of my companion's

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philosophy. He had a good-natured sneer for everything that inspired me with interest. Monuments of art in painting and architecture, associations connected with the general history of Flanders and liberty, even the ordinary sentiment of pride any Englishmen might feel in exploring the battlefield of Waterloo, were to him subjects of contempt—half epicurean, half cynical. In short, I was an enthusiast in company with a man older than myself, and in many things cleverer, but who mocked at enthusiasm; and thus by degrees his very gaiety depressed me.

We concluded our tour at Paris, and I was not sorry when my friend took there an apartment and left me free to muse in the solitude of mine.

CHAPTER XIV.

(Autobiographical.)

SOCIAL RELATIONS WITH THE FAUBOURG ST.-GERMAIN.

1825. ÆT. 22.

I FOUND my brother Henry at Paris. He had quitted Cambridge without taking a degree, and entered into the Life Guards, but soon sold out, meditating that diplomatic career in which he has since been so distinguished. He did not stay long at Paris, and while he was there we did not see much of each other.

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I soon found admission into circles of French society not often open to foreigners of my age. I became intimate at some of the most brilliant houses of the old noblesse domiciled in the Faubourg St.-Germain, and was received with marked courtesy at the select *soirées* of the principal members of the Administration. I owed some of my best introductions to a very remarkable man, who took a fancy both to Henry and myself, and expressed a warm interest in our future career. He was an Irishman and a priest, of the name of Kinsela, and bore the title of Abbé. He was, if I remember rightly, the confessor of Madame de Polignac, wife of Charles X.'s Minister, and was held in great respect by the chiefs of the Legitimist party. He was a Jesuit; he had much of the learning which distinguishes that great fraternity, and still more of their knowledge of the world and *savoir-vivre*. He was a very busy and, I should think, a very able politician;

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but, so far as I could judge, free from all personal ambition or self-seeking. He appeared poor, and lived very modestly; but on one or two occasions, when I guessed that he was in want of money, I could not persuade him to accept it, whether as gift or loan. He had, however, an intense enthusiasm for the interests of his order, and made no secret of it.

Among the houses to me most agreeable, and always to me most kindly, at which the Abbé Kinsela's introduction served to ensure my welcome, was that of the Marquise de la Rochejacquelein, the heroine of La Vendée—a lady of imposing presence, but with that frank and almost homely good-nature, combined with high breeding, which constituted the charm of manner in the old *régime*. She had two daughters, both very pleasant, and one, to my taste, very good-looking. They spoke English perfectly, which was a great aid to our friendly intercourse, as I then spoke French very ill; and, indeed, to this day I express myself awkwardly in that language. There is no trace in English society of the peculiar *bon ton* which characterised the surviving representatives of that World before the Flood—the *ancien régime*. Once familiarly admitted into their society, and it seemed as if you were made one of the family. Their cordial sweetness of manner was irresistible; and whatever their political prejudices, there was that genuine elevation of sentiment in their familiar converse that could scarcely fail to exercise a favourable influence over young men not indisposed to recognise the obligations imposed on gentlemen. Courage, honour, truth—a high but not obtrusive self-respect, which allowed neither greed nor ambition to infringe on their pecuniary, or their political, independence—were qualities that came out in their talk as naturally as perfume comes out of a flower. Their misfortunes had no doubt served to correct many of their ancestral faults. They retained, indeed, the old French sprightliness and gallantry; but I think there were very few of their *salons* in which

religion was ever turned into ridicule, or in which any immorality was paraded. Their ease of manner was always noble, their freedom of talk admitted wit and shunned indecorum.

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Among these distinguished families there was a young lady who had passed her childhood in England; who had a marked preference for English ways and literature; who had a very good fortune, and boasted a very illustrious historical name. I soon discovered that it was the great desire of the Abbé Kinsela to form a matrimonial alliance between that young lady and myself. At last he fairly proposed it to me.

'Pooh!' said I, 'a girl of so high a rank, and with such great pretensions of fortune and person, must look much higher than me. I appear richer than I am; I am but a younger son, living chiefly on an allowance from my mother. And though, I suppose, I am of a family old enough to satisfy a Frenchman's pride of pedigree, I have neither inherited nor made a position in the world that would qualify my presuming to Mademoiselle ——'s hand.'

'You know my footing in the family,' replied the Abbé, 'and you will not disbelieve me when I say that, if you propose, you will be accepted both by the lady and her parents.'

'But she is Roman Catholic, and I am Protestant. *Entre nous*, I mean to remain Protestant.'

'That as you please; I don't pretend to convert you. But the difference of religion will be no obstacle, unless you make it one.'

This conversation set me thinking. I was not in love with Mademoiselle ——, but I felt that I could easily become so. Her person and manners were exceedingly attractive. I liked her conversation, and discovered in her turn of mind much that was congenial to my own. She had been admirably brought up, and belonged to a family in which all the women were chaste as all the men were brave. In a social and worldly point of view, Mademoiselle —— would have been a

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suitable match for an English duke. After some reflection, I wrote to my mother fully on this subject; saying that if such a marriage would please her, I proposed to ascertain for myself how far the Abbé's overtures were justified by the predisposition of the lady and her parents, and that, if so, I thought I could be very happy in the union. But that, if she disliked the idea of my marrying a foreigner, my heart was not yet irrevocably gone; and, for fear it should be, I should discontinue my visits to the house. My mother's reply decided me. She had a great horror of Popery, and could not endure the thought of my marrying a Roman Catholic.

I found it required a stronger effort than I had first supposed to wrench my thoughts from the prospect that had been so alluringly held out to me. But I felt that honour and duty compelled me to persevere in the effort. I ceased to visit at the house where I had been so familiar a guest, and sought distraction of thought partly in the world, partly in literary occupation.

About this time one of those visitations of great melancholy to which I was subject during all my younger life—and from which to this day I am not wholly free—came upon me, and grew strong and stronger, deep and deeper. Gradually I withdrew myself much from the gaieties natural to my youth, and lived greatly alone. I wrote some poems, which I privately printed at Paris, under the name of 'Weeds and Wildflowers.' They have never been published, and I do not think ten copies have been given away. I also recast and nearly completed the sombre tale of 'Falkland.' Besides these achievements, I studied with critical attention the standard French authors. At last, finding that literary occupation of this nature only fed my melancholy, I made a determined resolve to wrestle with myself against it. I left Paris abruptly, took an apartment at Versailles, where I did not know a soul, and tried the effect of healthful physical exercise in restoring the mind to

that cheerful view of life which is essential to its just equilibrium. I had with me my favourite Andalusian horse ; and, rising early, I forced myself to ride out daily, in all weathers, for nine or ten hours, till it grew dark. I returned home sufficiently fatigued to ensure a good appetite and a sound sleep. All my life through, I have found the necessity of intervals of complete solitude for the cure of the morbid symptoms which half solitude engenders.

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End of Autobiography.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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OF
EDWARD BULWER, LORD LYTTON

BY
HIS SON

WITH PORTRAITS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

VOL. II.



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BOOK V.
SINGLE LIFE
1825—1826



CHAPTER I.

PROSPECT AND RETROSPECT. 1825. *Æt.* 22.

My father's Autobiography comes to an end in the middle of a lively period, and on the threshold of a serious epoch, in his life. In the last chapter of it we have seen him, at the age of twenty-two, just entering into the world with high aspirations, and an ardent ambition not yet directed to any fixed purpose. Already the desire of personal distinction was associated with the idea of public usefulness; but its aims were still indefinite, and its course uncertain.

His capabilities both of pleasure and of pain were exceptionally large; and whatever he did or felt, was felt and done strongly. The airs of indifference and frivolity assumed by him in his Pelham days were not merely literary artifices; they were partly the devices of a shy nature to protect from unsympathetic notice its own sensitive intensity. The real man was passionately earnest. He had a temperament naturally joyous and buoyant: but its natural buoyancy had been considerably subdued by an early sorrow so acutely felt that the traces of it were never wholly effaced. That premature experience had, no doubt, deepened his character in many directions; but it had also given to his disposition at this time a morbid, and even a dangerous, inclination. It subjected him to frequent fits of great melancholy and dejection. In natures as active as his there is always a healthy tendency to enjoyment; and these melancholy moods were followed by impatient cravings for excitement. The

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nature was a rich one—a fertile and tenacious soil wherein any seed, whether of good or evil, was certain to strike strong root and bear fruit abundantly. But the quality of the harvest to be reaped from it depended much on the character of its cultivation during the next few years. His observant school-master had noted, with misgiving, in his character as a boy the latent dangers of this exuberant vitality. ‘He is,’ said Dr. Hooker, ‘capable of extraordinary exertion, and also of self-denial, for any object in which he is interested; but, without such an object, his high spirits, his eagerness for pleasure, and keen enjoyment of it, may prove the ruin of his character.’

The ‘high spirits’ had been greatly sobered; but the ‘eagerness for pleasure’ was to some extent inseparable from the ‘capability of extraordinary exertion,’ and other permanent qualities of his nature. He had now the means of amply indulging it. The allowance made to him by his mother was a large one; and, with all his love of pleasure, his tastes were not extravagant. He was in the heyday of his youth. No professional or family obligations restricted its unfettered freedom; no anxieties for himself or others overshadowed its boundless horizon. Two years later he had exchanged deliberately all these advantages for the responsibilities of matrimony under conditions exceptionally trying, and with no other sources of income than genius and labour.

There is a time of life when even sadness is a kind of happiness; a time when the atmosphere of sentiment is finer than it can ever be again, and the sorrows that gather and disperse in that atmosphere are like the ethereal showers sometimes seen, in the fervid skies of Mexico, hovering over the earth but never reaching it. Grief, however passionate, when it comes to us for the first time, has at least the compensating charm of its ‘raven gloss’ still fresh upon it. The griefs of later years are less vehement, but they are more oppressive. Thus, all early feelings, even disappointed hopes and frustrated affections, are more beautiful than later ones in the retrospect

of those who have felt them. And this, perhaps, is one of many reasons why men, as they approach the age when to look back is more natural than to look forward, instinctively recall the most trivial impressions of their youth, or childhood, with greater pleasure than the most important achievements of their middle life.

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In my father's account of his school and college days, even those passages which describe his sorrowings for the loss of his first love were probably written with something of the wistful pleasure common to such recollections. But he may well have shrunk and hesitated as he approached in memory a time which was the beginning of lifelong calamities grimly prosaic, softened by no mitigating touches of romance, and productive only of the most poignant and enduring mortification. Here, at any rate, he threw aside the record of his reminiscences. Not but that he meant to continue it. Time after time, he took it up again with that object. Time after time, again he put it down untouched. And so years passed away, adding much to the experiences of his life, but nothing to his written account of them.

The resumption of the Autobiography was prevented, however, by lack of leisure and opportunity even more than by lack of inclination. When an author begins to collect his works it is usually a sign that he meditates no important addition to the number of them; that he is contemplating an early retirement from his accustomed field of literary labour; and that he feels the day has come when his permanent position as a writer must rest rather on his past achievements than on his future exertions. In the case of imaginative writings which have powerfully affected for any length of time the imagination of their readers, the author and the public are almost always contemporaries. They have been young together, and together they grow old. By degrees they simultaneously exhaust the associations they had in common. A new race arises, with different experiences and sympathies, to

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which new writers furnish different forms of expression. The voices grow fewer and fainter that exclaimed to the author at the outset of his way

Ibimus, ibimus

Utcunque præcedes, supremum

Carpere iter comites parati.

The old readers drop out of the *turba remi*, and the old writers rest silent on their oars.

It was under an impression that his literary life had reached some such period of rest and retrospection that my father began the memoirs which were to preserve the history of it. He at that time contemplated, if not a permanent retirement from the profession of authorship, at least a prolonged relaxation of its activity. His health, always fragile, had suffered much from mental exertion, and yet more from the wear and tear and worry of vexations which wrung to the roots the most sensitive fibres of his nature. The duration of his life (at least in the undiminished vigour of all its faculties) appeared to him extremely uncertain. In this mood his mind naturally reverted to the past, associating the recollections of it with thoughts of that distant future from which genius, consciously or unconsciously, awaits the final verdict on its work.

The retrospect thus taken must have 'revived to fancy's view' many things which, though unshown by the visible results of work actually accomplished, were associated with it in the recollections of its author: intellectual conceptions not embodied in such work, personal experiences and feelings imperfectly expressed by it, which had nevertheless combined their influence to shape its character or fix its aim. For, in all probability, no creative writer of true genius has ever given out the whole of what is in him. Every great author is greater than his greatest book; and in the life he has lived (not outwardly but inwardly) there should be something which, could we read it aright, would be better worth reading than all he has written. Although the records of this inner life

are in a language more or less untranslatable, my father believed that a personal account of what was apparent to himself when he looked into the book of his mind might hereafter be read with interest as a transcript of the original text closer at least than the imaginative forms in which some portion of it had already been embodied. And so his memoirs were begun.

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But the lasting farewells, so often taken of the public by writers to whom authorship has become an habitual occupation, resemble the vows of eternal fidelity addressed by lovers to each other. Fate and the future are in a conspiracy to defeat their fulfilment. In this case, there was certainly no foundation for the author's impression that the relations between the public and himself had reached that stage of reciprocal indifference to which an amicable separation offers the best prospect of mutual satisfaction. Their intercourse, soon afterwards renewed, was maintained with zest and increasing intimacy to the last hour of his life. He never got, as the phrase goes, to the bottom of his ink-bottle; never survived either the force and freshness of his imaginative power, or the public interest in repeated manifestations of its inexhaustible fecundity. And thus it happened that not only the most noticeable period of his political career, but also the most popular productions of his literary genius, were subsequent to the meditated close of his active connection with politics and literature.

The continuation of the Autobiography was consequently postponed in favour of more immediate demands; and the narrative it leaves unfinished is here continued from the biographical materials found in his correspondence, his private notes of reading, reflection, and observation, and sundry sketches or fragments of original compositions which serve to exemplify, better perhaps than any finished work, both his way of working and his way of thinking and feeling, at different periods of his life.

CHAPTER II.

INFLUENCE OF THE ABBÉ KINSELA. 1825. ÆT. 22.

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V.

1825-26

MY father often told me that, although he never succeeded in keeping a journal, he had, at different periods of his life, begun to note down the daily employment of his time, with the intention of persevering in that practice.

Two years ago, when looking over some tattered and discarded tapestries, stowed away with other household rubbish in a loft at Knebworth, I found there an old leathern travelling-bag, much mildewed, and stuffed with torn papers, mostly college accounts and business letters. Among them was the fragment of a diary which probably represents the earliest of those unfruitful resolutions, for it is a rather bald record, in my father's handwriting, of what was seen and done by him during the first weeks of his visit to Paris in 1825. Some few of the entries in it may, I think, be shortly noticed here, because they show, incidentally, the direction given to his mind by the influence of the Abbé Kinsela, and also the general character of the things then engaging his attention.

The first pages of the diary record a visit to 'The Manufactory of Looking-glass,' and carefully describe the process of that manufacture. The next are devoted to a description of 'The National Reserve of Corn and Flour for Periods of Distress.' Then comes mention of a visit paid to 'the building in which all wine that enters France must be deposited: the dealers, who have small stalls in it, paying only as they withdraw the wine. *Vin Ordinaire de Bordeaux*, forty-two

frances the barrel, about three sous a bottle. What an immense profit for the tavern-keepers!' A little later, he has 'visited the gigantic model of the elephant intended to be in bronze, where the Bastille stood. A fountain. Grand, stupendous, wonderful. Doubt and discussion as to the grace of its design and harmony with the purpose of the image, chiefly humbug. What is grand is grand.' This is followed by a visit to the church of Ste. Geneviève, and afterwards to the *Hospice des Enfants Trouvés*. The reflections suggested by the last are curious. A very few years later, my father's note-book contained the following entry:—'What can seem a more excellent institution than *Les Enfants Trouvés*? It would prevent infanticide by offering a home to deserted infants. Yet what are the facts? Since the propagation of these institutions, the number of foundlings has prodigiously increased, while the frequency of infanticide has not diminished.' And then follows a formidable array of facts collected from the statistics of France, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, Holland, and Germany. But on this occasion he only sees in the *Hospice des Enfants Trouvés* a 'most beautiful undertaking. Child brought in by its parents. No question asked. Invariably received. Kept there for a few days, and then sent to the country. Subsequently many of them return to Paris for education, or are put to different trades.'

And here he adds a warm tribute of respect to the French *Religieuses*. It was doubtless well merited, for the calumniators of the conventual orders in France are not those who best know what lives their members lead.

Noticed the great attention of the Nuns. Greatly affected by their supernatural devotion to purposes so truly beneficent. Vague and vain accusation of want of utility, commonly made against the *Religieuses*. All I have yet seen are the most useful class of citizens. Am informed, and credibly, that no monastery is suffered to exist without exercising some pursuit useful to the interests of society. N.B. Will certify myself on that point.

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The next day he visits the School for the Education of the *Enfants Trouvés*.

Alas, how different! *There* all was cleanliness, propriety, exertion on the part of the directors. *Here* all is misery, filth, idleness. Remissness in the masters; lamentable failure in the object. Noted the sensible and true conclusion of Kinsela, that those who are paid to do good work cannot do it with the zest and efficiency of persons who do it gratuitously from duty. Here, then, is the great and eternal use of the *Religieuses*.

This entry seems to have been followed by a suspension of the diary. For how long a time it is impossible to say, for the dates are not explicit; but apparently it was soon resumed, though not long continued. These are the entries in it:—

9th.¹—Saw a Convent. Nothing particular. Nun promised to pray for us as heretics.

10th.—The Observatoire. Inferior to Greenwich.

11th.—Hospital for old women. Great cleanliness and comfort. Apparent cheerfulness of all. 5,000 inmates, so old, so infirm, and yet so lively! French gaiety on the brink of the grave.

12th.—Saw the Hospital for Veterans. [Here follows an account of its origin, description of its organisation, statement of qualifications for admission, &c.] Went to the Library. One veteran reading a book of devotion; another, *des aventures galantes*; a third, universal history. Characteristic of this people. Love, religion, and politics, all so fantastically mingled.

13th.—Saw an establishment for lighting by gas. Ingenious. Very promising. Immense benefit to all if it succeeds.

14th.—Porcelain manufactory at Sèvres. Paintings exquisite. A Madonna for 50 napoleons: a Cupid and Psyche for 25,000 francs. *Manières de voir* pecuniarily expressed. Colours remarkably fine, but not equal to the old.

15th.—Talked, with Kinsela, to a peasant, near Versailles, about religion. Sensible replies to questions on images and absolution. Inveterate ignorance in England about Catholic tenets.

16th.—Hospice for blind boys. Children taught music, Latin, mathematics. Last two scarcely seem useful; but probably many of the better classes resort here. Surprising geographical knowledge

¹ The month and year are not stated in the diary.

of a little girl I talked with. Boys, how pleasantly free from the *mauvaise honte* of English lads of the same age.

CHAP.
II.

17th.—Went to a barn near Versailles, and studied manner of threshing. Different from ours. With the same hand, instead of changing.

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18th.—Observed manner of praying in this country. More unostentatious and really devout than ours. Advantage of leaving the churches always open. Recollected the beautiful sentence in Hervey's 'Meditations,' applicable to Catholic, but not (as he meant it) to Protestant churches: 'The doors of the Church, like the Religion it was intended to honour, were open to everyone who would enter.'

The things noticed in this little diary are not of the kind one would think likely to interest a very young man, fond of pleasure, full of romance, and tasting for the first time, with unsated relish, the varied social delights of the liveliest capital in Europe. It is a matter-of-fact record of visits paid to schools, hospitals, manufactories, and public institutions. But there was in my father's temperament a happy natural diffusion of spirits which enabled him without effort to keep the practical and poetical tendencies of his mind on tolerably good terms with each other. Moreover, he had at all times a fortunate inquisitiveness about external things, and a lively enjoyment in the observation of them, which acted on his mind like out-of-door exercise on a man who has much occupation at home, and served to keep it healthily active. But for this gift, he might now have suffered much both intellectually and morally from that more or less morbid disposition to self-contemplation which is generally strong in youth, and was at this time particularly strong in him.

The Abbé's influence upon him, which finds indirect illustration in this diary, was probably aided by the attractions of the young lady of the Faubourg, mentioned in his Autobiography; and it is, I think, apparent from the tone of the diary that, although the Abbé 'did not pretend to convert' him, he had succeeded in giving to the mind of the young Englishman in whose fortunes he took such friendly interest

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a vague unconscious inclination towards that point of view whence 'all roads lead to Rome.'

It would be premature to enter here upon any lengthened description of my father's thoughts and feelings about religion. But although the negative side of them was, naturally, most active in youth (the common season of doubt and inquiry), while their positive side was more strongly pronounced in age, I do not think they underwent appreciable change at any period of his life. It will not, therefore, be inappropriate if I at once take the opportunity to trace shortly the early influences which helped to form his religious sentiments, and indicate the habitual attitude of his mind towards the common doctrines, and chief divisions, of Christendom.

He was born in the Georgian age. That was an age of peace for the English Church. Anglican Theology slept the sleep of the just, and her dreams were untroubled. Within her own citadel there were no mutineers, and her external opponents were not formidable. Tom Paine and wooden shoes had gone out of fashion. The Voltairian philosophy, impartially intolerant of all religious organisations, concentrated no attack upon this or that particular form of Christian faith. Its founders had not bequeathed their wit to its disciples. In England it had made few converts. In France the reaction against it had begun. The little civil war between Orthodoxy and Nonconformity was virtually over: and, if the *modus vivendi* between the Church and the Tabernacle was not absolutely perfect, its disturbing elements were of a social and political, rather than of a doctrinal, character. Churchman and Dissenter, whatever their domestic differences, had at least a common cause to maintain against Popery on the one hand and Infidelity on the other.

Among the religious teachers of that time, the preponderance of genius, eloquence, and energy was towards Nonconformity. Thomas Chalmers, whose influence eventually led to the disruption of the Scotch Church in 1843, and who

is said to have been the most powerful preacher of his day, was then lecturing upon moral philosophy in the University of St. Andrew's. Robert Hall had just returned, in his fifty-seventh year, to the scene of his first ministrations in Bristol, at the Baptist church of Broadmead.

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The orthodox Anglican divinity of the time was more distinguished by elegant scholarship, and (in the main) liberality and good sense, than by spiritual aspiration. Its intellectual attitude was unemotional, its pulpit oratory languid. Paley, its chief literary ornament, had died in 1805, bequeathing to it a complete doctrine of utilitarian morality. The lectures of Porteus and the sermons of Blair still provided for the orthodox flock its Sunday feasts of spiritual food; and on this not very stimulating pasturage the sheep browsed without any great temptation to wander away from it. Tractarianism, Puseyism, Ritualism, were watchwords as yet unknown within the calm enclosure of the Church. The future seemed promised to the movement which eventually provoked these reactions; and it was in the direction of what they called 'Evangelical Christianity' that men like Mackintosh, Wilberforce, and Stephen were looking for a regeneration of the spiritual life of their time.

The advanced guard of this Evangelical Christianity was headed by a little body of men (all earnest, and some eminent) who were known as the Clapham Sect. 'God,' said Wilberforce, 'has set before me the reformation of my country's manners.' But from the society whose manners they aspired to reform these advanced Christians held aloof. And from the society they formed amongst themselves they excluded all the charms, and graces, and innocent recreations which render social life endurable. In a day when the stage was adorned by the genius of the elder Kean, the Kembles, and Miss O'Neill, they denounced the playhouse as the house of sin. The novel was converted by Hannah More into the most vapid and tedious of homilies; and even the

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language of daily life was elaborately vulgarised by a sectarian phraseology employed with the worst possible taste. 'They have invented,' said Mackintosh, 'a new language, in which they never say that A. B. is good or virtuous, or even religious, but that he is an advanced Christian.'

It was natural, and indeed inevitable, that a young man of my father's temperament and tastes should view with extreme repugnance the pretensions of these high-sniffing religious formalists. They shocked, not his taste only, but also his strong love of intellectual, social, and political freedom. The prosecutions of Hone and Carlile for blasphemy had occurred, the first during his childhood, and the last during his boyhood. The three trials of Hone, who in each defended himself with great ability and success, were of a peculiarly sensational character. The trial of Carlile had been urged on by Wilberforce; the sentence was shockingly severe, and the defendant completely ruined by it. These trials appear to have made a deep impression on my father's feelings at a time when generous emotions are strongest. They filled him with a burning sense of their injustice; and his early letters and note-books contain several indignant allusions to them.

He had no more sympathy than Carlile's persecutors with the opinions for which that unfortunate man was so harshly punished; but he had a lively sympathy with every case of conscientious independence, with the general cause of intellectual liberty, and with the humane spirit of Christianity. All these appeared to him incompatible with the arrogant and despotic attitude of evangelical zeal. 'God forbid,' he wrote in one of his earliest note-books, 'that in my own country I should ever see even the most erroneous faith in His existence and providence replaced by the flimsy philanthropies of an atheistical philosophy, which can perceive in the universe nothing higher or more admirable than incessant relays of human beings without souls, hurrying after each other, across a foolish world, into a nothingness from which it supposes them to have

emerged, only to find out, as they go by, how to make houses instead of huts, and substitute swords and guns for wooden clubs. But I do, from my very heart, despise the cant which thrusts out of the pale of society a man whose only fault is that of not believing everything which it is his interest to believe; and I do feel the most sovereign contempt for a policy which attempts to protect popular opinion by the fine and imprisonment of unpopular theorists.'

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By taste and temperament, by training and family tradition, and by the force of political as well as religious instinct, he was attached to the Established Church. He regarded it as a great bulwark against religious tyranny on the one hand, and religious anarchy on the other. He valued it also as a vehicle for the salutary association of religious teaching with intellectual refinement and learning. He appreciated the generally tolerant spirit of its divines. He knew by his own experience of country life how much good is done unostentatiously among the rural poor by the humblest of its ministers—good of a kind not performable by uneducated persons, however zealous and however pious. Attaching, as he did at all times, great political importance to the maintenance of kindly relations between rich and poor, he believed that such relations are better promoted by the influence of an educated rural clergy than by the order of men who exercise the function of dissenting ministers in the lower ranks of Nonconformity.

'I respect,' he wrote in 1826, 'the authority of the Established Church, because I sincerely believe it to be the religious organisation best adapted for the preservation of virtue and happiness among us.' And in one of his note-books bearing the same date I find the following reflection:—"It is surely strange that, although everyone exclaims against the wickedness of the age, yet no sooner does anyone affect peculiar piety than he becomes the subject of universal and vehement reprobation. What is the reason? I think it must be this. The world is a world of mediocrity; and therefore it does not

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readily pardon anything which appears either below or above the standard level. It is not a very bad world : therefore it dislikes what it conceives to be very bad. It is not a very good world : wherefore it does not approve what pretends to be very good. Neither is it, in all respects, a very wise world : and now and then its ideas about these two extremes are rather wrong. But the world has, in the main, a right instinct as to what is best for the preservation of its own comfort. And a very uncomfortable world it would be, if its reforming saints and sceptics had it all their own way. Winnow the chaff of its prejudices, and you will find at bottom the sound grain of a just opinion.'

He was not, however, likely to find in the rather somnolent religious literature of the undisturbed orthodoxy of those Georgian days much sustenance for spiritual cravings stimulated by the intellectual curiosity of a passionately imaginative and earnest nature. That curiosity attracted him to metaphysics and moral philosophy. His literary taste was delighted by the wit and knowledge of the world which he found in such writers as Helvetius, Diderot, and Voltaire. But their philosophy was entirely uncongenial to the constitution of his mind. To him the universe, and man's place in it, were full of a divine significance ; and the French philosophy of the eighteenth century appeared to him shallow and ineffectual, not only as an interpretation of the mystery and miracle of existence, but even as a guide to the organisation of society without reference to the religious sanctions excluded from its system of morals.

The simplicity of his common sense was impervious to the seductions of this philosophy. Had it not been weighed in the balance of experience, and found lamentably wanting ? The countrymen of Voltaire, trusting to philosophers and philanthropists, had rejected the religion of Pascal, as a ridiculous and degrading superstition. They had put their faith in the 'human perfectibility' of Condorcet, as a rational

and elevating creed. But with what result? Never was scepticism more terribly punished for its credulity. Philosophy had conducted her votaries to the public worship of a courtesan; and Philanthropy had plunged them into the perpetration of cruelties and crimes which transcended the massacre of St. Bartholomew in the depth and duration of their atrocity. Although, therefore, the French writers he was now studying exercised a perceptible influence over the style of some of my father's early compositions, they had no effect upon the religious sentiments in which he had been trained by a woman of deep and simple piety, whose example gave to her precepts enduring impressions on the character of her son.

A story is told of a discussion between Fuseli and a young and enthusiastic materialist. 'You assert, then,' said the latter, 'that I have an immortal soul?' 'Sir,' replied Fuseli, 'I have asserted nothing of the kind. What I assert is that *I* have an immortal soul.' To a similar question my father might, and perhaps would, have made a similar reply. For his belief in the existence of a personal provident Deity, and a responsible indestructible human soul, was inherent to the constitution of his mind, and inseparable from the sense of his own vigorous personality.¹ From the twofold conviction thus interwoven with the facts of consciousness (a conviction which no reasoning was needed to confirm or able to disturb) flowed faith in the direct relations between man and God proclaimed by Christianity, and in the moral efficacy of prayer.

But his faith was neither solaced by ceremonial expression, nor fortified by dogmatic definition; and, finding the whole field of religious controversy strewn with the wrecks of internecine

¹ It might well be described in the words of La Bruyère:—'Je sens qu'il y a un Dieu, et je ne sens pas qu'il n'y en a point. Tout le raisonnement du monde m'est inutile. Cette conclusion est dans ma nature. J'en ai reçu les principes trop aisément dans mon enfance, et je les ai conservés depuis trop naturellement dans un âge plus avancé pour les soupçonner de fausseté.'—*Des Esprits forts*, 485.

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conflict upon points, not of fundamental difference, but imperfect and sometimes nearly complete agreement, he had no inclination to take sides with any combatant in such a field. Thus, the diversities of Christian theology and ritual presented themselves to his mind as the diversities of civilised government and law present themselves to the mind of the political observer: mainly in relation to the diverse conditions and requirements of the communities in which they are found. An unpuritanical Protestantism he regarded as the form of Christian faith most favourable to the maintenance of that sober political freedom on which he set great store. But this did not prevent him from appreciating those features in the character of the Roman Church which justify its Catholic title by the comprehensiveness of its ecclesiastical organisation, and the activity of a popular spirit so profound that in every Catholic country this Church, notwithstanding its despotic alliances, is emphatically the Church of the People.

His feelings on this point, however, will be best expressed by himself in the following extract from a letter to a Roman Catholic correspondent.

Let me add the expression of my sincere concern, if, as you imply, there be anywhere in my writings passages that wound or offend you as a Catholic Christian. It is quite unconsciously, or quite in ignorance, if I fall into traps or pitfalls of religious controversy. I have neither the temperament nor the learning of a disputant in theology; and there is nothing in which I more differ from the philosophers of the last century than their attitude towards the ministry and priesthood of those divine truths in which Catholic and Protestant have a common stronghold to defend. I may also add that among the dearest friends I possess are two Catholics, in whom I recognise very pure and rare types of virtue. I know no men more severely moral in their own lives, or more mildly charitable to the infirmities of others. And, were it but for their sake, I should indeed be sorry if, in the range of works so various (and many of them so light), I had written anything that wounded the faith of earnest members of so vast a community of Christian brothers.

The sentiments expressed in this letter were perhaps a mental legacy bequeathed to my father by the excellent Kinsela. But upon the road to Rome the object of the Abbé's solicitude proceeded no further than Paris; where he soon found that best of all schools for a young man's social education, the friendship of an amiable and accomplished woman of the world who is older than himself.

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CHAPTER III.

MRS. CUNNINGHAM. 1825. Æt. 22.

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THE Faubourg St.-Germain was at this time the centre of a little world to which every capital in Europe contributed some agreeable social element. Charles X. had just succeeded to a throne apparently consolidated by the sagacity of Louis XVIII. ; and the society gathered around it was national without being narrow, cosmopolitan without being promiscuous. At the head of that society was a *Noblesse* which had received from other countries, during the Emigration, a hospitality it was now able and eager to return. The best families of France recalled the privations of the Revolution with feelings which only stimulated the enjoyments of the Restoration ; and in their *salons* the triple aristocracy of birth, talent, and beauty was brilliantly represented.

In this society was then living an English family to whose house my father had already become an habitual visitor. Some of the exiled Bourbon Princes had, during their sojourn in England, been the frequent guests of Sir John Call, a Cornish baronet warmly attached to their cause. This gentleman's daughter and her husband, Mr. Cunningham (who subsequently, on the death of his brother, became Sir Charles Cunningham-Fairlie), were among the first English visitors to Paris after the battle of Waterloo. There they were cordially received ; and there they had fixed their residence when my father first became acquainted with them. The acquaintance soon ripened into a warm and durable

friendship, which has left upon one of his earliest works traces of its pleasant influence. A great part of 'Pelham, or the Adventures of a Gentleman,' was written about this time; and in that novel Pelham says of himself:—

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I had mixed of late very little with the English. My mother's introductions had procured me the *entrée* of the best French houses, and to them, therefore, my evenings were usually devoted. Alas! that was a happy time, when my carriage used to await me at the door of the Rocher de Cancale, and then wheel me to a succession of visits, varying in their degree and nature as the whim prompted: now to the brilliant soirées of Madame de —, or the *appartement au troisième* of some less celebrated daughter of dissipation and *écarté*; now to the literary conversaziones of the Duchesse de D—, or the Vicomte de —, and then to the feverish excitement of the gambling-house. Passing from each with the appetite for amusement kept alive by variety; finding in none a disappointment, and in every one a welcome; full of the health which supports, and the youth which colours, all excess or excitement—I drained with an unsparing lip whatever enjoyment that enchanting metropolis could afford.

Slightly altered, this passage would be strictly autobiographical. For 'my mother's introductions' read 'Mrs. Cunningham's introductions;' for 'the Duchesse de D—.' read 'the Duchesse Descazes;' and for 'the Vicomte de —' read 'the Vicomte d'Arlincourt.' Of Mrs. Cunningham herself 'Pelham' also contains a portrait:

But to return to Mrs. C—. She writes beautiful poetry almost impromptu, draws charming caricatures, possesses a laugh for whatever is ridiculous, but never loses a smile for what is good. Placed in very peculiar situations, she has passed through each with a grace and credit which are her best eulogium. If she possesses one quality higher than intellect, it is her kindness of heart.

But I shall venture to add to this portrait another, for which I am indebted to the daughter of the lady whose likeness it depicts.

Edward Bulwer (she writes) was constantly at our house, whenever he came to Paris, during the years 1825 and 1826. My mother

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was his most intimate friend and cherished companion. The difference of their ages gave freedom to their intercourse, which was rendered mutually attractive by the similarity of their tastes and pursuits. She understood him; which few then did. She was clever enough to appreciate his genius, while her high moral character put their friendship above the world's blame. She joined a most sensitive and kindly nature to a sprightly wit. Her amusing repartees delighted him; and her knowledge of the world was useful to him. He often, even whilst in Paris, wrote to her asking her opinion on the books he was reading, or the politics of the day. She introduced him to her friends, both English and foreign.

His recollection of those times has given colour and animation to the descriptions, in his later works, of the peculiarities of Parisian life, its charms and follies, its vanities and virtues. But those of his own early life at Paris are vividly described in 'Pelham.' He was at that time particularly sensitive to the praise or blame of the world. He adopted a style of dress and manner different to that of other people; and he liked to be noted for it. My mother often laughed at him for this vanity, and his 'beautiful curls' were a standing joke amongst his friends.

But to him prolonged dissipation was distasteful; and from this life of excitement he would often retire to Versailles; wandering there, for weeks, about the then deserted palace, still resplendent with remembrances of the *Grand Monarque*, or the solitudes of the *Trianon*, so full of sad memories of Marie Antoinette. I suppose he sought retirement to complete 'Pelham,' for it was published shortly afterwards. My mother received many letters from him while he was at Versailles; but he maintained a strict secrecy as to his work. On its appearance, he sent her a copy of it; saying he wished her to see he had not forgotten her, and how much he owed to her friendship and society.

No doubt, however, one motive for his frequent, often prolonged, and generally sudden, disappearances from the society of his friends, was his love of reading; which was, even then, remarkable. Much of his correspondence with my mother at that time related to the books he was studying; and contained his criticisms upon them, inviting hers in return. He also sent her, in almost every letter, verses which were never published. I remember his return from one of these solitary trips, upon my fifteenth birthday. He jestingly pretended that he had been consulting the stars about my future; and he handed me its horoscope

in a poem which he had signed 'Magus.' He took an interest in all our pleasures, like an elder brother. I don't know why we considered him so old and wise. I was not out: but sometimes my mother took me to dances at the houses of her intimate friends; and then he always danced with me—which I was very proud of.

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In the last chapter of his Autobiography my father has referred to these solitary sojourns at Versailles, and has given his own account of the motives of them. How his mind was then occupied, and what was the general tone of it, may be partly gathered from his correspondence with Mrs. Cunningham; who, on those occasions, jestingly addressed him as 'my dear Childe Harold,' a title suggested by his fits of dejection, which had for their concomitant an aversion to general society. He wrote to her, just before leaving France:—

Versailles, Tuesday.

My dear Friend,—I send my servant to the 'great city,' charged with sundry and manifold commissions: not the least important of which is the delivery of this note to you. I am delighted with my abode. I took my horse at 12 o'clock yesterday, and rode about the forest till 5, rejoicing in the air and sun like an escaped bird; and filled with the most sovereign contempt for all encaged starlings, who have not the privilege of being as free and uncaressed as myself. With Rousseau's 'Julie,' a map of Europe, Mill's 'Political Economy,' and pen, ink, and paper, I assure you I do not regret your gaieties at Paris; nor feel the want of that female society which, with your usual charity, you accused me of going to enjoy. So much for myself. Going into the country, as it distracts us from the crowd in which we are lost, recalls our wandering feelings and thoughts into ourselves; and therefore it always makes us exceedingly egotistical. Tell me what you think, see, and do. And yet I suppose it is all exactly the same as you have thought, seen, and done, for the last year. Life in cities (see what airs of superiority the country gives us!) is always so terribly monotonous. 'The beef of to-day,' says Canning in one of his parodies, 'is succeeded by the mutton of to-morrow; and, from the soup to the cheese, all is sameness and satiety.' I called on Mrs. Bathurst before I left, but did not see her. For this I was sorry, because we did not part on our usual terms of cordiality. She has been too kind to me for

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coolness to arise between us without any endeavour on my part to remove it. I have therefore tendered my adieux in writing, since I could not do so in person. It is more than likely that I shall only return to Paris for a day or two. I may, indeed, have to return to England for a short time. In fact, none of my plans are yet decided. When they are, you shall hear. Adieu. Pray write to me soon.

This letter is undated, but it must have been written within a few days of his return to England.

Pelham, in the passage I have quoted from the novel, describes the life lived by its author during his first visit to Paris. 'I drained,' he says, 'with an unsparing lip, whatever enjoyment that enchanting metropolis could afford.' And amongst its enjoyments he counts 'the feverish excitement of the gambling-house.'

A circumstance, trivial in itself, but not perhaps unimportant in its effect upon my father's character and life, may be mentioned in connection with this bit of autobiographical fiction.

Early one morning he returned to his hotel from a gambling-house in which he had been passing the last hours of the night. For the first time in his life he had played high : and, with the insidious good fortune so frequently attendant on the first steps along what would otherwise be the shortest and least attractive pathway to perdition, he had gained largely. The day was dawning when he reached his own rooms. His writing-desk stood upon a *console* in front of a mirror ; and, pausing over it to lock up his winnings, he was startled and shocked by the reflection of his face in the glass behind it. The expression of the countenance was not only haggard, it was sinister. He had risked far more than he could afford to lose ; his luck had been extraordinary, and his gains were great. But the ignoble emotions of the night had left their lingering traces in his face ; and, as he caught sight of his own features still working and gleaming with the fever of a vicious excitement, he, for the first time, despised himself.

It was then he formed a resolution that, be the circumstances of his future life what they might, no inducement, whether of need or greed, should again tempt him to become a gambler.

This resolution was never broken or relaxed. The origin of it was told me by my father, when I was myself a very young man; and I record it here because it throws some light upon events to be presently related. Possibly, a prudent investment of the winnings of that night may have founded, or largely increased, a fund which, by supplementing the proceeds of his incessant literary labour, and the interest on the small capital inherited from his father, afterwards enabled him to maintain, without serious debt, a rather expensive establishment during the first few years of his married life.

But it is remarkable that, notwithstanding his love of cards, his great aptitude for all games played with them, and the temptation, to which he must have been exposed when thrown entirely upon his own resources, of seeking now and then from the favour of chance some addition to his means less painfully acquired than the slow result of continual brain-work, he never, from the date of his marriage, either betted or indulged in games of hazard.

This, no doubt, was partly owing to the unsanguine nature of his disposition. For, though strong in resolution, he was weak in hope; and with great confidence in his own powers of exertion and endurance, he had an inveterate distrust of his luck. But it may also have been, and I think it was, an abstinence powerfully promoted by that sensitive and uncompromising self-respect which had been shocked and lowered when the sight of his own image in the warning glass determined him to resolve that his first experience of a gambler's sensations (even under their least unpleasant conditions) should also be his last.

CHAPTER IV.

‘WEEDS AND WILDFLOWERS.’ 1825. Æt. 22.

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DURING his first visit to Paris, in 1825, my father printed a little volume there, for private circulation only, under the title of ‘Weeds and Wildflowers,’ and consisting of four pages of prose, and ninety-eight of verse “meandering through an ample meadow of margin.” These blotting-paper pages of mingled prose and verse, in longprimer, stitched together in a green paper wrapper bearing the motto ‘*Per scopulos tendimus—ubi?*’ and rudely illustrated by a woodcut representing a ship sailing between rocks and ruins, were dedicated to Alexander Cockburn. The prose portion is a series of original maxims, so characteristic, and the best of them so felicitous, that I will here insert two or three as specimens of a mind in which thought and reflection were matured earlier than the more mechanical faculties of expression.

Your friends speak worse of you than your enemies.

With women, love is often nothing but the pride they feel at being loved.

Never be little in order to become great.

We are made so much more for reflection than for sensuality, that the mind can contain at the same time a dozen sciences, but only one passion.

Vanity only offends when it hurts the vanity of others.

One sees every day that one can never judge of a person by the relation of others. Yet by what else does posterity decide upon the characters of the dead?

There is a rank peculiar to England,—Acquaintance. One is, there, as great by whom one knows as by what one is.

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If you wish to have a firm friend, choose one who can do something better than yourself.

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There is no feeling of liberty like that of escape from half-friends.

‘The Tale of a Dreamer,’ written in 1824, was now printed in this collection of verses, with the motto ‘*O quam te memorem!*’ and another and shorter poem on the same subject addressed ‘To Thee’—the heroine of the Dreamer’s Tale. The poem of ‘Milton,’ written at Cambridge, also made its first appearance among ‘Weeds and Wildflowers.’ Of the other compositions in verse printed for the first and last time under this title, the longest and most important is ‘A Satiric Sketch’ of Almack’s, beginning with these lines:—

To Lady S. . . ., for cakes and cards,
Flock ancient lords on Wednesday nights;
While darkest blues and lightest bards
‘Refresh their souls’ at Lydia White’s.
But those who have the happier fate
To know the saints who guard its heaven,
Pass on through Almack’s holy gate,
About three quarters past eleven.

With the exception of a rather snappish rebuke to Rogers the poet, and an unnamed caricature of a banker’s wife notorious for her vulgarity, the satire is confined to its general reflections; and the personal portraits of Lady Cowper, Lady Jersey, Lady Ellenborough, Mrs. Norton (then Miss Sheridan), Lady Uxbridge, Madame de Lieven, Lady Grantham, Lady Gwydir, Lady Belfast, and Lady Exeter, are touched with all the gallantry appropriate to the subjects of them. But the only verses in this sketch which I think it worth while to quote here, on account of their biographical interest, are those which contain an allusion to Lady Caroline Lamb.

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The world, that mingles smiles with blame,
 Thy worth but poorly prized :
 For love is vice, and softness shame,
 When both are undisguised.
 But all thy woes have sprung from feeling ;
 Thine only guilt was not concealing ;
 And now, mine unforgotten friend,
 Though thou art half estranged from me,
 My softened spirit fain would send
 One pure and pitying sigh to thee.
 Though ' lips inspired ' have breathed the vow
 More warm than friendship to thine ear,
 Though many a voice be near thee now,
 More sweet, if haply less sincere,
 Yet well I know one tone at least
 Even of this desultory lay
 Will wake within thy silent breast
 The echoes of a dearer day ;
 And, saved from thoughts that seek the throng
 Whose thoughtless paths my footsteps flee,
One thought of thine shall still belong
 Ungrudged to memory and to me.

These stanzas are an evidence that the author of them had settled into the belief (and the same opinion was expressed by Rogers) that the passionate attachments of Lady Caroline were as innocent as they were mostly fickle. Writing, in friendly defence of her, verses which she herself was to read, he could not add the notorious fact that her proceedings were also the ebullitions of a flighty mind over which reason, in this direction, had no control. The tribute elicited two letters from Lady Caroline :—

I was ill (she says in the first), and have been thrown from my horse. Also my aunt, Lady Fitzwilliam, is dead. All of which prevented my sending you a letter I have begun—full of praise, but also of hints—upon your poems. You are really gifted with no small supply of natural genius. But study and stand by the great originals. Read the last 'Edinburgh' about Lord Byron. The faults of the present age, to my mind, are affectation, imitation,

and fear. If you write, do it from your heart, and then leave it, and correct it (as Cicero, I believe it is, says) nine years hence. As to my Tragedy, I will fully explain it the moment I am well enough. I have been cupped twice, and bathed, and done everything to: and yesterday, when riding, late, for the air—being weak—my beautiful black mare threw me. How I admire your ode to your horse! It is really beautiful. You are, like me, too fond of Lord Byron. Pray turn from the modern school. Stick to the old one, and write for, and from, yourself. Just going to Brocket.

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The second letter was written from Brocket a few days later:—

I should have answered your letter long ago, had I ever had an innate idea. But I am convinced there is no such thing. How, then, can I write? Even imagination must have some materials upon which to work. I have none. Passions might produce sentiment of some sort, but mine are all calmed or extinct. Memory—a waste, with nothing in it worth recording. Happy, healthy, quiet, contented, I get up at half-past four, ride about with H., and see harvestmen at work in this pretty confined green country; read a few old books; see no one; hear from no one; and occasionally play at chess with Dr. G., or listen to the faint high warblings of Miss R. This contrast to my *sometime* hurried life delights me. Besides, I am well. And that is a real blessing to oneself, and one's companions. When you were so kind to me, how ill, how miserable, I was! If there be a place of punishment hereafter, assuredly the lost souls must feel as I did then. Pray write to me as you wrote then; even though your opinion of me, and affection—boyish affection—be utterly changed. Your letters were then beautiful and soothing. I detest wit, and humour, and satire. I fear you are now given to all this, and have lost the freshness of youthful feeling, the noble sentiments, and the warm vivid hopes and aspirations of an uncorrupted and unworldly heart. I drew my Good Spirit, in Ada Reis, from you, as I then imagined you. Pray do not turn into a Bad Spirit. Here are my notes on your poems. I beg you a million excuses for their impertinence. I have not said how very beautiful I think many of them are. But I have marked what I don't like. Perhaps there is no reason for my not liking what I have marked. But my liking and disliking are always sincere. What are you writing now? May I not be allowed to know? Farewell. Give my adoration to the

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dear Sea ; whose every change I worship, and whose blue waves I long to dip in—provided two old women take me out again safely. Excuse this stupid letter, and write me a long and amiable one. Lady Dacre and Mr. Sullivan came over to see me yesterday. It is the first time I have seen anyone since my exile from home. To-morrow William Lamb says he will come. He has been at Hastings ; with which he was delighted, as far as scenery goes, and climate. But he felt dull there, knowing no one, and having nothing to do. Without wife, or Parliament, or trouble of any kind, he ought now to have found in perfect quiet the true enjoyment he pined for. Yet, if I mistake not, he is less happy than when plagued with these appendages. If there are two p's in that word, imagine one, and pray excuse my spelling. Yours with sincere interest, and disinterested attachment.

Lady Caroline speaks of the affection bestowed upon herself. With good reason she avoided touching on her own, for she could not have reflected with complacency on the part she had played in trifling with affections she exerted her blandishments to win. Nor would she have ventured on her half-reproachful admonitions to her former admirer for having 'lost the freshness of youthful feeling, and the warm aspirations of an uncorrupted and unworldly heart,' if she had been capable of perceiving that conduct like hers had the principal share in producing the effects she condemned.

These 'weeds and wildflowers' of 1825, though not published, flourished for a season upon drawing-room tables, at Holland House, and other fashionable resorts of the writers and readers of new books. So far as may be guessed from the number of letters and verses, expressing sympathy or remonstrance, which they elicited from fair correspondents chiefly anonymous, they would seem to have been noticed with some gentle curiosity by literary ladies old and young : a curiosity excited, perhaps, more by the author than his verses. Be that as it may, they certainly found their way to a favoured place in the fancy of a young lady whose name appears at the head of the following chapter.

CHAPTER V.

ROSINA WHEELER. 1825. Æt. 22.

IN the spring, or early summer, of this year my father returned to England. He carried with him a tumultuous consciousness of growing intellectual powers. His love of adventure and romance found no charm in the common conditions of a sedentary life ; and the bent of his disposition was to seek in action, rather than in literature, the occupation of his superabundant energies. He had grown up among the stirring echoes of those great battles which preceded the downfall of Napoleon and the resettlement of Europe. The most illustrious men of the age under whose influence he was born had achieved their reputation in war, or in the statesmanship of a time when every nation was in arms. In the popular imaginative literature of that age the grandeur of action was more celebrated than the charms of contemplation. The heroes of his favourite poets, Scott, Byron, and Campbell, were men of daring deed or romantic adventure. ‘Amadis of Gaul’ and the ‘Seven Champions of Christendom’ had been the cherished companions of his childhood ; Waterloo the first theme of his schoolboy song. Though no sportsman, he was a good rider, a good fencer, a good boxer. He delighted in danger for its own sake, and in every kind of bodily exercise. A soldier’s career was, at this time, more congenial than any other to his tastes. It was also the most attractive to his ambition : and immediately after his return to England he

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purchased a commission in the army,¹ with the full intention of seriously embracing that profession. But, notwithstanding the masculine vigour of his energetic nature, the sentimental and emotional side of it was femininely sensitive; and this had been stimulated to a morbid excitability when he left Paris with a restless unsatisfied heart, guided by an imagination eager to create for it those delightful illusions which are so often the bitter punishments of demanding too much from the poor realities of life.

He reached London on the evening of his arrival in England. His mother's last letter to him had been dated from Knebworth; and, supposing her to be still in the country, he called, on his way to his hotel, to inquire after her at her house in Upper Seymour Street. It happened that she was in town, and at home, but just going out. The meeting between mother and son was not the less warm for being unexpected. They had much to say to each other; much to ask and to tell.

'But I am under a particular promise,' said the mother, 'to go to Miss Berry's this evening, and I can neither go, nor stay, late. Do come with me. It will be such a pleasure. And we can continue our talk there.'

¹ Thus officially recorded:—

'Public Record Office, War Office.

'Craig's Court, August 24, 1826.

'Sir,—We have the honour to report for the information of His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, that the sum of four hundred and fifty pounds has been lodged in our hands for the purchase of an unattached Ensigny for Mr. Edward Lytton Bulwer. We have the honour to be, sir, your most obedient, humble servants,

'GREENWOOD COOKE.

'Lieut.-General Sir Herbert Taylor, G.C.B.,
&c., &c., &c.'

He was never appointed to any regiment, and, having married and settled down to literary occupations twelve months after his purchase of this commission, he retired from it by sale three years later, on January 25, 1829.

One circumstance biographically connecting this military impulse with the literary avocations which soon quenched it, may be mentioned here. In the previous year, 1825, Mr. Bulwer had been elected a member of the Athenæum Club, that being the first year of the Club's existence.

Though fatigued by his journey, and in no humour to appreciate the mild delights of a literary tea-party, her son dressed himself in haste, and accompanied her to the house of Miss Berry. There, in one of the rooms not yet invaded by other guests, they renewed their *tête-à-tête*; and, whilst thus conversing, Mrs. Bulwer Lytton suddenly exclaimed,—

‘Oh, Edward, what a singularly beautiful face! Do look. Who can she be?’

An elderly gentleman was leading through the room in which they sat a young lady of remarkable beauty, who, from the simplicity of her costume, appeared to be unmarried.

My father, thus appealed to, turned his head languidly; and, with a strangely troubled sensation, beheld (to use his own phrase) ‘his fate before him:’ in other words, his future wife.

This biography has now reached a point at which the story of my father's life necessarily includes, to some extent, the story of my mother's. The circumstances of her childhood and girlhood, as related by herself in her first correspondence with my father, were very unhappy. But the briefest mention of them will suffice to explain why they powerfully stimulated his interest in, and attachment to, Miss Wheeler; whilst at the same time they entered largely into the motives of my grandmother for objecting to her son's marriage.

Rosina Doyle Wheeler was at this time twenty-three years of age, just one year older than my father, and in the full blossom of a beauty remarkably brilliant. Her father, Francis Massy Wheeler, of Lizzard Connel, in the county of Limerick, was an Irish squire; who, at the age of seventeen, had married a very beautiful girl two years younger than himself. The natural result of this marriage between a boy of seventeen and a girl of fifteen was a separation, which took place after the birth of two children, both of them daughters. Of these two children Rosina was the younger. Mrs. Wheeler, to

whom the care of them had been consigned by the terms of her separation, went with her daughters to Guernsey ; where she lived for some time as the guest of her kinsman, Sir John Doyle, who was then Governor of that island. She had a violent temper ; which brought at last to an untimely end the friendly hospitalities of Sir John. She then went abroad, and settled eventually at Caen ; where she became the *bel esprit* of a little group of socialists and freethinkers, to the support of whose doctrines she devoted both her purse and her pen.

Rosina, *matris pulchræ filia pulchrior*, was now seventeen. She was gifted with personal attractions which, unfortunately for her, instead of increasing the affection, only excited the jealousy and dislike, of her mother. The wretchedness of a home in which she could find neither shelter nor affection rendered welcome to her any opportunity of even temporary absence from it. With Mrs. Wheeler's assent, she returned to Ireland on a visit to a lady, considerably older than herself, who was the most intimate, and for many years the most devoted, of her early friends. This lady, Miss Greene, was the daughter of an English family settled in Ireland since the time of Cromwell. Through her previous intimacy with, and long-continued attachment to, my mother, she eventually became connected with the circumstances of my father's domestic life, to an extent which will necessitate frequent mention of her name in the further course of this biography.

Rosina, at the time of her visit to the family of Miss Greene, had never seen her father. Shortly afterwards, however, an interview between them was brought about by their friends, with a hope that it might result in the establishment of their mutual relations on a more natural footing. That result was not attained by it. But Mrs. Wheeler, on hearing of the interview, refused to receive back her daughter ; who, when my father first saw her in London, had found there a temporary home in the house of her uncle. She had also found in him a generous protector and a judi-

cious friend: all the more needed because, in the meanwhile, she had survived both her father and her only sister.

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She wrote to me (says Miss Greene, in an unpublished memoir of her own life) about the acquaintances she had made in England with several literary people. Amongst others, she particularly mentioned Campbell, Miss Landon, and Lady Caroline Lamb. She seemed charmed with Campbell, and said how fatherly and kind he had been to her. But they soon quarrelled: I never heard about what. Miss Landon she spoke of very highly; and, indeed, sent me a note from that young lady which prepossessed me much in her favour.¹ For it was a most sensible remonstrance against excessive intimacy with Lady Caroline Lamb.²

At the house of Lady Caroline, or elsewhere, Miss Wheeler had been reading 'Weeds and Wildflowers.' They interested her: and the interest was increased by what she heard of their writer; who had, at this time, the reputation, more interesting to women than to men, of a good-looking, dandified and eccentric, but decidedly clever and ambitious, young man, from whose future career his friends expected great things; and who was, in the meanwhile, remarkably (in many respects agreeably) unlike other young men of his own age and class. The first letter she wrote to him, after the commencement of their acquaintance, was on the subject of these verses; and it flattered the vanity of the young author, who soon found in the society of his fair and appre-

¹ Miss Landon herself was then only seventeen.

² Of Lady Caroline Lamb Miss Wheeler wrote to Mr. Bulwer (shortly after the beginning of their acquaintance) on June 15, 1825:—"I do not deserve all the praises bestowed on me by Mr. Bulwer in the letter which Miss Spence has just sent me. My love for Lady Caroline Lamb is nothing but selfishness. What in this country is called propriety (but which is often nothing more than the would-be mask of heartlessness) long made me refuse to know her. It was by accident I became acquainted with her. To be so, and to love her, are one. Her very faults, which are but her own enemies (and on *that* account *alone* unpardonable), serve to make her virtues more conspicuous, as shades in a picture throw out the brighter tints. And if what Mr. Bulwer has so beautifully expressed, that "her only fault is not concealing," be not quite true, it is at least her greatest fault."

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ciative critic a fresh attraction to the house of their common friend, at which Miss Wheeler was a frequent visitor.

About this time (continues Miss Greene), my dear mother died, and my sister and I went to France. From Rosina, though I often wrote to her, I received not a single letter during our absence abroad. But, about a month after our return, she wrote me one of her old, clever, affectionate letters, telling me the cause of her silence. First, her sister had died (in Paris), and next, she herself had been occupied by the attentions of a young gentleman, whose mother, a widow lady, objected to their marriage.

Before I speak of the widowed mother's objections I must explain her son's state of mind at the time of his first acquaintance and subsequent marriage with Miss Wheeler. What he had felt, in all the freshness and purity of his boyhood, for the nameless heroine of the romance described in his Autobiography, it was impossible that he should ever feel again. And of this impossibility he was fully conscious. Once, and once only, when he was long past middle life, the old emotions were partially revived under conditions which recalled the youthful dream. But in the long interval he was driven to renounce all hope of anything like a renewal of the unfulfilled ideal love. This renunciation left in his inner life a void that continually tormented him; and it disposed him, not only to accept with premature gratitude, but to seize with impatient avidity, any apparent promise of happiness from the exercise of his affection on a lower range. His nature was indeed so constituted that affection, in some form or other, was the paramount condition of its happiness and peace. There are some characters in which the *besoin d'être aimé* is the strongest motive power of all their activities, intellectual as well as moral. His was one of them. Men of this character cannot live without loving and being loved. To them there is a charm in sympathetic female companionship unapproached, and unreplaced, by any friendship, however intimate and cordial, with persons of their own sex.

The character of the girl first loved by my father was probably as uncommon as the love he gave her, since her separation from him was fatal to a spirit so deep and tender that it could not survive a divided life. But what he felt for her must have owed much of its precocious intensity to the glow of an imagination too fervid to be quenched by the destruction of its first and fairest dreams. The less he was capable of renewing the romance of that early passion, the greater was his craving for the quiet tender sympathy only to be found in the affection of a woman. For this he still hoped, and this he was amply able to requite, though he at times spoke of himself as a blighted man who could offer nothing sufficient in exchange.

In what he now saw of Miss Wheeler there was much that was peculiarly calculated to invest her with a charm supplied by his imagination under the influence of these feelings. The effect of all her other gifts (and they were many) was enhanced by her remarkable beauty. He knew, from his own experience, that, in the world where it is ill at ease, a sensitive spirit often adopts a demeanour mistaken by superficial observers for the natural expression of a hard and shallow disposition; and he prided himself on not being a superficial observer. In her manner towards him there was something unconventional, which he interpreted as the artless manifestation of a frank, fearless, unsophisticated nature. The undisguised pleasure his attention seemed to cause her, and the powerful appeal of her worse than orphan condition to that compassionate sentiment by which, at all times, his heart was soonest touched and his judgment most easily misled, redoubled the force of the other motives, and had probably the largest share in enlisting his affections.

For Mrs. Bulwer Lytton the match had no attractions of any kind. Her pride, her prudence, her forebodings, and her motherly susceptibilities were all opposed to it. The paternal property was of course entailed upon the eldest brother,

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William ; and Edward, being the youngest of the three boys, had only inherited from his father an income of 200*l.* a year. This income was largely increased by the liberality of his mother, whose marriage settlements had reserved to her the unrestricted disposal of all that remained of the once large property of the Lyttons. But English parents are under no moral, and fortunately for them they are free from any legal, obligation to make special provision for the natural consequences of imprudent marriages contracted by their children in opposition to their wishes. General Bulwer, in his alliance with Miss Lytton, had contemplated the ultimate union of the Lytton with the Bulwer property in the line of his own family and name : and the eldest of his sons might naturally regard the wishes of his father as entitled to exercise considerable influence upon the intentions of his mother in the disposal of her property. Apart from the small provision made for him by his father's will, Edward had at this time no sources of income that were not entirely dependent either on his own exertions or on his mother's affection. He had been reared in habits of luxury not common to the younger sons of country gentlemen, and early initiated into all the pleasures and excitements which the world can offer to the combined demand of wealth and youth. He had as yet never known privation, never been pinched for money. Sensitively proud, he would have suffered intolerably from any position in life which left him unable to hold his head high, and look the world in the face with the most complete consciousness of being under no pecuniary obligation or liability to any man. His marriage with Miss Wheeler seemed to threaten and invite the evil, with the certainty that necessitous humiliations would be tenfold more bitter to him if a wife were involved in them.

His mother's sense of maternal property in him could hardly fail to take alarm as well as her prudence. Of her three sons, my father was the one to whom her heart had

been closest drawn by all the circumstances of his childhood. William, her first-born, was independent of her from the moment of his father's death. Henry, her second son, was the special favourite of his grandmother, with whom his early years were chiefly passed, and by whose affection he was assured of a liberal income during her lifetime, and the whole of her fortune after her death. Edward, a delicate and interesting child, was thus the last of the three boys left beside the widow's hearth. His education had been the chief interest of her life; and now, in a youth mature beyond its years, he was the confidant and adviser to whom she looked for counsel and comfort in all her little lonely troubles or undertakings. The intercourse between these two was on both sides so tender, and so unreserved, that the poor mother would not have been human had she contemplated without trepidation its sudden extension to another. It was natural that she should wish for some share in the selection of any person to be invested by her son with rights over his conduct, his affections, his very thoughts, to which hers must give way if the claims of the wife were opposed to those of the mother. It was equally natural that she should contemplate with repugnance and alarm his selection of Miss Wheeler for the helpmate of a life as yet barely begun.

Her own life was singularly quiet and dignified. It had been one long act of devotion and self-sacrifice to principles publicly repudiated and ridiculed by the only surviving parent of her future daughter-in-law. And, indeed, the very circumstances which helped to deepen my father's interest in Rosina Wheeler—her forlorn childhood, and unguided girlhood—only suggested to my grandmother additional reasons for mistrusting the wisdom, and fearing the consequences, of his growing attachment. Thus, for the first and last time of his life, and in reference to the most important action of it, his relations with his mother gradually assumed an attitude of reluctant but resolute opposition to

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BOOK her wishes: and from this opposition he suffered acutely in
 V. what was to him, not an affection only, but a religion.¹

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A knowledge of the divergent views of mother and son, and the motives which influenced each, will throw light on the correspondence that grew out of the course of events. The letter which follows was written by my father in reply to his mother's first remonstrances on the subject of his increasing intimacy with Miss Wheeler.

My dearest Mother,—Your eloquent letter only convinces me that even the most sensible persons may sometimes err through prejudice in the harshness of their judgment. . . . It is not when she is unjustly attacked that I can cease to befriend, and defend, her. Believe me, my dearest mother, I do not say this from any selfish feeling. I have no desire, no design, to marry her. And I promise you on my honour, as a man, and my duty as a son, that I will not marry without your consent. This is due to you for all you have done for me, all you have been to me; and this at least you may depend upon. After this assurance, however, may I not plead with you for justice to Rosina's character? Judge her, not as a woman ever likely to be connected with you, but as you would judge the character of Miss H—— or Miss C——. I am going to Bocket to-day, and shall ride there on my new horse. Can I turn the other out to grass at Knebworth? I must be in town to-morrow, in order to get to Cheltenham on Tuesday. If I can call at Knebworth, I will. If I do not, it will be because the ride proves too long for my horse, not for myself. I go to Bocket mainly to ask Lady Caroline to speak to Murray about a poem I think of publishing.

¹ Many years later, in a letter to Lady Osborn (of condolence on the death of her mother) he wrote:—'All that I have met in the world of sympathy, generosity, and faithful friendship, is identified with the name of Mother. And the thought of that loss seems to me like the taking away of the candle from a child who is terrified at the dark. It is a protection and a safety gone, a dreary solitude begun; and all we have left is to wish the night were gone and the morrow come.' He never ceased to love what she had loved, or to venerate what she had revered. Not over his childhood only, but his manhood also in its ripest maturity, her maternal influence resembled that of Julia Procilla over the mind of Agricola. '*Mater raræ castitatis: in hujus sinu indulgentiaque educatus, per omnem honestarum artium cultum pueritiam adolescentiamque transegit.*'—Tacitus, *Agricola*, iv.

The visit to Brocket had doubtless a stronger motive than literary consultation with Lady Caroline Lamb: for Miss Wheeler was there. But it was for the purpose of parting from her in a manner which, without wounding their friendship, would sufficiently dispel any matrimonial expectations founded upon it, that he then sought her. Of Mrs. Bulwer Lytton's strong objection to her son's marriage with Miss Wheeler, that young lady was fully aware; and she also knew that Mr. Bulwer's income was almost entirely dependent on his mother's generosity. From every point of view, therefore, the young lady's self-respect was entitled to claim for herself the regulation of her further intercourse with a gentleman placed in this position. The cessation or the continuance of that intercourse (and, in the latter case, the terms of its continuance) primarily rested with her.

Up to this point, my father had believed, erroneously no doubt, but sincerely, that neither Miss Wheeler's feelings nor his own were in any danger of seriously suffering from the pledge he even then felt able to give to his mother. But, having given that pledge which bound his honour as a son, he could no longer trifle with a connection to which his honour was not yet committed as a lover. And, when he felt that, to himself at least, his intimacy with Miss Wheeler was becoming dangerously dear, he resolutely plucked himself away from it. From Cheltenham, where, on leaving Brocket, he sought change of thought in change of scene, he wrote to his mother, 'God knows that, in spite of that great dejection and despondency of spirit which make me at times so silent and at others so querulous, I do feel most tenderly attached and grateful to you. Even now, I have sacrificed much that is dear to me from the heartfelt desire that in all the great events of my life I may secure your approbation, and that in no event of it you may ever be ashamed of the kindness and affection you have shown me. God bless you, mother, dearest mother!'

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Shortly after this, he was again at Paris; and busily occupied in the subjugation of a feeling which duty, reason, and every instinct of self-preservation now warned him to resist. Unfortunately for the success of his efforts, however, he was pursued at Paris by 'messengers which feelingly persuaded' him that the happiness, possibly even the social prospects, of a woman whom he tenderly esteemed, were involved in the issue of what he had till then regarded as a 'flirtation' dangerous to no feelings or interests but his own.

In that belief he again returned to England in the beginning of April 1826. Meanwhile, the months of February and March, passed mainly at Versailles, were a not unproductive period of his literary life.

CHAPTER VI.

THE 'NOUVELLE HÉLOÏSE.' 1826. *Æt.* 22

THE state of my father's feelings when he returned to Paris unfitted him to find there the recreation he was in search of. The pleasures of the place were no longer new to him : but social intercourse is so much easier and livelier in Paris than in London that, had his mind been unburdened and his heart unoccupied, he would probably have derived from the increased familiarity of his relations with that old French society (in whose conversation and manners a refined and comprehensive mode of life was then flowering out), many enjoyments more perfect than those of the enchanted curiosity with which he had first entered it. As it was, he could not now meet his old French friends of the Faubourg without embarrassment and reserve. The plans of the Irish Abbé, so far as they concerned his English *protégé*, had broken down ; which is what commonly happens with the plans we gratuitously form for the welfare of those whose destiny is unconnected with our own by any natural relationship. For beneath the surface of every man's life there are unalterable facts imperfectly perceived, or not perceived at all, by his disinterested well-wishers ; and, like sunken rocks in an unsounded sea, what is hidden shatters the benevolent purposes put forth on his behalf by the officious providence of friends. To my father the house of the Larochejaqueleins could no longer be what it had been. For some part of the charm of what it had been

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was in the chance of what it might be. But Hecuba was now nothing to him, nor he anything to Hecuba. General society only aggravated the inward trouble from which it failed to distract him. When the mind is absorbed by a great idea, a great passion, or a great anxiety, incessant intercourse with those to whom its pre-occupation is unknown soon ceases to be tolerable; and, from the fear of being burdensome to others, my father found company an increasing weariness to himself. In this condition the congenial solitudes of Versailles attracted him even more powerfully than before; and thither he betook himself.

The growth of confidence between new friends may always be traced in a rising succession of the subjects to which it is gradually extended. It passes from things trivial to things serious, and sometimes, at last, from the serious to the sublime. At first it plays in a light joyful wonder over its newly-discovered community of tastes and feelings about places, persons, books, and the lesser occupations of life. But by degrees it deepens into an intimate interchange of communications about sentiments past and present, love affairs, and the experiences of the heart: and, if it endures, the consummation of it embraces the higher secret aspirations of the soul, religious ideas, spiritual doubts or yearnings, even the dim outlines of unattainable ideals which seem to have a common origin in the intercourse they illumine and exalt. This kind of confidence is sweetest and least selfish when it exists between two persons of opposite sexes who have great sympathy, but no passion, for each other; and the earlier stages which mark the growth of such a confidence are apparent in the letters written at this time from Versailles by my father to Mrs. Cunningham in Paris. For which reason these letters also indicate, in a livelier manner than any less unconscious record, the general course of his thoughts and occupations in the suburban retreat to which he had now fled.

Edward Bulwer to Mrs. Cunningham.

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Versailles: February 1826.

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Love has often an interest to beguile, to abandon, to betray. But the interest of Friendship is constancy; and its very existence depends upon its truth. While I am writing on this subject, let me confess to you that I am glad you did not shew me the verses you mention. To you, who are so superior to most women, I should not like to talk as I would to those who are immeasurably your inferiors in all the attributes which are, to me, the most attractive of your too-attractive sex. Do you forgive my frankness? Or do you laugh at me for my simplicity? Answer my first question in the affirmative, and you shall have full liberty to answer the last as you please.

You doubt not but that I shall marry some dissipated and worldly woman. Never! And that is one reason why I shall probably not marry till late in life—supposing, what is very unlikely, that I ever shall be *late in life*. My mother, whose parental affection is mixed, perhaps, with a more than common quantity of maternal pride in her offspring, is anxious that I should make a match worldly at least as regards its promotion of that wonderful career which her kind imagination has created for me in the days to which I may never attain. I am not only too dependent on her generous kindness, but also far too grateful for it, ever to make a marriage she would condemn. But, at least, a negative liberty is left to me; and I shall employ it. Love—I mean that of the soul, not of the senses—is dead to me for ever. The feelings which are early unfolded are soon blighted. And how shall *such* feelings bloom again? Like the burnt child, we shrink from the flame that has scorched us. And, when I perceive in myself the growth of any passion that promises to be real, I do not rest till I have destroyed it to the very root. Once only, of late, I have been in danger. But to the young and pure heart which has never awakened from the repose of its innocence, that heart would indeed have been an unworthy offering which has survived its best emotions, and sacrificed the freshness of youth above a grave in which passion has buried all that could save it from the premature satiety of age. You are laughing at my sentiment! And it is that laugh, and your own indifference, which probably preserve me from the danger I might otherwise have found in you. Laugh on, then, and preserve

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yourself from the poisonous perfume of poetical flowers, and the feverish contagion of romantic reflections.

Send me your sonnet, I implore you. Nothing would refresh me so much as poetry. I mean poetry by anyone else ; for I am surfeited with my own, in spite of its exceeding and ineffable beauties ! I have just finished the first part of a poem¹ which merits the incredible sum of money Mr. Murray will doubtless decline to give me for it. It is a tale to suit the day. Ireland the scene. Full of rebels, banshees, and scaffolds : interspersed with various and profound observations, satirical and political, upon the state and government of that peaceable little province. But I long, eagerly, for your sonnet, and shall feel seriously disappointed, if it does not come in your next note. In the meanwhile, I wander through the forest, which has a great many crooked, as well as straight, walks ; cautiously turning into a new path whenever (which is rarely) I see a human being approaching. Brought up from my childhood to love solitude, I still cling to nature as to a mother. But *le vrai livre de la nature est pour moi le cœur ; et la preuve que j'y sais lire est dans mon amitié pour vous. Adieu !*

This letter elicited an exceedingly sensible answer :—

Mrs. Cunningham to Edward Bulwer.

Paris : February 1826.

My dear Childe Harold,—Your letter, just received, relieves my mind. I had great doubts whether, in your Diogenes mood, you would ever think of sending to the Post Office. But, as you have done so, I shall venture to reply. Your letter is now, according to your wish, consuming in the most wonderful of all elements. But I cannot agree with you about many things in it. You will love again, and be very vexed at yourself for it. Your lost love will fade into the past. As, however, you do not mean to marry till your hair is gray, our friendship may last ; for I think a man's wife should be his only female friend. And by that time I shall be dead. What do you think of St.-Preux ? His argument with Lord Edward, on suicide, is well written. Julie had an excellent idea of Platonic love, had she not ? How could she live so long with her lover under the same roof with that nasty old husband of hers ? Walmer is my detestation. I always fancy him in a cocked hat, and square-toed

¹ *O'Neil, the Rebel.* See Book V., chap. i.

shoes, with huge buckles. It is not true to nature. How good of you to spare me so many thoughts! I am obliged to others for the expression of my own feelings. I shall never cease thanking Lord Byron for his beautiful descriptions of love and friendship. Why, when I can so feel, cannot I so write?

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Edward Bulwer to Mrs. Cunningham.

Versailles: February 1826.

As for 'Julie,' with which I have been exceedingly bored and amused at the same time, I think both the hero and the heroine insufferable. St.-Preux, with his mawkish and whining declamations upon virtue, and Julie, with her sentimental sensuality at one time, and her heartless perfection at another. Don't talk to me of the descriptions of love. There is no love in it. But, alas, to those who have felt passion, what can the description of it bring but disappointment?

What detestable paper one gets at Versailles! My servant will convey to you this proof of the truth of that profound observation. I admire your galloping observation upon fire. It is, indeed, the most wonderful of all elements. And I have sat thinking of it for hours; but my thoughts were like the 'passages' in Gray's humorous description of Gothic architecture. 'They led to nothing.' Let me, however, draw from it one comparison. The Religious Metaphysicians have said, 'But this mysterious entity, the soul, which has lived so palpably within you, whither can it fleet after your death? You do not conceive that it evaporates.' Well, I take my answer from the fire. You afford it materials upon which to exist, and it does exist. It gives animation and life to the matter upon which it preys. It warms, pervades, vivifies all around it. But while it glows, it destroys its own *palpable* existence. It consumes the body that supports it. And, when its material subsistence is gone, I ask, with the Religious Metaphysicians, 'Where does it go, itself?' It goes to mingle with the other elements. There it preserves its inspiring and inflammable qualities. Anon it is attracted by a new substance. Upon this it seizes, and then it vivifies, blazes, and destroys, as before. So with the soul. As to my poem, it will not be published till May. But you know I have printed a few others,¹ for particular friends only; and they will be upon your table in a few days. I suppose I must come to 'the great city' in the course

¹ *Weeds and Wildflowers.*

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V.

1825-26

of the week. And, for fear of losing my way, I shall (to borrow a French idiom) *find* myself at your house the evening of my arrival.

You say, if I could but 'know your singular position,' and express various other hints and innuendoes very irritating—not to the curiosity of an acquaintance, but to the interest of a friend. How is it that there are so many mysteries still between us? Most of my secrets you, with your quick penetration, will discover in the poems I shall soon send you. All other revelations left incomplete may be made in prose. I wish I could write something amusing. But I am dull, dejected, lifeless. And, if your letter had not roused me into something like pleasure, I should have lacked the mental energy to lift my looks from a large closely-printed quarto now before me. You will not be surprised to hear that it has been open for the last three hours at page 49, when I tell you that it is 'Sinclair on the Revenue.'

What beautiful letters you write! Lady Caroline writes well, but not so naturally. French women, in general, write the best, particularly when their imagination is excited. I have some letters from an uneducated French girl which astonish me by their intelligence and beauty. Pray give me some more poetry. Your inspirations charm me. One word, however, I can't read. At which I am exceedingly discomposed. Have you read L. E. L.'s poetry? She is only eighteen, and possesses the same extempore flow. I admire your prophetic wisdom, when you so safely contradict me about love, and tell me I shall think differently of it at thirty. I began the world at sixteen.¹ That is five years before anyone else. Consequently I am, in fact, very nearly thirty now. For it is events, not years, that age the mind. Am I like any other young man, just of age? *J'ai vécu beaucoup en peu d'années. Et c'est le chemin des passions qui m'a conduit . . .* alas, I dare not add, to Philosophy, but to a state resembling that silence after storm in which we shrink from the turbulence of emotion, and covet the repose of insensibility. What a beautiful play is the 'Misanthrope' of Molière! I know not how many times I have read it. Was Célimène's final decision the right one? To come, however, to a person very different from Célimène—your liking of society, and mine of solitude, convince me how much gentler and more perfect is the practical philosophy of women than that of men. There must be some time for those who are of your sex, as well as for those who are of mine, when they feel, and sicken at, the hollowness, the insincerity, the sameness of the world. But you do not suffer these feelings to

¹ The date of his Ealing adventure.

revolt you too far against it. You force yourselves into a wise reconciliation to its defects. You do not 'chafe because of the ungodly.' We, when disappointed, yield at once to the bitter impressions that disappointment leaves upon our character. The world has betrayed us, and we fly to solitude for refuge from the resentful sense of that betrayal. Fools that we are ! the passions, which were our real seducers and betrayers, still pursue and possess us. And it is not in solitude that we can escape from ourselves.

CHAP.
VI.

ÆT. 22

The opinion of the 'Nouvelle Héloïse' expressed in this letter is more fully recorded in one of my father's note-books written at the same time.

Rousseau's 'Julie.'

Versailles : 1826.

Celebrated books, like celebrated persons, generally disappoint us. Reality never equals the imagination. This, with me, was the case in reading the 'Nouvelle Héloïse.'

It is the first volume only which is dangerous. Nothing can equal the beauty of the style. It is too beautiful to be natural. There is too much point and period. The remaining volumes are somewhat tedious. It is a bathos to begin with love, and continue and conclude with friendship. The characters are all unnatural. Very great geniuses generally draw from themselves, or from ideas peculiar to themselves. Hence their ideal creations, like themselves, are uncommon, and to the world they seem unnatural. 'Julie' begins with great sensuality, and ends with great sentiment. The two letters of St.-Preux, the one before and the one after the fulfilment of his passion, are masterpieces of style. And the latter is even natural. But, as for the first . . . Who ever sat down at such a moment, to write a letter to his mistress ? What ! with the heart beating, the hand trembling, the senses confused, the mind bewildered, half-delirious, every thought lost in emotion,—sit down to write a letter ? Impossible. The character of St.-Preux is feeble, and irresolute. This gives him an appearance of susceptibility which during the *premières amours* and at the age of twenty-four, is interesting and delightful ; but which becomes exceedingly tiresome and drivelling when the passion has subsided, and the man is thirty. Nothing could be more canting and insipid than his sickly and eternal declamations upon Virtue.

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Lord Edward Bomston is a great, and a very odd, character. Nor would he have been unnatural, except in the completeness of his virtues, but for the singular incidents from which Rousseau has thought proper to construct the account of his life. A man of strong mind may be violently in love. And Lord Edward is supposed to be violently in love with Lauretta. He flies from Rome to England to avoid her; and from England to Rome to see her again. This also a man of strong mind might do. But only once or twice. Lord Edward does it continually for several years. This a man such as Bomston is portrayed would never have done. He would have decided one way or the other. And when we reflect on his constant occupations, his pursuits in the army, the House, the Cabinet, this irresolution (generally the friend of love, because it is the offspring of idleness) appears still more unlikely. But is he so violently in love? No. Here is another contradiction. What man violently in love would suffer another to take away his intended, shut her up in a convent, and, on hearing of it, say nothing, do nothing, express no grief, no resentment, caress the man who did it, and sit down to write a cold letter to another, inclosing a sketch of a pavilion?

Walmar also is so far unnatural that no man possessing a profound knowledge of human nature would have exposed his wife to the risk she runs by living in the same house with St.-Preux. She was, it is true, exceedingly good; but she was also exceedingly susceptible. St.-Preux was her first lover. His love had not been platonic or unsatisfied. He, himself, is still in love. Julie, Walmar acknowledges, still loved him (though very innocently, as he wisely observes), and the same senses which have transgressed duty before were certainly liable to the transgression of it again. All this by a man of warm feelings might have been disregarded; and by a man ignorant of the world it might have been unperceived. But Walmar is neither the one nor the other. Cold, not carried away by romance, deeply inquiring into human nature, he was the last man naturally capable of sanctioning such an arrangement. As it was, Julie was terribly in danger; and with no other man than St.-Preux would she have been safe.

Julie's is intolerable. A more odious paragon than Clarissa, a sort of Hannah More, an epistolary schoolmistress, always correcting, advising, encouraging, and doing right. God defend me from reading again the letters about her marriage. And then, she is a gourmand. Absolutely a gourmand. And her death! Dressed

and tricked out, flowers and lace. That may be forgiven; but not her theatrical discourses, her gaiety, her very long speech to the minister, and the snug little dinner she pressed them to eat. She talks about the dishes; finds, yes, absolutely finds an appetite herself, gets up, refuses the *blanc de volaille*, gormandises over some fish, and 'finds it good.' Does anyone find such a death-scene affecting?

CHAP.
VI.

ÆT. 22

Unfortunately the concluding pages of this note are torn out of the book from which I have copied it. Its remarks upon the character of St.-Preux suggest a question I shall not attempt to answer, but which it might perhaps be worth while to follow out in any critical survey of sentimental fiction: Why is it that in the greatest love-tales of French literature (such as 'Manon Lescaut' and the 'Nouvelle Héloïse') the hero is generally the weak, and the heroine the strong, character? It is not so in the corresponding department of English fiction. It is not Clarissa in all her virtue, it is Lovelace in all his vice, who is the really strong and commanding character of Richardson's great romance. Lovelace is terrible; the lovers of Manon and Julie are only contemptible. The same unfailing virility is conspicuous in the heroes of my father's most sentimental fictions, as regards the manifestations of their characters under the influence of love; and it equally distinguishes the love-poetry of Byron from that of De Musset. But from the love-poems and novels of our contemporary literature this masculine attribute has almost disappeared. What are the social or intellectual causes of the change?

CHAPTER VII.

RETURN TO ENGLAND. 1826. Æt. 22.

Edward Bulwer to Mrs. Cunningham.

Versailles: February 25, 1826.

BOOK
V.
1825-26

MANY thanks for your admonitory caution to advertise you of my coming, beforehand. I am only waiting in Versailles to finish four or five books I have to read with some attention. I shall then return to Paris for five days. And then . . . then? I am like one of the leaves I now see before my window, whirled away by the wind, without an aim, without a use; its destination unknown, its end unregarded.

Two sides of your letter are about that phantasmagoria of your imagination, that Lady Mary; whose birth, parentage, and life, are only to be found in your luxuriant fancy. The respect due to her as a creation of yours makes me desire, like Molière's doctors, to put an end to her in the most delicate and orthodox manner. Need I again remind you of what I have so often told you, about my mother's wishes and my own feelings on the subject of matrimony? With neither the one nor the other would such an alliance be in any wise reconcilable. I am too proud to marry for money; too poor to marry without it. And to marry for love, I have already loved too well. Lady Marys, though rarely rich, are generally extravagant; and as for *this* Lady Mary of yours . . . Well, now, is not her epitaph becomingly written? Dead she is, and buried with due decorum. *Requiescat in pace!* But may she find no resurrection in the hereafter of our correspondence.

Talking of resurrection (excuse blots, by the way), my course of thought and reading have led me lately into some of the most deserted regions of metaphysics. I was beginning to think I could deduce from proofs, not, indeed, complete, but far more cogent in their suggestion than any I have found among the books I am

reading, the existence of an eternal, perfect, and *provident* Creator. Yesterday, whilst I was absorbed in the meditation of this idea, *voilà mon Abbé qui arrive*. I made him stay the evening; and we sat up all last night discussing this question. Never before did I hear a priest argue so fairly, or evince such logical precision and freedom from cant and sophistry. No, nor yet such profound erudition. He has given me new lights; which, if here and there they reveal new difficulties, have at least illuminated the whole subject, and indicated new pathways through it; though not, perhaps, exactly in the direction along which his own lamp leads him.

But see how I am talking with you, just as if you were, not only a man, but a man superior to most men in elevation of thought and range of research! Well, the greatest compliment a man can pay to a woman is to remember that her mind is in many respects equal, in some superior, to his own. And this because men fancy that women are not to be reasoned with. All folly! But then, men are such fools.

Long letters from England! Possible that I shall go to Russia instead of Switzerland. Lady C. Stanhope to be married, they say, to the Duke of Newcastle, a widower with children. I am obliged to give up the gardens. English people beginning to come here. You may imagine what they are, when I tell you that they seem the refuse of those in Paris; of whom the greater number are the refuse of those in England.

The *projets de voyage* referred to at the close of this letter had no result. My father did not visit Switzerland till some years later; and Russia he never visited at all.¹ But in the spring of 1826 he had abundant cause to crave from any new and distant scene even a temporary release from the contemplation of his actual position. He stood now at the parting of the ways: but not, like Hercules, with complete freedom to choose between them: and all the letters written by him at this time reveal the increasing agitation of his mind.

¹ His common-place books for the year 1826 contain copious notes upon Russian history and society. They were probably made in view of this projected visit to St. Petersburg; and some of them may perhaps have been utilised in the composition of his fourth novel *Devereux*, published three years later, in 1829.

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Within a few days after the date of his last letter to Mrs. Cunningham he was again at Paris: this time, upon his way back to England; and in a state of mind painfully indicated by the following note.

Edward Bulwer to Mrs. Cunningham.

Paris: (undated) 1826.

Your kind and touching note has hurt me while it flattered. Believe me capable of anything but coldness of heart. The fact is, I am just now in a state of great and increasing anxiety. Ask me the cause, and, if this will ensure your forgiveness of the effect, I will tell you what I have confided to no one else—not even to my mother, not even to Cockburn; as regards whom you do me injustice in supposing that I do not love him. I feel for him the warmest, the liveliest, affection. I admire him immensely, and love him heartily, unreservedly. It is not from want of confidence that I have not told him what I do not tell you; but from a dislike of talking about my own affairs, and an idea that the manner in which they affect me can have no interest for anyone else. How can you expect me to come to you all ‘nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles,’ when I am quivering from the strain of an internal struggle which inflames every unamiable feeling? But never, my dear friend, shall I forget you. Never shall I cease to think of you with interest, with tenderness, with unalterable friendship. Would that these feelings could change my nature, and make me more worthy of your esteem! God bless you, now and for ever. I shall see you to-morrow.

On that favourite Andalusian horse which receives special mention in his Autobiography, he now commenced his homeward journey; riding all the way from Paris to Dieppe, and from Dieppe to Calais and Boulogne. His Parisian friend, who had tried to laugh him out of this project, wrote to him, on the second day of its execution, the following letter:—

My dear Childe,—I know not if you have ever felt, on the day of the departure of some dear friend, when your thoughts are mostly occupied by regrets, that, if you hear his name unexpectedly mentioned by some stranger, it causes you a sensation of sharp pain.

CHAP.
VII.

Æt. 22

Yesterday, at the Opera, I heard your name mentioned. You were met on the Boulevards, when I fancied you trotting away on your road to Dieppe. I bravely denied the fact. You wicked little man, to make me tell a lie! But you were right. Love should claim your last moments, undisturbed. I am dreadfully *maussade* to-day. Not cold, or callous; but feelingly alive to all impressions—headache, heartache, and a thousand aches—all because the sun does not shine, and it is cold, and it rains. The servants have not lit the fires, because it was hot yesterday. I do hate my carcass! It gives so much trouble, and *will* feel all these things. After all, it is really more disagreeable than one's soul. Under the impression of our adieux, I send you some lines. Dear Child, what a day for your Quixotic ride! If you have no Dulcinea with you, I pity you. You must be the thin man at the inn; not the stout one. I can tell you no news. The world is as dull as possible. The Duke of Devonshire goes to Russia. He told me so yesterday. I am sure, ambitious though I am, I should not like to go there as his wife. It is a horrid country. We hear it is to be deluged with blood; and the coronation ceremonies celebrated by executions. The rival Duchesses quarrel, as usual, about their cavaliers. That little mischievous sprite, who caused the famous duel, is certainly (in spite of her teeth, for they are bad) the most *piquante*, *séduisante*, little imp I ever saw.¹ The lovely Ida is still very sad.² *Le monde d'abîme*. I pity her, and I believe her only sin is being too good to cope with them. Adieu! If you are safe in your inn, be grateful, and write to me.'

He did write: and I subjoin the letters which describe the course of this 'Quixotic ride.'

Edward Bulwer to Mrs. Cunningham.

Rouen: April 17, 1826.

Your letter, which I read for the first time last night, has occupied the whole of my attention during the stormy weather of to-day. Pigott, who left Paris with me (for fear I should lose either my way or my spirits without his superintendence), is the sole cause of my not having answered it sooner. When I write to the few who

¹ The Duchesse de Firmacon, whose father was Talleyrand's brother.

² The Duchesse de Guiche, Count D'Orsay's sister.

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engross my better thoughts and feelings, I dislike the proximity of other people. There is something infectious in common characters. One catches their insipidity. Whilst addressing you let me have no companion but Remembrance, no interruptions but the thoughts which it recalls. There are things in your letter which perplex and confuse me. I beseech you to explain them more fully. All half-confidences are more unsatisfactory than none. You may be sure that I will send to the post-office at Dieppe directly I get there. Your letter can then, I hope, be answered more fully. As to your female friend (of the particulars of whose treachery I am of course profoundly ignorant), I can only trust that in no case, for the future, you will expect perfect friendship from your own sex. Two friends are rarely met with; two women friends, never. Except in 'Julie!'

My own, and true friend (true since we are of different sexes), you accuse me of having suffered a coolness to grow between us. Was it, in the first place, my fault? If you say 'yes,' then are there no causes for it in particular circumstances which you well know? I will tell you moreover another cause; which is one reason of my increasing dislike to society. It is a painful sense of my own unfitness for it. One year has altered me so much in person and in mind—has rendered me so little amiable, or even tolerable—that I never enter a room without the idea that I am going to be still more disliked, and never leave it without the impression that my expectation was well founded. Is this vanity? It is certainly not self-confidence. It is doubly tiresome of you to talk to me of walks in St.-Germain forest, and other things which, even in *badinage*, you would not have hinted at, if I were not on the eve of quitting France.

This has been to ordinary mortals a terrible day. But I have one exemption from the ordinary ills of mortality. I rarely or never catch cold. Rain and wind are congenial to me. At this moment, I am dripping with wet, for I have sent on my luggage, and have no change of clothes. But this is not foolhardiness. It is not from physical causes that my health ever breaks down. I thrive on fatigue, and hardship strengthens me. But in cities, amidst quiet and luxury, I am pursued by those worst of all diseases—remembrance and regret. I thank you for the partiality of your compliment to my poetry; but I feel that it is not as a poet I am to fulfil the end of my existence. Verse is the faculty which for the last four or five years I have least cultivated and esteemed. I shall cultivate and esteem it more, however, if it gains me the approbation

of minds like yours. Farewell, my dear friend. My thoughts are with you. I reach Dieppe to-morrow ; and shall receive, and answer, your letter before I am on the sea. Amidst the sombre apprehensions of the future, and the bitter recollections of the past, it is one consolation that you have deemed me deserving of your esteem. I shall often look upon your ring, and rejoice on the emblem it presents to me. For there, at least, our hands are clasped upon the symbol of Eternity.

Abbeville: April 19, 1826.

My dear and forgetful Friend,—I waited one day and a half at Dieppe in the hope of receiving your expected letter. Finding that it did not arrive, I at length remounted, and pursued my solitary way to Calais : an additional journey, quite unforeseen by me, and only recompensed by the additional health I derive from it. Of course, on reaching Dieppe, I was informed that no steam-vessel was then plying : that the last sailing-boat bound for Brighton had remained fifteen days at sea ; that no others would make a similarly short and delightful voyage for ten days ; and that, if time was no object to me, I might wait at Monsieur Petit's London Hotel till the first of June, in full confidence that on that day the fine and famous steam-vessel called the '*Espérance*' would leave Dieppe at 8 o'clock in the morning, and reach Brighton at 6 the same evening. An *espérance*, however, so long delayed, was not likely to make my stomach, though it might make my heart, sick. And so, *me voici* at Abbeville.

My writing will puzzle you, and . . . There again ! another blot ! Good heavens, was there ever such ink, such pens, such paper, as those produced at Abbeville by the *Tête de Bœuf* ? If I were autocrat of France, letters should be written only upon vellum, and no one should scribble with any but crowquills. Mozart wrote his music on gold-edged foolscap. Rousseau stitched his '*Héloïse*' with rose-coloured ribbon. Lord Byron wrote his *billets-doux* on paper of the most delicate pink. And shall *our* correspondence be recorded, like that of a Tomkins or a Smith, upon this vile material ? Let us at least rejoice in the reflection that our friendship has no need of the auxiliaries of the imagination. The intimacy which detects no blemish in the character will heed no blot upon the paper ; and, however ungracefully they be traced, the words of truth and affection could not be more precious were they inscribed in letters of gold. Pray what are you doing ? Does the

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Bois of to-morrow succeed to the *Tuileries* of to-day? And, whilst I am courting nature upon the flat roads of France (where she only reveals herself in the form of ploughed fields and thin sheep) are you daily finding out the truth of Bacon's beautiful sentence (which Byron has so gracefully stolen) that 'Talk is but a tinkling cymbal, the resorts of men but a gallery of pictures, and society a solitude in which there is no love?' Have you seen my long cousin?—that six feet of stupidity (as long and dull as one of Mr. Southey's poems; whose frankness and simplicity of character make me love him, nevertheless, like a brother. So true is one of my maxims that, to be loved, we should not display our more dazzling qualities. One may *esteem* the strong, but one *loves* the weak. This maxim, however, refers only to friendship; and that again, the friendship only which is commonest between men. Perhaps, like all feelings which pretend to spring from the heart, vanity is the main source of it. I am near my conclusion. I told you, mine own friend, that I would write again to you before I left France. I have kept my promise. This letter seems to me, however, both flippant and yet dull. But it shall be like the bird whose wanton roving through the day returns at evening with a true and steady flight to its invariable resting-place. Idly and pertly my thoughts have wandered. But this last expression of them is serious, earnest, and sincere; for it bears to you the assurance of my lasting remembrance and unalterable regard.

Boulogne: Wednesday, April 24, 1826.

My letter (confound the ink!) written from Abbeville has travelled with me here. Having written it too late for the post from that town, and being unwilling that so precious a composition should be lost by the carelessness of any servant to whom I might entrust it, I have brought it hither for the purpose of posting it myself. And to this peregrination you are indebted for the amusement and expense of another sheet.

I accomplished the journey from Abbeville to Boulogne yesterday, to the greater satisfaction of myself than of my horse; who thought sixty miles a day too much for an excursion of pleasure. In point of health I feel not like the same person since I left Paris. As to spirits, they are, at this instant, at a very very low ebb. But there is an inconsistency in the human mind which the fanatic attributes to the superiority of his faith, and the philosopher to that of his system. It is that in all misfortunes and all wretchedness

the soul is to itself a secret support. It finds a strength even in despondency, and opposes to mischance or disappointment an intense concentrated resolution which defies and dares the worst. By men who do not reflect this is called greatness of character. I know it to be nothing but the unbending and unconquerable obstinacy of pride.

When I was stopping to dine at a little inn upon the road hither, the landlady asked me, with a smirk, if I would not like a *dîner à l'anglaise*. Of course, I said Yes. And I was served with . . . soup, and potatoes: dry mutton chops, and potatoes: hard beefsteaks, and potatoes: juiceless chicken, and potatoes: and, last scene of all this strange eventful history, in, after these, came, by way of the most delicate dish of the dessert, centrally situated in the midst of cheese, apples, and walnuts,—potatoes again! Yea, verily, potatoes.

Who would think to find such a touch of satire in Normandy? Or this anecdote in the midst of a sententious epistle from a moralising hypochondriac?

The great sea is before me. I raised my eyes just now, and they rested on its waters. I have ever found in the sense of mystery they excite, a vague, undefined, but *restless* emotion. To me there is nothing soothing in the sight of that dark unsleeping element. The sea and the sky affect me powerfully, but differently, when I observe them with attention. The contemplation of the first always troubles me; that of the second brings to me repose. Each is an emblem—a haunting suggestion—of Eternity. But the eternity which speaks to my imagination in every aspect of the ocean is a tumultuous eternity of doubt, of inquietude, of dread. Gazing upon the heavens to which earth sets no bounds, and through which man has no paths, my feelings grow freer from the agitations, the anxieties, the fears and fevers, of human life; and my soul seems to wander, through serener avenues of thought, towards that everlasting, limitless, unattainable repose which is the spiritual realm of a Divine Presence.

Have I been writing nonsense? Something very like it, I imagine. But I hate your very sensible people. And I, who am always playing the fool in life, may surely do so now and then upon paper. Adieu.

BOOK VI.

UNPROFESSIONAL AUTHORSHIP

(SUPPLEMENTARY)

1826.

CHAPTER I.

'O'NIEL.' 1826. ÆT. 22.

If coming events ever cast their shadows before upon the mind, the melancholy which pervades the letters written by my father on his way back to England might be regarded as the reflection, rather of a deepening instinct of future trouble, than of any lasting regret for past felicity. For he was now upon the eve of a great change in life: and, as regards the literary results of his life, there is a marked difference to be observed between those which preceded, and those which followed, this change in it.

CHAP.
I.

ÆT. 22

From the record of his undergraduate days it will have been seen that, before he left Cambridge, he had studied prose composition as an art; that he had tried his hand at fiction as well as criticism; and that he had early formed the habit of making elaborate notes upon his observation of the world around him as well as his study of books. But until he married he was a literary *dilettante*. After that event, and in consequence of it, he became what may fairly be called a professional author; dependent on his pen for nearly the whole of his income; and forced into incessant and systematic literary production by the *res angusta domi* which provides the motive power of so much precious labour in this toilful planet.

The probability of such a necessity had been constantly present to his mind during the months passed by him at Paris and Versailles in 1826; and the unpublished products of that

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1826.

time attest the assiduity with which he was already preparing to meet it. This short, but active, period of unprofessional authorship will not be without its interest to those who care to trace, step by step, the gradual development of the author's genius, to understand the conditions of feeling and circumstance under which he worked, and to appreciate the relation of what he wrote to what he read, and what he *lived*. Two of the works begun, and all but completed, before my father left Paris in the first half of the year 1826, were shortly afterwards published. One of them was a poem, 'O'Niel,' the other a prose romance, 'Falkland.' Many other sketches of life and character, written at the same time, were sent to Mr. Colburn, who considered them too slight for publication in a volume by themselves, and recommended the author to bring them out serially in some monthly periodical. Some of them were afterwards worked up into the novel of 'Pelham,' others introduced, at a later period, into 'England and the English,' and the remainder never published.

What other works of a more ambitious character may have been begun at this time, and afterwards discarded as too crude in conception to merit the labour of completion, it is impossible to say; but among several scraps of unfinished stories undoubtedly written in 1826, I find fragments of a tale, which seems to have been planned out for treatment in three volumes, and is called 'Linda, a Romance.' The scene of it is laid in Germany, and both the style and the subject are mystical. There is also, bearing the same date, a short fiction founded on the alleged secrets of the Rosicrucian Brotherhood. It is quite complete, and appears to contain the germ of those ideas which many years later suggested 'Zicci' and finally created 'Zanoni.' Of these manuscripts I need say no more. The poem of 'O'Niel, or the Rebel,' though not published till 1827, was finished early in 1826; and to the same date must be referred the commencement of an unfinished work entitled 'Glenallan.' The scene of this last named story is laid in

Ireland; the heroine of it is Irish; the subject of it is apparently, and the origin of it undoubtedly, the same as those of the poem, which must have been composed about the same time. Which of the two was produced first I cannot say; but as the novel was never finished, the probability is that it represents the earliest embodiment of the idea common to both. 'O'Niel' and 'Glenallan' were written before the author of them had been in Ireland, and were the direct literary result of his acquaintance with, and interest in, Miss Wheeler. They are his only fictions, in either prose or verse, which are indebted to Ireland for their subject-matter.

To the poem of 'O'Niel,' which my father describes in one of his letters to Mrs. Cunningham as 'full of rebels, banshees, and scaffolds,' he prefixed the following Dedication:—

To * * * * *

In premising that I have laid in Ireland the scene of the following poem, I give at once the motive and excuse for inscribing my undertaking to you. Do not deceive yourself by imagining that in so doing I intend solely to convey a token of respect and admiration for a single individual. Pardon my want of gallantry in owning a desire to render this idle tribute a testimony of less exclusive devotion. In the single fascination of your beauty, which knows neither an equal nor a fault, in the vivid and various graces of your mind, and in the higher qualities of your heart, you have combined and blended the most prominent characteristics of your countrywomen: and, like those who looked upon the masterpiece of Apelles, I feel that I am yielding my offering of homage to the beauties of a whole nation by rendering it now to the concentrated perfection of ONE.

This Dedication, if the asterisks are replaced by the letters for which they stand, sufficiently reveals that, in the composition of the poem, his heart had directed his pen. In style and sentiment the story is Byronic; but there is in it a fulness and movement of incident, flowing out of

* * * * *
ROSINA WHEELER.

a distinct variety of dissimilar characters, which are not to be found in Lord Byron's shorter narrative poems. And to this extent it indicates an original dramatic power not yet embodied by him in a dramatic form. 'Give me the character,' said a dramatist, 'and I will find the play.' But character cannot be created by art alone, and the kind of narrative interest which delights us in novels of the highest order is probably more the result of genius than of art. For the plot of a really great fiction is not contrived but created. Its strong situations are not brought about by ingenious combinations of incident, specially invented for the purpose, but by the natural action of strongly-marked characters.

This faculty of imagining characters which create incidents may be detected in the construction of 'O'Niel:' and it was partly owing, perhaps, to the dramatic elements which, for that reason, are to be found in it, though also, no doubt, to the warm reception likely to be given by an American audience to any representation of 'the wrongs of Ireland,' that, many years after its publication, this forgotten poem was disinterred, and a piece founded upon it was placed upon the stage (I believe, effectively) at New York. The poem itself has long been out of print, and I quote from it two short passages as specimens of its style. The first repeats in verse a fancy more prosaically expressed in a letter already printed from the author to Mrs. Cunningham.

He turn'd, he sat beside his hearth, and view'd
The fitful fire, that friend of solitude :—
That strange and mystic spirit, wherein is shown
Perchance some type or shadow of our own :
Our own internal agent, which requires,
Like that, from earth the fuel for its fires ;
Which pours its powers into the meanest things,
Quickens the senseless block to which it clings,
Now low, now soaring, now but formed to bless
With temper'd light, now blasting with excess ;

Which warms, pervades, ennobles while it preys
 On the dull substance which supplies its blaze,
 And when that substance is consumed, O where
 Speeds the wild spirit? Answer me, thou Air!

CHAP.
 I.

Æt. 22

The second passage is one of the many instances of that grateful sentiment which urged my father, in every period of his life, to give literary utterance to the tenderest and most durable of its affections:—

Oh, in our sterner manhood, when no ray
 Of earlier sunshine glimmers on our way,
 When, girt with sins, and sorrows, and the toil
 Of cares that sear the bosom that they soil;
 Oh, if there be in Retrospection's chain
 One link which knits us with young dreams again,
 One thought so sweet we scarcely dare to muse
 On all the hoarded raptures it reviews,
 Which seems each instant in the backward range
 The heart to soften, and its ties to change,
 And every spring, untouch'd for years, to move,
 It is the memory of a mother's love.

This poem was my father's last indulgence (for some time to come) of that inclination to write verse which is more or less common to all imaginative and emotional natures in early youth. He was already convinced that his ideas, even when most poetic, were not of that kind to which verse is the suitable form of expression; and that if he was to vindicate his vocation as an author it must be through the coarser instrument of prose. He wrote, as we have seen, to Mrs. Cunningham, 'I feel that it is not as a poet I am to fulfil the end of my existence;' and in an unpublished retrospect of his own literary work he speaks to the same effect.

I imagine that, in one respect, the epochs of a literary life resemble those of literature itself. We begin with poetry, and end with prose. The imagination precedes the reason. In nearly all the biographies of literary men we find some proof of this. Few are born

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poets. But most intellectual persons are, in youth, more or less poetical. The born poets retain to the end the first predilections of their genius. But we lesser and harsher natures discover betimes our true vocation. We cease to worship the celestial fire, though we still kindle from its flame the torches which light and guide us to lowlier shrines. For my own part, my first recollections are of poetry : and, ye Nine, with what a quantity of villanous offerings did I frighten you into dismissing so troublesome a votary !

CHAPTER II.

'GLENALLAN.' 1826. ÆT. 22.

THE plot of 'Glenallan' differs (so far as it goes) from that of 'O'Niel' only in the minuteness of detail, and the variety of incident and character, which are more proper to a prose romance than to a poem. Otherwise, the two stories are substantially the same. The general characteristics of Desmond, the hero of the poem, reappear in the character of Ruthven Glenallan, the hero of the novel. Ellen St. Aubyn, the heroine of the novel, is the prose counterpart of Lord Ullen's daughter, the heroine of the poem; and both of them are the literary tributes of a lover to the lady he afterwards married.

CHAP.
II.ÆT. 22

The manuscript of 'Glenallan' is not long; and I here subjoin the whole of it. To the imaginary narrator of the tale my father has transferred some characteristics of his own temperament and disposition at the time when it was written, as will be recognised by a reference to his correspondence with Mrs. Cunningham; and his description of the relations between the younger and the elder Glenallan was, to some extent, perhaps, suggested by his recollections of his maternal grandfather, in the days of his childhood. The story is noticeable for the traces it contains of that love of the supernatural which is conspicuous in so many of the later creations of his fancy; but of which little or no indication appears in 'Pelham,' 'The Disowned,' 'Devereux,' 'Paul Clifford,' &c. This sketch is evidence that the feeling had its origin in early life, and probably in childhood, though the development of it in his published writings was reserved for his later productions.

GLENALLAN.

CHAPTER 1.

I WAS born in the county of —. After my mother's death, my father, who deeply lamented her loss, resolved to spend the remainder of his life in Ireland. He was the representative, and, with the exception of an only brother, the last of a long line of ancestry; and, unlike most ancient families still existing, the wealth of my father's family was equal to its antiquity. At an early period of life he had established a high reputation in that public career which is the proper sphere of distinction to the rich and the highborn. Men of eager minds, however, should not enter too soon into the world. The more it charms them at first, the more it wearies them at last; hope is chilled by disappointment, magnanimity depressed by a social perspective which artificially lessens even great characters and objects, tedium succeeds to energy, and delight is followed by disgust. At least so thought, and so found, my father before he was thirty; when, at the very zenith of his popular esteem, he retired from public life, to one of his estates in the West of England. It was there, at a neighbouring gentleman's, that he first saw and loved my mother, and it was there that all the latent softness of his nature was called forth.

Men of powerful passions who have passed the spring-time of youth without the excitement of that passion which is the most powerful of all, feel love perhaps with greater tenderness and force when at last it comes upon them. My father and mother had been married for several years; their happiness was only equalled by their affection, and, if anything could weaken the warmth of the thanksgiving my father daily offered to Heaven for the blessings he enjoyed, it was the reflection that there had been born no pledge to their attachment, and no heir to the name and honours of his forefathers. Justly proud of his descent from some of the most illustrious warriors and statesmen of his country, such a reflection might well cast a shade on the otherwise unbroken brightness of his married life. At last, however, in the eighth year of that life, my mother found herself pregnant, and the measure of my father's felicity was complete, as the time of her confinement approached. But on the day when I came into this world to continue the race of the Glenallans, my mother left it, for ever. This stroke fell the

heavier on my father, because in the natural buoyancy of his character, he had never contemplated the possibility of such a calamity. He left England for six years, and travelled over the greater part of Europe. At the end of that time he returned, with the determination to withdraw himself completely from society, and devote all his time and intellect to the education of the son he had so dearly acquired. But as it was impossible for one so distinguished to maintain in his own country the rigid seclusion on which he was resolved, my father decided to fix his future abode in Ireland, upon the estate where his mother was born, and which in her right he inherited.

Though so young at the time of our departure from England, I can well remember many of the incidents of the journey, and never can I forget the evening when our travelling carriage stopped before those moss-grown and gigantic ruins which were the only remnants of the ancient power of the Tyrones.

It needed but a slight portion of my father's wealth to repair the ravages made by time and neglect in this ruined but still massive structure, and my future home soon assumed a more lively appearance. Although my father civilly but coldly declined all intercourse with the neighbouring gentry, the lower orders were always sure of finding a warm hearth and a bounteous board in the princely halls he had restored. His beneficence secured to him the affection of his peasantry, even amidst the perpetual disorders of one of the wildest parts of that unhappy country, and notwithstanding the abhorrence with which the existing Government was regarded by the surrounding population. My father's sole occupation was the management of my education. It was both the employment of his severer hours and the recreation of his lighter moments. He was not satisfied with making me a thorough classical scholar, but was particularly anxious to give me a perfect knowledge of the history and literature of my own country; to enlarge my views by habitual meditation; to make me familiar with the sciences of philosophy and political economy; and, in short, to bring me, as nearly as my abilities would permit, upon a par with himself.

Perhaps in his ardour to make me great, he forgot how necessary it was for my happiness to make me amiable. He suffered me to pay too little attention to the courtesies of society; and, thinking that it was impossible for a gentleman to be anything but a gentleman, he remembered not how many trifles, small in themselves but large in the aggregate, were required to lay a just claim to that distinction.

From the lessons of my father I used to turn to my private and lonely amusements. I in some degree inherited his aristocratic pride, and preferred even solitude to the intrusive familiarity of the servants and dependents, who were accustomed to join in the rural sports for which I felt no inclination. It was in solitary wanderings over wide and dreary plains, by rapid streams, amongst the ruins of ancient power, beneath the lofty cliffs, and beside the green and solemn waters of the Atlantic, that my mind insensibly assumed its habitual bias, and that my character was first coloured by the sombre hues which ever afterwards imbued it. As there were none to associate with me, my loneliness became my natural companion; my father I seldom saw, except at meals and during the time I was engaged with him in the studies he had appointed for me.

The effect of one great misfortune upon a mind so powerful as his was indeed extraordinary. Although during my mother's life he had given up all political activity, and lived in comparative retirement, yet he was then proud of preserving the ancient and splendid hospitality of the family, and whilst his house was the magnificent resort of all who were distinguished by their rank, their talents or their virtues, I have been told by those who then frequented it, that his own convivial qualities, his wit, his urbanity, his graceful and winning charm of manner were no less admired by his friends than his intellectual powers were respected by his rivals. But during the whole time that I can remember him, his habits were so reserved and unsocial that, but for his unbounded benevolence, he might have passed for an inveterate misanthropist. Although his love for me was certainly the strongest feeling of his heart, yet he never evinced it by an affectionate word or look. His manner was uniformly cold, and somewhat stern, but never harsh. From my earliest infancy I never received from him an unkind word or a reproach; nor did I ever receive from him a caress. In his gifts to me he was liberal to profusion, and as I grew up to manhood a separate suite of rooms and servants were allotted to me, far more numerous and splendid than those with which he himself was contented.

The only servant I ever admitted to familiar intercourse with me was an old man whose character was of a kind to deepen the gloom of those impressions I had already derived from other sources. He was a sort of living chronicle of horrors. He knew about every species of apparition and every kind of supernatural being, whether of Irish, English, or Scottish origin. The wildest tales constructed by the luxuriant genius of German romancers would have been tame

in comparison with those of old Phelim. But of all the fictions he used to narrate, and I to revere as sacred and incontrovertible truths, none delighted me so much as those relating to my own ancestor, Morshed Tyrone, a wizard of such awful power that the spirits of earth, air, and ocean ministered to him as his slaves, and the dead walked restless rounds to perform his bidding. I can remember well how the long winter evenings were spent, by the flickering light of the turf fire, in descriptions of the midnight orgies and revels, held perhaps in the very room where Phelim and I were then sitting. I can remember well the thrilling delight with which I used to watch for the hour when I laid aside what seemed to me the cold and airy beauties of Virgil, or the dry and magisterial philosophy of Seneca (the two books my father at this time most wished me to study), that I might listen to those terrific legends. Well, too, can I remember the not all undelightful fear which crept upon me when they were over, and I was left to the dreary magnificence of my solitary apartment.

As I grew up, so far from discarding or wearing out these impressions, so inconsistent with the ideas of the eighteenth century, they grew with my growth, and strengthened with my strength. In the old library I discovered many treatises on the existence of witchcraft. Some of them went so far as to hint at the means of acquiring that dreadful art without the penalties which superstition has attached to it; others were filled with astrological speculations, and to these treasures, which I carefully removed to my own rooms, I was continually adding every work I could procure upon the subject of my favourite pursuits. Still as I read, the ardour of penetrating further into the mysteries hidden from human eyes so powerfully increased, that at last I used to steal forth on certain nights to the lonesome abodes of the dead; and, amidst the corruption of mortality and the horrors of the charnel, I have sometimes watched till morning for the attainment of frightful secrets from which my mind in its ordinary healthful condition would have shrunk with repugnance.

This unnatural state of mind, however, could not last when nothing sustained it but the chimeras of a disordered imagination; and what perhaps conduced more than anything else to restore me to my senses was a long and violent illness, caused by a severe cold caught in one of my midnight expeditions. During several weeks I was confined to my bed, and then the long dormant kindness of my father's nature seemed to revive. A mother's fondest care could not have surpassed the unceasing vigilance, the anxious tenderness, with

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which he watched and soothed me. He poured forth, for my amusement, the varied stores of a mind rich in the knowledge of men as well as books; and the astonishing fund of information thus lavished for my enjoyment made me conscious of my own mental defects, and anxious to recover the time I had squandered in eccentric reverie. As soon as I was convalescent I fell into a more regular and instructive course of reading: I discarded old Phelim from my confidence, cleared my shelves of their unhallowed lumber, and seemed in a fair way to flow on with the rest of the world's stream in the calm current of ordinary life. Alas, it was not to be!

I have been thus diffuse in the narrative of my earliest years, because it is in that period of life that the character is stamped. It is then we sow the seeds we are to reap hereafter.

CHAPTER II.

I HAD attained my eighteenth year, and was beginning to think it time to mix somewhat more with my equals, when my father sent for me one morning at an hour which was not the usual time for our daily meeting. Since my recovery he had gradually relapsed into his former habits of reserve, although when we were alone his manner was warmer and his conversation more familiar. I was somewhat surprised at the message, but more surprised by the extraordinary agitation in which I found him when I entered his study.

'Redmond,' said he, 'I believe you have never heard me mention my brother. Perhaps you did not know that I had so near a relation. I have learnt to-day that he is dead.' Here my father paused, evidently much affected, and I gained time to recover from my surprise at hearing in the same breath of the existence and death of so close a connection.

'In very early youth,' continued my father, 'an unfortunate quarrel arose between us, partly caused by my brother's change of political party for reasons which I thought either frivolous or mercenary. The breach was widened, however, by a very imprudent marriage on his part, at which my family pride revolted; and he, disgusted at what he deemed (not perhaps unjustly, as I have since imagined) my heartless arrogance, resented so warmly some expressions I had used in the first moment of mortification that he forswore for ever my

friendship and alliance. Thus we parted, never to meet again. He withdrew to France; and from that time to this my information respecting him has been slight and trivial. To-day I received an official letter informing me of his death and enclosing one from himself, in which, after lamenting our long separation, he recommends (and in terms I dare not refuse to comply with) his only son to my care and affection. I shall therefore write at once to this young man, inviting him to Castle Tyrone, and assuring him of my future solicitude. I have sent for you, Redmond, to acquaint you with this decision and to prepare you for a companion about your own age, who will, I trust, relieve the tedium you must often have felt in the unbroken solitude of our lonely life here.' With these words my father dismissed me.

I will pass over my reflections and anticipations, my fears and hopes, in reference to the prospect of this addition to our home life. During the whole morning of the day when our guest was expected, my father was in a state of silent agitation, as unusual to him as it was surprising to me, although I largely shared it. At length the carriage was seen at a distance; it approached, and a young man leapt lightly down from it. My father received him with a warmth quite foreign to the usual coldness of his manner, and entered into a long conversation with him about his own father. During this conversation I employed myself in taking a minute survey of my new acquaintance.

Ruthven Glenallan was in person small, but the proportions of his figure were perfectly symmetrical. He could scarcely be called handsome, but in his dark and dazzling eye, and in his brilliant smile, there was a power greater perhaps than that of beauty. He had been brought up from childhood in the most polished societies of Italy, and the winning grace of Continental manners was visible in all his gestures and expressions. Except my father, I have never known any person with such varied powers of conversation, or so able to charm and dazzle without apparent effort. Yet at times there was in his countenance a strange and sinister expression, which assumed a more suspicious appearance from the sudden and sparkling smiles immediately succeeding it if he thought himself observed. This peculiarity, however, I did not immediately perceive. For the next week we were inseparable. We walked and talked together, we accommodated our dissimilar habits to each other's inclinations, and we seemed to be laying the foundation of a lasting intimacy. Little as my father was accustomed to observe how those around

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him passed their time, he was evidently pleased with our friendship ; and one morning, when I went to ask his advice about a course of reading on the commerce and politics of America, he said to me : ' I am much gratified by the affection which you and Ruthven feel for each other ; the more so, as I am now convinced of what I have always hoped, that you would be but little affected by the loss of a part of that overflowing wealth which will be yours when I am gone. You are aware that a very small portion of my estate is entailed, and I can therefore, without injury to you, bequeath to Ruthven enough for his future independence. Though his father's fortune was not large, his expenditure almost rivalled that of the foreign princes with whom he associated, and at his death little or nothing could be saved from the wreck of his fortune. The least I can do, therefore, to compensate for any fault I have committed towards my brother will be to give to his son a small moiety from the superfluous riches of my own.' I need not say what was my answer ; it was, I hope, what it ought to have been.

CHAPTER III.

AFTER the first novelty of companionship was over, I began to find in my cousin's character much that widely differed from my own ideas of excellence. If I spoke of superior worth, if I praised a lofty thought or a noble action, his usual reply was a smile of contempt, or a cold calculation of its probable motives, which he invariably sought to prove selfish or unworthy. Sometimes he laughed at my notions, as the inexperienced absurdities of a romantic visionary ; at other times he startled me with a bold avowal of his own, and they were mostly those I had been taught to abhor in the most cynical literature of France and Italy. I must own, moreover, that I had sometimes the meanness to feel jealous of him. My own character was not formed to be popular. Naturally proud and reserved, and cold in my manners though warm in my feelings, there was in me something repellent, which chilled affection and repressed confidence. But Ruthven was precisely the reverse. Really wrapped in himself, yet by the perpetual courtesy of his manners always appearing to think only of others, he was loved as soon as seen. The largest part of my munificent allowance I gave away in charity ; but my charity was always silently and oftenest secretly

bestowed, nor did my manner of giving it ever heighten the value of the gift. Ruthven seldom or never gave, but when he did give, he so managed it that his gift was sure to be known, and the value of it exaggerated, set off as it was by that winning grace so peculiarly his own, and so particularly seductive to our Irish neighbours. His habits also, both of reading and of recreation, widely differed from my own. He was devoted to politics, which to me seemed neither interesting nor amiable, and his amusements were either the sports of the field or the society of the promiscuous admirers, mostly his social inferiors, whom his conviviality of spirit perpetually gathered round him.

I have said that I was jealous of my cousin. Yes, I was jealous of him; but this was perhaps not altogether so unworthy a feeling as it might appear. I could have recognised without irritation the solid superiority of another; I could have admired such superiority even in a declared rival, with feelings, not of jealousy, but of generous emulation; but I could not acknowledge Ruthven as my superior in any quality my character had been trained to admire. I could not but feel that in personal advantages, in depth of information, in abilities natural and acquired, and above all in that region of character which is governed by the heart, any just comparison between us would have been greatly in my favour. Yet he was loved and admired; I was disliked and feared. To a mind ardent in all its emotions, and hearty in all its thoughts, such a reflection could not be but bitterly mortifying. It was a reflection constantly and painfully renewed by the most ordinary events of every day; and the pain of it, which was not wholly selfish, may palliate perhaps, though it cannot condone, the fault I have confessed.

The gradual separation which now began to take place in our pursuits was hastened by Ruthven's adoption of a profession. My father had given him his choice, and promised him assistance in any career he might select; and after a short wavering between a commission in the army and a seat in Parliament, he finally decided upon the latter. My father had three boroughs at his disposal: two of them had been lately given to men of high reputation, and at this time, all of them were filled; but the member for one of them was very old, and labouring under all the infirmities of advanced age. There was therefore every probability that it would soon be vacant, and the expected vacancy was promised to my cousin. After this decision, Ruthven applied himself more ardently than ever to the study of politics. Every branch of law and history

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connected with this great object he pursued with an unwearied attention which scarcely left him an hour at leisure. This intense desire of distinction was decidedly the highest point in his character. In youth, to desire honours is to gain them.

CHAPTER IV.

I RESUMED my former habits of solitude. I had always been more fond of walking than of any other kind of exercise. Accustomed to it from my earliest childhood, and blest by nature with a more than common activity and strength, I would often wander forth, in all varieties of weather, over those dreary and almost uninhabited wastes which tell so sad a tale of the internal condition of Ireland. Unhappy country! whose sons have in all ages, and more especially in ours, been among the brightest ornaments and best supporters of other lands, whilst their own, formed by nature to be so prosperous, has remained in a condition mourned even by the stranger who beholds it.

One morning, tempted by an unusual flow of animal spirits and the beauty of the advancing spring, I prolonged my excursion far beyond its customary limits. I was greatly attracted by the novelty of the scenery which opened around me, and finding myself at the foot of a small hill, I climbed it, for the pleasure of a wider prospect. There was one object in the foreground of the landscape on which I then looked down which immediately and strangely impressed me; but little did I then anticipate the influence it was destined to exert over my future life. This object was a rather large and very ruinous building, which stood utterly alone, upon a dull and shrubless plain. The oasis of desert, islanded in the loveliness of a landscape with which it had no visible relation, looked as though a wicked enchanter had stolen it by night from another and more dismal land, and dropped it where I saw it, to sadden and deform the beauty of the scenery around it; so foreign did it look to the character of the neighbouring country, and so coldly did it seem to cower in the desolation of its own sterility. My imagination tempted me to approach it.

I found the house in a state of even greater dilapidation than had been apparent to my first and more distant view of it. There was no wall or fence to protect it from the encroachment of man or beast. The rank ivy rioted in its broken windows, and troops

of wild thistles crowded its doorless thresholds. At first it seemed to me impossible that such a place could have a human tenant, but presently I perceived a faint smoke rising from a rickety chimney in the shattered roof; and soon afterwards a woman, whose dress and air were evidently not those of a peasant or a pauper, emerged from the crumbling aperture which served as main doorway to the interior of the ruin. She slowly approached the place where I was standing. As she walked, her head was stooped apparently in deep thought, and we were close to each other before she noticed my intrusion. With a respectful gesture I stepped aside to let her pass. She heard my footstep and looked up. Our eyes immediately and involuntarily met.

Could I devote the unremitting labour of a hundred years to the description of the feelings which that momentary look awakened within me, I should fail to express them. Philosophers may deride, and pedants dispute, the magic of those rare moments which reveal to the heart the capacity and the destiny of emotions it has never felt before; but from the first glance of that woman's eye my soul drank inspirations of passion which have influenced my whole life.

The stranger blushed deeply beneath my riveted and ardent gaze; and, slightly returning the involuntary bow which my ignorance of modern etiquette could alone excuse, she passed on with a quickened step. How often have the most momentous events of our future life originated in the most casual and trifling incidents of the passing moment! Ruthven's favourite dog had that day accompanied me in my lonely excursion. He was one of the fiercest of the fierce breed of English terriers; and his indignation being kindled by some mark of disrespect in the behaviour of a small spaniel which was the lady's only companion, he suddenly flew upon the little creature with a force and ferocity from which it was wholly unable to defend itself. My interference with this unequal combat was successfully exerted at the most opportune moment; and I had the happiness of being rewarded for it by a smile, and a voice, of which the memory almost repays me even now for the terrible sufferings I have since undergone.

To those who read the history of my eventful life, I would fain describe, if I could, the surpassing loveliness of that face which has been the star of its fairest hopes, and even in its darkest moments a guiding light, a glory, and a blessing. But the best part of beauty is what no picture can ever express; and if I attempted to portray the beauty of Ellen St. Aubyn, the attempt would be as eternal as my love.

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I TOOK advantage of an opportunity so favourable, to enter into conversation with the fair stranger: a conversation embarrassed only by my habitual reserve. She was too high bred, and too genuinely modest, to repulse my respectful advances. Half an hour's walk brought us to the entrance of a large modern mansion, so completely embosomed in the surrounding woodlands that till then I had not perceived it. By this time I had learned that my fair acquaintance was the daughter of Lord St. Aubyn; that her father was dead; that since his death her mother had settled almost entirely in Ireland, which was her native country; and that Lady St. Aubyn was accustomed to pass half the year in Dublin, and the rest of it at Rose Cliff, the beautiful retreat which then burst into view from the depth of the embowering foliage around it, bright in all the sweetness of the noontide sun. Here I received from my companion a slight but graceful invitation to accompany her into the house, and I gladly accepted it. 'I have brought you,' said Miss St. Aubyn to her mother, 'a treasure from an unknown shore. Let me introduce Mr. Glenallan.' Lady St. Aubyn received me with a charming courtesy which was a pleasant combination of English dignity and Irish cordiality; and in a few moments I found myself in animated conversation with her on the state of the neighbouring country. When at last I rose to take my leave, I was so warmly pressed to stay for dinner, that I felt too pleased and flattered to refuse. Shortly afterwards, some friends who were staying at the house returned from their morning walk, and I was formally introduced to Mrs. M——, Lord and Lady C——, Miss P—— and Lady L——. In the manner of all these new acquaintances I noticed how instantaneously their first scrutinising and somewhat supercilious look at me was changed, on the mention of my name, to one of respectful politeness: so great is the magic of a name, when that name is associated with the importance which society accords to birth and wealth. At dinner I was seated between Miss P—— and Lady C——. To me these ladies then appeared the most uncommon, though I have since discovered that they were the most common, specimens of womankind. Miss P—— was an enthusiastic musician and admirer of poetry, especially the poetry of Scott and Moore. It is a pity that Byron had not then become famous. How she would

have adored him! What her family and fortune were, I cannot exactly say. Both were, I believe, respectable. As for her personal and natural qualities, she was rather pretty, if blue eyes, good teeth, a perpetual smile, and a never-varying red and white, could make her so, in spite of red hair, a short clumsy figure, a broad hand, and a voice which had not a single tone free from affectation. Lady C—— was a fine large woman, highly rouged, and dressed rather more *à la Grecque* than ladies of fifty generally think correct. She spoke with remarkable self-possession; and whether compliments or sarcasm, wit or wisdom, politics or poetry, it was with a voice perfectly unchanging, accompanied by a fixed stare, which, according to the subject discussed, appeared sometimes indecent, sometimes supercilious, always displeasing, and always unfeminine.

These two ladies, however, were just the sort of women best fitted to diminish the embarrassment of a shy and inexperienced young man. They were eternal talkers and loose observers, and my little blunders in established etiquette escaped unheeded. They were not very serious blunders. Although no guests ever joined our family meals at home, the refinement of my father's tastes and habits scrupulously maintained, even in the most careless privacy, all those little forms and customs which exist in well-bred families. Moreover, I was a most miscellaneous reader, and not less familiar with all that class of fiction which paints the manners and habits of society than with the more serious literature of ethics. A good novel should be, and generally is, a magnifying or diminishing glass of life. It may lessen or enlarge what it reflects, but the general features of society are faithfully reproduced by it. If a man reads such works with intelligent interest, he may learn almost as much of the world from his library as from the clubs and drawing-rooms of St. James's.

How often during dinner did my eyes wander to that part of the table where Ellen St. Aubyn was sitting! How intently were they riveted upon her, when her bright cheek was turned away from me, and yet how swiftly were my looks averted when they encountered hers! After the ladies had withdrawn, the conversation was as uninteresting as after-dinner conversation generally is. I took an early opportunity of retreating to the drawing-room to make my adieux, but, with a hospitality truly Irish, I was again pressed to prolong my stay, at least for that night, and to send a servant to Castle Tyrone, with a message informing my father of the cause of my absence.

'Do pray stay,' said Miss P——, 'for I have a great favour to ask of you.'

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'Why should you go?' cried Lady C——.

'What's the matter?' added Lady L——, who was somewhat deaf. 'Surely Mr. Glenallan is not going; the evening is setting in, and see how hard it rains.'

'It will be quite an insult to Rose Cliff,' chimed in Lady St. Aubyn.

To this I could answer nothing, but I looked at Ellen, who blushed as my gaze met hers, and I bowed a delighted assent. The servant was sent, and I remained. The whole of that evening I sat by Ellen, and that evening was therefore one of the happiest of my life.

In the course of our conversation, I asked her who lived in that deserted and ruinous building which had so fortunately attracted my attention.

'It is,' said Ellen, 'the last descendant of one of the oldest and once most powerful families in Ireland; and that house, the only one left of all her ancestral possessions, may give you a good idea of its inmate. She is very old, and apparently very poor; yet she never appears to want, and with all the noble but mistaken pride of high lineage, she would starve rather than accept assistance from anyone not of her own kindred. Her age, her poverty, her loneliness, and something certainly mysterious in her manners and habits, have gained her the reputation of a witch throughout the neighbourhood. When I was quite a child, I found her one morning stretched in a fit, by a well near her house, where I suppose she had gone to draw water. I was fortunate enough to procure assistance in removing her to her own home, where she soon recovered, and ever since that time she has regarded me as an acquaintance, though she is averse to frequent visits, and will never permit me to contribute to her scanty comforts. To-day I visited her for the first time since many weeks, but every time I see her she leaves upon my mind a remarkable and I may almost say a fearful impression.'

I was just going to ask some further questions, for I felt deeply interested in what I had just heard from Miss St. Aubyn, when to my vexation that provoking Miss P—— came up to us and said, 'Dear Mr. Glenallan, now it was so good to stay, because I wished it. Don't be vain at my wishing it, for I am going to tell you why I did. You have read, of course, Scott's beautiful poem of "Rokeby." Well, I am making some drawings descriptive of the most striking scenes in it, but I never can draw figures out of my own head. I must have a model, and I want to paint Bertram and Redmond.'

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II.

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Well, I have been everywhere and looked at everybody to find an appropriate model, and all to no purpose, but when I first saw you, I said to myself, "Oh, he will just do for Bertram," and so, . . . la, thank you, that look is just the thing. Pray keep so. Now don't move a muscle till I get my pencil. Dear, how provoking, if you ain't laughing! Well now, since I saw you talking and laughing so cheerfully with Miss St. Aubyn, I thought you would do for Redmond too, so will you let me have your profile for Bertram, and your front face for Redmond? Thank you! I knew you would. I feared at first it might be rude to ask you, but—

"Despair
Made us dare,"

and I have tried everywhere. First I thought Lord C—— would do, but he is so very pale and thin, and then I thought of Mr. M——, but he is so very red and fat, and then I looked at Colonel B.-E——, but he wears his collars so high that I could see nothing but his nose and eyes, and if I was to take them with that immensity of black hair round them, people would think I had drawn an owl in an ivy bush. Well, you will do very well. With a little management, that is. You must throw your hair off your forehead, and take off your neckcloth for Redmond, and . . . la, if here ain't Lady St. Aubyn coming to ask me to sing. What *shall* I sing? "Young Lochinvar" or "When in death I shall calm recline"?

I stayed a week at 'Rose Cliff,' and that time was sufficient to attach my heart to Ellen St. Aubyn by the finest and firmest ties of love. She was, indeed, all that was fitted to command the worship of a youthful and ardent enthusiast. Her face, her figure, her temper, her heart,—all were formed in the perfect purity of female loveliness.

CHAPTER VI.

It was in the middle of the day that I took leave of 'Rose Cliff.'

The morning had been wet, but the weather had cleared up by noon, though dark clouds in the distant horizon foreboded a return of storm before night. One of my servants had come with my horses from Castle Tyrone, but I had sent him on before me. Lovers know how sweet is the charm of a solitary ride when solitude

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is peopled with delicious hopes and remembrances that convert it into a paradise. I had not ridden more than three or four miles upon my way when a very heavy shower coming on drove me for refuge to a neighbouring farmhouse. Here I stayed so long that the evening was already far advanced before I recommenced my journey ; but the rain had ceased, and the way was too short to make the lateness of the hour a cause of any inconvenience. I was little more than seven miles from home, when my course was crossed and again stopped by a stream which the recent rain had so swollen as to render it perfectly impassable. I knew of a different road, but it was much longer and rather intricate, and the increasing darkness made me very doubtful whether I should succeed in tracing it out. However, there was no alternative. I must proceed or recede, and of course I chose the former. I had gone some distance when the road branched off in three directions, and I left the choice between them to the discretion of my horse. The event proved how mistaken is the notion entertained by some people about the superior sagacity of those animals. Although I put my horse to his fastest speed, the night came upon me, still completely ignorant of my course, and evidently no nearer home than before. Suddenly I heard a noise behind me, and two horsemen dashed by me, without heeding or answering my loud inquiries as to time and place. I felt all my Irish blood boiling in a moment, and resolving to have some more courteous response from these strangers I galloped after them as fast as my horse's weariness would permit.

They had not gone above a hundred yards before they abruptly turned down a narrow lane, the winding of which completely hid them from sight ; and while I was deliberating whether I should follow them, down a road evidently out of my way home, I saw a light which, from its bright and steady beam, appeared to proceed from some house, about a mile distant. There I am sure, thought I, of finding either a guide or a lodging, with perhaps the chance of catching those ungallant gentry into the bargain. So, keeping my eye upon the light, and my horse still at a rapid pace, I reached in about ten minutes the door of a small house. The sign-board, hanging over it, indicated that the place was meant for the entertainment of man and beast. I had a faint idea of having seen it before, in my rides and walks, but I took short time to examine its exterior. The door was fast. I could, however, distinctly hear low voices within, but my loud knock was only answered by an instantaneous and profound silence. I twice repeated it without any other

result. My third effort was answered by a voice which asked, 'Who is there?'

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II.

ÆT. 22

'I want,' said I, 'a guide and a lodging; open the door immediately.'

Another silence was followed by a gruff command to go away, and not to disturb honest men, at that time of night.

'Hark you,' said I, 'this house is a public one, for the reception of strangers, and I know there are some in it at this moment. Open the door therefore, or refuse at your peril.'

Another voice now replied with a deep curse, and a third added, 'Let him come in and take the consequences.'

'No,' cried the one who had first spoken, 'he shall not come in.'

Then I cried, 'I will break open the door.' And suiting the action to the word, I placed my shoulder against it with some force.

It immediately gave way. There was a narrow passage between the threshold and the room whence the voices had proceeded.

Immediately on my entrance, a man strode out before the door of this room, and eyed me with a menacing attitude.

'Are you,' said I, quietly, 'the master of the house? If so, I will trouble you to take care of my horse.'

There was an appearance of surprise in the man's countenance. Of this I immediately took advantage, and gently putting him aside, I walked into the room.

I must own that I repented of my temerity on the first view of its interior. In the centre of the apartment there was a large oaken table, around which were seated about twelve or fourteen men. The greater number of them were wrapped up in large cloaks, which, with the addition of slouched hats and muffling handkerchiefs, effectually concealed each man's person. At the head of the table stood, in an angry attitude, one man more closely disguised than the rest, for he wore a black mask; and by his right side sat a woman of advanced age. Her features were the most strikingly commanding I ever saw, and her style of dress, which was somewhat in the Moorish fashion, enhanced their imposing effect. The table was spread with papers, which appeared to have been thrown together in great haste and disorder, probably at the moment of my unexpected intrusion; and before each man was placed a brace of pistols, ready cocked, and a drawn sword.

There was a momentary pause. But the dark disguises of the

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forms around me, the weapons before them, and the lateness of the hour fully proclaimed the unlawful character of their meeting. I felt a strong inclination to retreat from a house where I was evidently no welcome comer. Whether this design appeared in my looks or motion, I cannot say; but, on a sign from him who appeared to be the chief in this unhallowed assembly, a man rose from the table, advanced to the door, bolted and locked it, and quietly returning to his place, laid the key beside his pistols. This I looked upon as a very unfavourable omen; but, resolved, if possible, not to betray my alarm, I turned to the large turf fire, and made some remark on the coldness of the night.

'Was the weather,' said the man at the head of the table, 'the only cause of your trespass upon our society?'

'Sir,' said I, 'if I have intruded upon you and the company of these gentlemen, you will, I trust, excuse me, and believe that my motive was really and solely the wish I expressed before I entered, to obtain a guide to the nearest town. If I am not mistaken, this house is intended to receive all who seek its shelter, but as I cannot conceive that anyone among you is the landlord, will you allow me to look for him, and accept my repeated apologies for having so unintentionally disturbed you? Sir,' I added (turning to the man who had secured the door), 'will you have the goodness to let me through?' And so saying, I walked, with a sort of despair, to the entrance.

'Stay,' cried the chief in a voice of thunder, and pointing one of his pistols towards me, 'If you move one foot further, your blood be on your own head.'

I felt my indignation rise, and not caring to suppress it, 'By what right,' I cried, 'will you or any man detain me? If, as you say, I have intruded on your company, can you with any reason object to my withdrawing from it?'

Before the chief could reply another man rose suddenly from the table. 'Stranger,' said he, 'look around you. Is not one glance sufficient to convince you that you are among those to whom concealment is necessary, and do you think that we will permit you, not only to endanger our lives, but also imperil the salvation of our country? No! I repeat it, no; it is not our lives that we regard, and as for myself, I scorn this vain meanness, of meeting in darkness and disguise, to concert and execute schemes for so noble a purpose as the liberation of our country. Know us for men in whose ears the groans of Ireland have not fallen in vain.

In silence we have seen our constitution insidiously attacked and betrayed. In silence we have submitted to the laws and commands of a tyrannical Government, which grinds us to the dust, while it mocks us with the pretence of friendship and union. In silence we have heard our religion traduced, and seen our nobles robbed of their rights, whilst yet meanly crouching at the court of their conqueror. In the senate of a land not ours, we have no voice to complain, no force to cry for justice. Whilst our rulers boast of tolerance, we are crushed beneath the weight of their bigotry. More than victorious Rome ever imposed upon our tyrants they have inflicted upon us, and all this we have borne, writhing but unresisting. But endurance is exhausted; we can no longer sit helpless in our ruined homes, whilst our dependents, our parents, our wives, our children, are daily and hourly sinking around us, beneath the horrors of famine. They ask us for bread and we have it not to give them; yet though they are perishing beneath our eyes, we will no longer uplift, in the vanity of supplication to our oppressors, hands to which the sword can alone restore the liberties we have lost, and the lives we are losing. There is not one of us here assembled who has not sworn an oath which, if maintained, will liberate his land, but if broken turn against the bosom of its betrayer the swords of his comrades. There is not one of us whose life is not consecrated to the freedom of his country, not one of us who is not ready to shed his blood in that sacred cause. But think not, stranger, that our strength is but the frenzied paroxysm of despair. It is a deeply established and elaborately organised power. At the slightest sign from each one of the men before you, as many thousands are prepared to flock to the standard of Ireland, and when that standard is unfurled, there is not throughout the whole people of this land an honest man whose name will not be enrolled in the ranks that follow it. Our councils are secret, but our cause is sacred. It is sacred because God is the God of mercy and justice, and for justice and for mercy we contend. Yes, although now we assemble in darkness and disguise, ere long the sun of a reviving nation will rise upon the hosts that are gathering in the watches of the night, and the clouds that still obscure its brightness shall be scattered upon the wings of the morning. Such, stranger, are the men in whose presence you stand, and with their fate is linked the fate of Ireland. Judge, then, whether we can suffer you to leave us at the risk of our destruction.'

'No, let him die,' shouted the chief. 'Let him die' echoed

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the voice of every man in the room, and their swords gleamed in the dim light of it.

'Hear me,' I cried, 'hear me first, and then murder me if you will, for I am in your power.'

'Hear him,' said the man, who a few moments before had turned their wrath against me. And at his word every sound died away into silence.

* * * * *

END OF THE MANUSCRIPT OF 'GLENALLAN.'

CHAPTER III.

SKETCHES AND STUDIES. 1826. Æt. 22-3.

A TRAVELLER in a strange land observes features and aspects of it which custom has rendered unnoticeable to its inhabitants. Things that are to them trivialities are to him discoveries; and, when we read the impressions of our own country or society recorded by an 'intelligent foreigner,' we often find with surprise that the characters and occurrences least significant to ourselves are precisely those which have set him philosophising about us. A young man on his first entry into the world of men and women resembles the traveller in a strange land; and, if he be not only observant but reflective, he, like the intelligent foreigner, instinctively philosophises about them from that wonder of inexperience which is a great stimulant to observation. For we see least what we have oftenest looked at. My father was, by temperament, a keen observer of the world around him. He entered it at a very early age; and, while his impressions of it were still vivid, he made sketches of character, as a tourist makes sketches of scenery. Here is a list of some of these efforts which belong to 1826:—

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1. On conversation, and the chief talkers of the day.
2. *Love à la mode*.
3. Hades, or High life below stairs.
4. Sketches of society by a *débutant*.
5. The Correspondence of Muley Eidor Moratcham.
6. Memoirs of a Gentleman.
7. Posthumous letter from the King of the Sandwich Islands.
8. Literary Lions.

9. On Bores.
10. Social Philosophers.
11. The Age and its worshippers.
12. Typical Characters.

As a specimen of these papers I give an extract from the introduction to the imaginary 'Correspondence of Muley Eidor Moratcham,' which is voluminous and ranges over a wide variety of topics. The general character of its satire upon certain aspects of English manners, customs, and institutions, will be gathered from the passage I quote.

In the year of our Lord 18— a stranger arrived from the East to take up his abode for some months in the metropolis of Great Britain. He was by birth a Persian, and by profession an enthusiastic admirer of the fair sex. In fact, he had undertaken this pilgrimage to the cold shores of liberty and rheumatism mainly for the purpose of admiring those flowers of female beauty which were said to blossom here in great luxuriance. Muley Eidor Moratcham was the name of him. Muley Eidor had been in France, where they had told him he would certainly be stopped by highwaymen on his way from Dover to London. He had consequently furnished himself, his Moorish servant, and his Italian companion, or toad-eater, with twelve pistols, three blunderbusses, and as many swords. Being a Persian of valorous temperament, and accustomed to little skirmishes of this kind, he looked forward with some degree of pleasure to his expected adventures with the knights of the road. But when his post-chaise was rattling past the fourteenth milestone from London, Muley Eidor Moratcham fell into a melancholy reverie.

'By the Holy Prophet!' he exclaimed at length, 'what stupendous liars are the French! We have not yet encountered a single bandit.'

'True,' said the Italian, 'were we in Italy you would be much better off. The Carbonari would prodigiously suit your valour.'

The Moorish servant looked at his master. 'Descendant of Rustam,' said he, 'I think the French were not so far wrong as you suppose.'

'By the great cock of heaven,' exclaimed the Persian, seizing his blunderbuss, 'do you see them coming?'

'No,' replied the Moor. 'They have come, and gone too. For,

with due submission to your wisdom, I think we have already been robbed.'

'How, slave?' cried Muley, clapping one hand on his purse, and the other on a small chest which he held on his lap.

'Do you remember,' said the sapient Moor, 'that each time we stopped on the road, the men in red garments who bestrode the horses of our chariot, flung open the door of it, and demanded our money. We were told that the donation was quite voluntary on our part. But was it? Those knaves were never satisfied with the gift that satisfied us. They demanded more, and their demands were complied with.'

'Ha!' said the Persian moodily, with the air of a man who has been made to recognise an unwelcome truth; 'thy words are the words of wisdom. We have been robbed, like cowardly Greeks, without a shot for it. But by the blood of Rustam——'

'Yea-hup!' cried the first postboy.

'Yea-hup!' echoed the second.

'Coming out,' rejoined the voice of an invisible person; and the chaise made a dead halt at the door of the Red Lion.

'Be ready, comrades!' cried the Persian, wrath in his eye and heroism in his voice. The chaise door was flung open.

'Please to remember the postboys,' said the Pollux in corduroys.

'Now, Ali Abra!' cried the Persian, 'now Giovanni!'

Three blunderbusses, loaded, primed, and cocked, were simultaneously turned upon the corduroys.

'O Lord!' exclaimed the postboy.

'Murder!' yelled his companion.

Away flew the landlord. Off scampered the ostler. Down fell the fat landlady, screaming like a whole flock of geese when a dog presumes to address them.

'By the Prophet,' said Muley Eidor Moratcham, with disdain, 'what dastards! They are not worthy of our vengeance. Let us get out and give up the dogs to the Cadi.'

Forth stepped the victorious Persian, with his blunderbuss still presented to the unfortunate postboys, who were down in the kennel, galloping over the Lord's Prayer as fast as they would have carried a royal duke to Dover.

'Help me, comrades!' said Muley Eidor, gravely seizing one of the postboys by the collar. 'Giovanni, you carry off the other!' And the conquerors, taking their prisoners with them, marched on, over the mountainous landlady, towards the bar.

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'They will make us minced meat!' groaned the elder postboy.

'They will make us bishops,' sobbed the younger.

By this time, however, the Landlord, the Boots, the Head-waiter, the Under-waiter, and the Ostler, having recovered from their first alarm, made a rally, and entered the bar also, in the following order. The Head-waiter, bearing the kitchen poker, went first. The Boots followed, with a rusty broadsword which had served him faithfully in the militia. Next came the Under-waiter with a carving knife. The Ostler backed him up with a pitchfork. And last, like a prudent general, marched the Landlord himself, with a matchless matchlock, which had hung, *in terrorem*, over the kitchen chimney ever since the Red Lion was first whelped.

I ought to have mentioned that Muley Eidor Moratcham had learnt to speak English tolerably well before he came to our country. At least he understood our language better than any Frenchman who has been twenty years learning it. 'Take up these villains,' said he, 'they have attempted to rob us!'

'Oh my eye, what a bouncer!' cried the first postboy, recovering at the sight of his rallied allies.

'A thumper!' echoed the second.

'If so, Mounseer,' said the Landlord, peeping over the Ostler, who peeped over the Under-waiter, who peeped over the Boots, who peeped over the Head-waiter, 'if so, Mounseer, that alters the case. Will you take your Davy to it?'

'I don't understand you,' said the Persian with dignity. 'But no matter. Here they are. Take them. Bastinado them. Give me more horses, and let me go on to London.'

'Well, if ever I heered anythink like it?' said the Head-waiter.

'My stars!' said the Under-waiter.

'Blow me!' said the Boots.

'Bless me!' said the Landlord.

'D—n me!' said the Ostler.

Now the chief of the trencher-scrappers who headed the battalion, and was a sort of John, Duke of Argyll,—

'The inn's whole thunder born to wield,
And shake alike the senate and the field,'

began to understand that there was some misunderstanding. He was a shrewd fellow, and forthwith conducted the Persian and his suite into a private room. There he soon plucked out the heart of their mystery. After which he explained to them the important

distinction between a pad and a postboy. 'Giovanni,' said Muley, walking to his chaise, 'they are not Arabs after all. Heaven have mercy on those lying French when they walk over the last bridge!'

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Æt. 22-3

The postboys were satisfied with five shillings a-piece for their fright; and the travellers, without any further adventures, reached the apartments prepared for them in London, at a West End hotel. Prepared for them by whom?

'Patience,' saith the Spanish muleteer to his mule, and the English writer to his reader. I am going to explain.

Our Persian had in some country, no matter where, rendered some service, no matter what, to a young Englishman of good family; and, notwithstanding their differences of faith, they had become sworn friends. The Persian was, to say the truth, supposed by his countrymen to be shamefully indifferent about religious matters. From some persons who, in Persia, called themselves philosophers, he had imbibed the absurd notion that a Jew, a Giaour, even a Christian or a Safi, who had done good to many and harm to none, might be almost as acceptable to Allah as a Mussulman who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca without relieving the wants of a single fellow-creature, or caring for anyone but himself. As for the Englishman, his ideas about religion were simple. He believed that it is right to go to church, especially in the country, and proper to give soup and pudding to the poor at Christmas. He also believed that murder and poaching are great sins. Muley was a regular attendant at the mosque, he was charitable to excess, and he had never committed either murder or poaching. By his English friend he was consequently regarded as a remarkably pious character. A long journey, planned and made in concert, cemented their intimacy; which remained unbroken till the Englishman (Mr. Vavasour Howard) was summoned home by the death of his father, and the acquisition of 12,000*l.* a year.

Muley Eidor Moratcham was a gentleman of actively indolent disposition. His pleasure was to saunter through life from sentiment to sentiment. He consoled himself for the loss of his English companion by lounging through Europe for a year or two, and writing to the prettiest women he met in his travels the prettiest verses in the Persian style. He had one quality, rare in a Mussulman. Some people say they can enjoy walking or riding through woods and fields even without the excitement of killing birds and foxes: and in the same way it pleased Muley Eidor to follow the footsteps and admire the features of beauty without any destructive purpose. He found as

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much pleasure in contemplating the living lineaments of Eve's daughters as an Italian in gazing on the marble goddesses that still consecrate the classic soil of his country, or an Englishman in studying the pedigree and proportions of his racehorses. Thus he had become a perfect connoisseur in every detail of female loveliness; and was, in fact, the first person who discovered that the right hand of the Venus de Medici is too short by a full hair's breadth. All knowledge finds its way at last to our own country: and, when Muley Eidor had seen all that was to be seen, and known all that was to be known, of the women of Greece, Italy, Spain, Germany, and France, it occurred to him that instruction and amusement might be derived from personal investigation on the spot into the truth of a report he had heard in those countries that the women of England surpass all others—in the size of their feet. He therefore accepted from Vavasour Howard an invitation to our celebrated island. Vavasour Howard was a great diner out, and a great talker. Soon, therefore, it was rumoured about London that a young, rich, and handsome Asiatic was come to spend the season in town. 'He is prodigiously fond of you women,' said Vavasour.

'Does he bring his seraglio with him?' asked the handsome Mrs. A——.

'What is the colour of his handkerchief?' sighed Lady Ophelia. All London was in a tumult.

'He will ride in the Park to-morrow,' said Vavasour, and the Park was as full as a Downing Street drum when the Ministerial majority is doubtful. The Ride was a whispering gallery.

'What o'clock is it? Have you heard when he is to be here?'

'Where is Mr. Vavasour Howard?'

'I wonder what height he is?'

'Do you think he wears a beard?'

'How many wives do they say he has?'

'Has he room for any more?'

'Why you know he's a Mussulman.'

'Oh, mamma, what is a Mussulman?'

'But *do* be serious. Is he really so very, *very* rich?'

'Can we get him to Crocky's?'

'Brought over any nice little Arabian tits with him?'

'How is he dressed?'

'Does he look like Othello?'

'Good heavens, there he is!'

'No really, where is he?'

'Ah, how beautiful!'

'Don't see him? That's he.'

'La, how funny!'

'Magnificent man!'

'Superb horse!'

'Queer costume!'

'How droll!'

'How divine!'

The interesting object of these remarks, mounted on a thoroughbred Arab, dressed in the graceful costume of his country, attended by two Oriental servants, and accompanied by Mr. Vavasour Howard, rode slowly through the admiring crowd.

'Your English people are fond of staring,' said he.

'Yes,' replied Vavasour, 'it is their habit to stare at each other in a hot room without saying a word for four hours at a time. But they mean it affectionately, and call it "seeing their friends."'

'Houris and heavens!' exclaimed Muley, 'never did I see eyes by which it was so delightful to be surveyed. Who is that? and that? and that? Ah, I am like the dervish who was permitted by the fairy to see all the wonders of her realm, but not to touch them!'

'Why not?' said Vavasour.

'Bless me,' whispered the pretty Miss May to Lady Evergreen, 'what a look he gave me as he passed! just as if he would like to eat me.'

'Insolent barbarian!' said her companion. 'Is there anything wrong with my turban?'

'Fine beard,' observed Lord Absalon, stroking his own.

'Deuced queer colour though,' said Captain Carrot. 'Tyrian dye, I suppose.'

The charming Lady Dashington beckoned from her carriage. Vavasour Howard rode up to it.

'Dear Mr. Vavasour, can you bring him to my ball to-morrow? Do try!'

'Ah, Lady Dashington!'

'How foolish you are!'

'Then I *shall* see you to-night, after the opera?'

'Oh, Vavasour!'

'Why so cruel to one who adores you?'

'But will you never forsake me?'

'How can you doubt my devotion?'

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'Then I suppose it must be. Insinuating creature! What temptation we poor women are exposed to! But *do* tell me. What is the story about throwing the handkerchief, *and all that*?

'Beautiful Lady Dashington, I will explain it to you this evening most satisfactorily—after the opera. 'Tis the prettiest thing in the world.'

Happy Lady Dashington! her ball was the greatest success of the season. The unfortunate Duchess of Belfont, a rival beauty, had, in the pride of her heart, fixed the same night for a similar entertainment. She had dared to anticipate full rooms for herself and empty ones for the odious Dashington. But alas for the vanity of mortal expectations! No sooner was it rumoured that the dear Persian would be on view at Dashington House than there came, oh, such heaps of excuses from the dearest of friends to the dearest of duchesses. The poor Duchess was seized with an influenza, put off her ball, went to Tonbridge Wells for the recovery of her health, and left the lively Dashington in full possession of the field. Our Persian shone forth like the orb once worshipped by his countrymen. He rose at Dashington House, and careered in glory through the three summer months which compose a London winter. The Grand Seigneur himself, in the bosom of his seraglio, was never so caressed by rival sultanas. Muley Eidor Moratcham grew thinner and thinner as his engagements waxed thicker and thicker: and, at last, having exactly ascertained the number of inches that go to a foot in the fair measurement of the fairest portion of the finest English world, as also the causes which make consumption so common in our country, he packed up all his accoutrements, burnt two-thirds of his voluminous correspondence, took an affectionate leave of Vavasour Howard, and, armed this time with restorative cordials instead of blunderbusses, retraced his way to Dover.

Next to Vavasour I held the most prominent place in his esteem. For I understood the Persian language, and had translated his favourite poems. We talked together about love and literature, Hafiz and Houris. Before he left the country he gave me, with the most flattering expressions of his regard, a huge heap of papers containing his observations on all that had most attracted his attention in England. I found amongst them many choice remarks upon English beauty and English character, and some very curious treatises upon our institutions and manufactures, our morals, manners, and politics. There is one, for instance, upon the Parliament and the Gingerbread, another upon the Spirituous Liquors and

Spiritual Creeds, of England. These manuscripts (originally written, it would appear, for the instruction of one Haroun Hassan of Ispahan) are numerous enough to supply any flourishing cheesemonger with wastepaper for a whole year. I have here translated only a few of them.

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A word or two must now be said about the metaphysical studies mentioned by my father in one of his letters to Mrs. Cunningham. All that remains of his notes upon them is too crude and confused to be of any general, or even any biographical, interest without lengthy explanations which would here be out of place. But they were the beginning of a kind of reading to which he frequently returned in later years. Metaphysics and moral science attracted him by their relation to character; of which he was, by disposition as well as profession, an habitual student. I do not think, however, that he sought or discovered in them any other source of serious interest. Goethe found in Spinoza a theory of the universe and man which satisfied his mind to the exclusion of every other philosophy, and indirectly animated his art. Schiller found the same in Kant; George Eliot seems to have found it in Comte; and possibly the animating influence of Mr. Herbert Spencer, or the late Mr. Mill, may hereafter be discovered in some work of imagination not yet written. But my father's creations responded to the guidance of no single philosopher, and contain no artistic illustration of the maxims of any particular school or system of philosophy. His conception of human life, in all its moral and social relations, was derived directly from the empirical observation of life itself; and, although physical science was almost the only department of knowledge from which he was content to remain excluded, he had certainly no great reverence for the metaphysical method as an instrument of inquiry. In short, he regarded the employment of it as a kind of intellectual and by no means profitless gymnastic, rather than as a practical opening into any of the hidden avenues to truth.

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Hume, whose metaphysical essays he read eagerly and carefully at Cambridge, was the one, perhaps, among all the writers of that class who stood highest with him as a thinker.

Though I am myself opposed (he wrote in a letter I once had from him) to Hume's theological conclusions, I do not hesitate to assert of his philosophical scepticism that it was not only pregnant with suggestion but immensely beneficial in its results. He has given to the whole philosophy of Europe a new direction, and to him must be referred, directly or indirectly, every subsequent advance in philosophical speculation.

In the year 1826, however, he was more vividly impressed by the literary merits and knowledge of the world, which he found in Helvetius.

We want (he then wrote to a friend in England) some good translation of the works of Hume's great contemporary. There is this difference between the two. Hume drew his conclusions from his own solitary mind. He had great learning and exquisite taste (for everything but the grand), but he profited little by intercourse with society; little by discussion, argument, and the conflict and comparison of minds. Helvetius, on the contrary, brought to bear upon his book the collected and concentrated wisdom of the deepest thinkers and shrewdest observers in France. It is not a mere philosophical treatise. It is the essence of the philosophy of that day, intensely brooded over by a mind of wonderful power, and then slowly arranged into a system; the thinking of a thousand minds systematised by one.

It is still in the year 1826 that this list of subjects for intended essays appears in one of his note-books:—

1. Perfectibility.
2. Knowledge of the World.
3. The Merits of La Bruyère.
4. Vauvenargues (overrated).
5. Ambition.
6. Early Love.
7. Churchyards.
8. Wit.

9. The Proper Aim of Satire.
10. Wilhelm Meister.
11. The Love of Improving our Fellow Creatures.

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None of these essays, I think, were written; but many of the memoranda made for them have been incorporated, more or less, into various works of greater length. Altogether, the note-books of 1826 indicate the direction in which my father's mind was now turning. With the exception of a few desultory remarks on Bentham, all his studies at this time appear to have been purely literary.

Yet even in the pursuit of literature the political bent of his mind was continually revealing itself. Thus, in a 'Sketch of the Progress of English Poetry,' written in 1826,¹ a passing reference to the 'Land of Cockayne' and 'Richard of Alemaigne' (the one an allegorical satire on the luxury of the Church, and the other a ballad written after the battle of Lewes, 1264), suggests the observation that 'these poems are valuable *because they show the temper of the times*;' and forthwith this sketch of the progress of English poetry diverges from its nominal subject into a long political review of the state of England during the thirteenth century. Robert of Gloucester, though his work is of no poetical worth, appears to have been studied with an attention which the student did not consider wasted on '*so minute and accurate a chronicler*.' Robert de Brunne is treated with the same respect on the same ground, whilst Adam Davie is dismissed with the observation that 'his visions in verse are apparently original.' An attempt to analyse the metrical structure of the verse of Langlande is no sooner begun than it gives place to an inquiry pursued, with great vivacity, through nearly forty pages of manuscript, as to '*How far did Chaucer and Langlande contribute by their works to the Reformation in England?*'

The 'Sketch' stops at the reign of Henry VII., and is

¹ From the beginning of the twelfth century to the reign of Henry VII.

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followed by a few incisive notes upon the poets of later times : a laconic record of the author's estimate, at the age of twenty-three, of the various schools of English poetry. In these notes, again, the Elizabethan poets are noticed chiefly in reference to the illustrations found in them of 'the influence of the Reformation upon our imaginative literature ;' and indications of the social condition of the country under Mary Tudor are sought from Lord Sackville's gloomy '*Mirror of Magistrates.*' Great admiration is expressed of Peele's blank verse. Marlowe '*is in my opinion rather overrated.*' The famous address, however, of Faustus to the image of Helen is much praised ; whilst the fine sonority of the verse in Tamberlain is condemned as '*windy turbulence of sound.*' From Shakspeare to Pope the opinions expressed are short and explicit. For instance, Hall, '*a coarse but admirable satirist.*' Donne, '*much inferior.*' Greene, Lodge, Legge, '*very mediocre.*' Jonson, '*stands preeminent.*' Massinger, '*one of the few poets whose writings retain little hold on my memory, although I have read him often ; never with much interest.*' Beaumont and Fletcher, '*streams bearing mud and gold mixed in equal proportions.*' Cowley and his followers, '*heroes of conceits and metaphysics.*' Denham, Carew, Waller, '*a purer and more classical school, but without genius.*' Herrick, '*a poet after my own heart : his richness of fancy and exuberance of feeling, delicious.*' Hudibras, '*the one gem amidst the dull grossness and flippant insipidity of the poets of the Restoration.*' Dryden, '*the true English poet. Except in his plays, rough, manly, with a quick and joyous perception of beauty and power.*' Pope, '*has lately added to "the laurels never sure" the honour of Mr. Bowles's abuse ; but his versification, though smooth and sweet, wants power, variety, and musical compass.*' Of Gray he says, '*to him the modern school is under unacknowledged obligations. During the next fifty years beauty and melody of versification will be at their height. Opulence, too, of vocabulary. But the rough original stamp of genius in poetry may perhaps be*

lost in the polishing of the metal or the exuberance of the ornament.' CHAP. III.

A brief summary of the 'History of Portugal,' which fills a thick quarto of manuscript, was also begun in 1826, and ended in 1827. He seems, from his note-books for these two years, to have gone with care through the 'Persæ' and 'Prometheus' of Æschylus, to have begun the 'Inferno' of Dante, and to have made an elaborate study of the Latin Elegiasts. These habits and methods of note-making he continued throughout his life. Every year widened the range, and ripened the fruits, of his reading. Its recorded accumulations are astonishing. His commonplace books are nearly as voluminous as the whole of his published works. But it was not till a much later period of his literary life that the manifold information he had, at the outset of it, set himself to acquire from books, and then to refashion from his own observation of life and character, became completely assimilated in his mind. It then reproduced itself instinctively in the sort of playful erudition which gives a peculiar flavour to the humour of such works as the Caxton novels.

It was probably this element in them which led Mrs. Southey to say in a letter to the publisher of 'The Caxtons':— 'Who is the author of "The Caxtons"? And, as some excuse for my over-curious question, I will add that in reading the series of admirable papers still in course of appearance in *Maga*, I have been so struck throughout by the similarity (sentiment and style) to the writings of the person I most loved and honoured—the author of "The Doctor,"—that, but for my knowledge that he *did not* write "The Caxtons," and a passage here and there which he *would not* have written, I should have exclaimed over and over again "*This is none other than Robert Southey!*"'

I must confess myself unable to detect in my father's mind or writings any other resemblance to those of Robert Southey than that which is inseparable from the universality

BOOK of study common to the two men. They were both of them
VI. not only authors, but also men of letters in the only true
1826 sense of that much-abused term. And certainly no other
novelist of my father's own age and country has bestowed
upon the enrichment and elevation of his art anything like
the same opulence of literary knowledge.

Forty sixth page of the Manuscript of Falkland.

She did not wait for him to awake - She ⁴⁶
entered - at the first glance she ^{was among the person} had met her
by the lake on the day before, & she

flushed deeply as she replied to his
salutation - to her great relief Lady
Margaret & Mrs Dalton entered in a
few minutes & the conversation grew
general. . . .

Talk soon had lent little of a ~~flair~~ ^{flair} is
called animation in manner - but
his wit tho' it rarely led to misanth

CHAPTER IV.

'FALKLAND.' 1826. *Æt.* 22-3.CHAP.
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THE romance of 'Falkland' was completed in 1826, and published in 1827. It is the only one of my father's works which he composed, from beginning to end, without recourse to the sedative of tobacco: and for this reason its composition was slow and laborious. It was elaborated in the course of solitary rambles about the gardens and forests of Versailles, and there is scarcely a page of it that was not written over and over again. The transfer to paper of the ideas which shaped themselves in the author's mind during those long walks and rides involved a sedentary process almost intolerably irksome to the natural restlessness of his exuberant physical activity. From this restlessness he afterwards found great relief in tobacco-smoking; and from that time forward he was an habitual smoker. 'Falkland' is not a novel, was not meant to be a novel, and ought not to be judged as a novel. It is what in these days would be called 'a study of sentiment;' the history and analysis of an illicit love, treated with an insight into all the gradations of such a passion, which would be surprising in so youthful a writer if juvenile experience was not notoriously richer than that of age in the knowledge of those sentiments which are serious occupations only to the young. The tale of 'Mortimer,' written in the same vein as 'Falkland,' and afterwards developed into 'Pelham,' had been finished in London before my father's second visit to France. Speaking of it in the

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preface to an edition of 'Pelham' published in 1835, he says :—

Soon afterwards I went abroad. On my return, I sent to Mr. Colburn for publication, a collection of letters which, for various reasons, I afterwards worked up into a fiction, and which (greatly altered from their original form) are now known to the public under the name of 'Falkland.' While correcting the sheets of that tale for the press, I became aware of many of its faults ; but it was not till it was fairly before the public that I was sensible of its greatest fault—namely, a sombre colouring of life and the indulgence of a vein of sentiment which, though common enough to all very young minds in their first bitter experience of the disappointments of the world, had certainly ceased to be new in its expression, and had never been true in its philosophy. The effect produced upon my mind by the composition of that work was exactly similar to what Goethe says of the relief given to his thoughts and feelings after he had thrown off the morbid excitement of them in the production of Werther. I had rid my bosom of the perilous stuff. I had confessed my sins and was absolved. I could return to real life and its wholesome objects.

My father subsequently withdrew this book, and not till after his death did it reappear in any edition of his works.¹ His maturer judgment condemned it as a production which, though not immoral in its intention, might have a harmful influence upon the class of readers most likely to be interested by it. It need hardly be said that this was not his opinion when he

¹ The reasons which induced the author's son to restore it to the first posthumous edition of them are thus stated in the preface to the Knebworth edition of *Falkland* (1875) :—

'Those who read the tale of *Falkland* eight-and-forty years ago have long survived the age when character is influenced by the literature of sentiment. The readers to whom it is now presented are not Lord Lytton's contemporaries; they are his posterity. To them his works have already become classical. It is only upon the minds of the young that works of sentiment have any appreciable moral influence. But the sentiment of each age is peculiar to itself; and the purely moral influence of sentimental fiction seldom survives the age to which it was first addressed. The youngest and most impressionable reader of such works as the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, *Werther*, *The Robbers*, *Corinne*, or *René*, is not now likely to be morally influenced for good or ill, by the perusal of those masterpieces of genius.'

wrote it. He resented the charge of immorality to which it exposed him ; and to that charge he made a lengthened reply (now long out of print) which I here condense :—

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Two things are to be considered in relation to the morality of a book. 1. The moral maxim it illustrates ; which we call the *moral* of it. 2. The moral effect which, on the whole, it is likely to produce ; and this we call the *tendency* of it. The two are not inseparable. A book with a good moral may have a most pernicious tendency, and one with an admirable tendency may have a very defective moral. The tales of Marmontel are written for the purpose of illustrating excellent maxims. They have the most immoral tendencies. The plays of Molière illustrate pernicious maxims, but have the most useful and beneficial tendencies.

On both grounds, the charge of immorality is inapplicable to 'Falkland.' The subject of the book is the progress and severe punishment of an unlawful passion. The moral maxim which it illustrates is, therefore, the *punishment of vice*. Is this immoral ? But to say that virtue is virtuous, and vice vicious, does not (as La Bruyère observes) make either vice or virtue a whit more acknowledged. The moral maxim of the book is, I admit, useless, if unsupported by its moral tendency.

What is the tendency of 'Falkland' ? 'To make vice beautiful,' you say. I reply that this is impossible. We may admire a vicious character but not the vice of it. What do we admire in the Richard III. of Shakespeare ? His treachery ? his cruelty ? his hypocrisy ? No, we admire in him only his courage, his wit, his profundity, his genius. These may partly blind us to his vices, but they do not induce us to love them, nor do we esteem the qualities that degrade, but those which redeem, the character. For which reason, I could not have induced, even if I would, any virtuous reader of 'Falkland' to love vice. But I might have endeavoured to render the readers of this book enamoured of a vicious character. Had I done so I should have given to the book a vicious tendency ; and yet I should have done no more than has been done before me by Richardson and Le Sage, and Fielding and Scott, and every dramatist. It would still remain a problem whether I had abandoned morality by adhering to nature. But, at the expense of my vanity as an author, I must aver that this I have not done. I say at the expense of my vanity, because it requires a great intellectual exertion on the part of an author

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to render a vicious character really captivating. It is only in the capacity of a lover that the character of Falkland is to be considered in reference to this charge of immorality. As a man, he has much to redeem him from censure; as a lover, absolutely nothing. Selfish, exacting, vain, reckless of the happiness of his mistress, devoted only to the gratification of his own, he possesses all the qualities that most displease us in the character of a lover. So that even in this respect I have not offended, for I have rendered my vicious hero as thoroughly unamiable as I have shown him to be unprosperous; and it is impossible either to sympathise with his character or to commiserate his fate.

What, then, was the purpose of the book? A far wider, and I think a far higher, one than the trite illustration of any moral maxim however excellent. This purpose was to increase the knowledge of our nature by displaying the passions and workings of the heart. It is the observation of a shallow criticism that there is much in the human heart which ought not to be described. But the observation is as untrue of literature as it is of surgery. The physician might as well be forbidden to explore all that is defective in the formation of the body, as the literary student of character to investigate what is vicious in the constitution of the mind. In every department whether of literature or of science, knowledge (whatever be its province or its sphere) is the legitimate aim of our intellect; its acquisition is the best moral we can inculcate, its extension the widest blessing we can bestow. It is *because* it traces the passions and reveals the heart (and not *in spite of* its doing this) that fiction is the noblest vehicle of morality. And therefore it is that the theatre is more potent than the porch, that novelists are more useful than essayists, the poems of Homer more instructive than the hymns of Watts, and the tragedy of Macbeth of greater value than Dr. Gregory's advice to his daughters.

Now, I may have failed in my endeavour to delineate truthfully the passions I have studied to describe. Goodness is so little esteemed in comparison with sense, that the most modest of men may without apology assert the sincerity of his heart, whilst none but an inveterate coxcomb dare insist on the strength of his head. But to have made the attempt in the prosecution of so excellent an object will suffice, in the eyes of the charitable, to excuse some faults; and the least success in such an attempt ought to redeem many. Authors are no more infallible than readers, nor are they better judges of the moral merit of their works. But whatever be

the moral defects in this work of mine, I conscientiously assert that they are not the fruits of an evil intention; and that, in endeavouring to please, I have not studied to pervert.

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This *apologia* is a curiously unconscious mixture of truth and fallacy about literature.

During the ten years of authorship which followed the publication of 'Falkland,' the ripening of my father's critical judgment was not less remarkable than the development of his productive power, and in an admirable criticism of the novels of Paul de Kock which he contributed to the 'Edinburgh Review' in 1837, he has himself supplied the answer to what is unsound in this defence of his own first work.

To the novelist (he says in his Edinburgh article) the proper sphere of morality is twofold—that of the effects of the passions on individuals—that of the effect of social circumstance on character. The last is often the most generally salutary, for it seeks to amend not only individuals but society itself. But it is often also the most dangerous. We are not quite sure, for instance, whether novels like 'Tom Jones,' which, in seeking to unmask hypocrisy, lend too great a charm to the errors of a frank and cordial nature, are as safe for young readers—who are rarely Blifils and frequently Joneses—as they may be for sober philosophers who have passed the grand climacteric. The novelist should ever remember that the class he addresses is the very widest an author can command—that it comprehends all dispositions, all ranks, all ages, all countries. He ought to be aware that a fiction can never so thoroughly open all the bearings of a truth, but that a truth itself should be presented to the world with every possible precaution against such one-sided views of it as are ever productive of error. Physical anatomy is a most useful science, but there have been writers who have made anatomy subservient to the grossest impurities. There is a mental anatomy as well as a physical one, by which we may render intellectual instruction a pander to the passions. To be moral is ever to be philosophical; but to be philosophical is not always to be moral.

It was, however, on religious rather than social grounds that this book incurred the disapproval of one whose judgment

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on such a question my father held in higher reverence than that of any other critic. The following letter was written to him by his mother immediately after her perusal of 'Falkland.'

Mrs. Bulwer Lytton to her son.

I cannot wait till I see you, for the expression of my sentiments about 'Falkland.' Yet I know not how to express my astonishment at the really wonderful power of your imagination. In reading a book of this kind one expects to be gratified by sentiments well and gracefully expressed, and by a tale told with interest and pathos. But interested as I was about the *dénouement* of 'Falkland,' almost every page of it has forced me to pause by the way in amazement at the power with which it is written; and I may say that I am still lost in wonder at such a production by so young a man. I cannot better express my ideas about your *exquisite* delineations of character than by comparing them to a beautiful portrait by one of our first masters. So startling is the insight of its whole conception, and so fine the delicate finish of all its details, that your work is, to others of its kind, what one of their masterpieces is to a sign-board daub. Compared with it, they all seem coarse and clumsy, and untrue to nature. Any person who does not feel this must be incapable of feeling the charm of intellectual power; and I don't think any *woman* could read 'Falkland' without being startled by its insight into the innermost nature of a woman's thoughts and feelings. There are some of those feelings, so unlike a man's, which a woman when she feels them most is perhaps least able to express or even understand. But we can all of us tell by instinct or experience, when we read of them in a book, whether its author has truthfully represented and interpreted them. 'Falkland' is certainly the production of an imagination of no common order.

And yet, proud as I am of its being written by you, in one respect it has disappointed and grieved me. Ah, my dear Edward, how delighted I should be to behold in you a champion of Christianity. Of those to whom much is given much is required. You may be sure of that. Consider, dear child, the parable of the talents. When I began this letter I had not read the whole of 'Falkland;' not that part of it where he is in Spain. I have now finished the

book. And oh, what a pity the end of it should not assimilate with the rest! That in that soliloquy of the author's, after Falkland's reflections upon death, so little of the spirit of Christianity should be visible! What impression can these sentiments make upon the mass of your readers? that the author has no belief in a state after death which has any relation to the conduct of life, and that he rejects the religion which commands us to regulate the conduct of life in the faith that it will be judged after death. Certainly too much speculation puzzles and confuses the mind. It is best to love and obey. By seeking fruitless knowledge man lost Paradise, and when, by the aid of such knowledge alone, he sought to reach the heavens, his language was confounded, and the unity of his life dispersed.

My dear Edward, what a different, what a much better, moral you might have given to your book had you only altered the last two pages of it! How I wish I could have seen them in manuscript! What sort of a moral does it contain now? None that points to any reason why a man should greatly care by what road he reaches annihilation. There can be no purpose in life without faith in death, and no moral worth where there is no moral purpose. You paint your hero as superior to the rest of his species. You wish us to recognise his superiority; for you have no right to interest us so powerfully in his feelings and his fate, if they are not those of a person entitled to our admiration or our sympathy. But what does his superiority consist of? And what does it all come to? Presumptuous egotism! selfish vanity in attachments that do no good to their possessor, and do harm to others. Child, this is unworthy of you. Appreciate yourself better. You have a life full of purpose because you have a soul full of power. Why write as if you thought that power could exist without purpose, or purpose without belief? Vain are all the acquirements of learning, vain all the aspirations of genius, if the only superiority they can achieve is a superiority of wretchedness.

In the character which the author of 'Falkland' thought fit to give to his disagreeable hero, religious scepticism was a perfectly natural element. But there was certainly no such scepticism in his own character. Nor is it easy to perceive how the moral of the book could be improved by any alteration in the last two chapters of it, as suggested in this letter. To the sanctity of social conventions, Fiction can

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only do homage by the employment of other conventions prescribed by art for the regulation of its own conduct; and the miscarriage of 'poetical justice' (itself a supreme convention) cannot properly be imputed to any work of imagination which fulfils that established condition. Morality would seem to be sufficiently observed in the conduct of this fiction by the prompt and terrible punishment of its hero and heroine for their moral aberrations. To have made Falkland, on his deathbed, a model of Christian faith and penitence, dying happy and calm 'in the confident expectation of a glorious resurrection,' would have been, not an improvement in the moral of the book, but an unpardonable outrage upon the moral sense of its least fastidious readers. Nor would it have been less revolting had the author himself attempted to preach, over the dead body of his hero, an orthodox sermon on the text that virtue is better than vice. All such inappropriate sermonising in the delineation of sexual sentiment and passion is an intellectual sin committed in a province of the emotions so close to that of ethics, that the violation of the æsthetic proprieties destroys all confidence in the ethical sense of the author who commits it. It is the great and unpardonable defect of the '*Nouvelle Héloïse*.'

But the immoral influence attributed, or attributable, to works of this description, has its sources, not in the incidents they describe, but in the sentiments they excite. If, as a matter of fact, young and impressionable readers are induced by the perusal of them to rebel against the established code of domestic morals, then the strength of the inducement will probably be in proportion to the truth and power with which sentiment and passion are represented in such works as what they actually are; tremendous realities in human life, and especially in the life of the young. In that case, the greater the merit of the book, regarded as a work of art or genius, the worse is the mischief it may do. This consideration presents itself under different aspects to the politician and the

poet. The author of 'Falkland' was both; and his sense of literary responsibility increased with his increasing consciousness of literary influence. He had, at all times, a strong faith in the influence of literature upon popular sentiment, and of popular sentiment upon national institutions. He watched with the interest of a politician the experiment of middle-class government in France, and read with the appreciation of a poet the magnificent imaginative literature which renders the reign of Louis Philippe one of the most brilliant epochs in the intellectual history of the French nation. But, as his political judgment matured, he could not fail to perceive that the pervading sentiment of that literature must sooner or later prove fatal to the duration of a middle-class monarchy.

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No political system based on the ascendancy of the middle classes can have any stronger foundation than the respect shown by those classes themselves to the principles and sentiments which constitute the very essence of their own respectability. What a middle class must represent in any community of which it is the governing power, has been truly and tersely defined by M. Guizot, speaking on its behalf as the Minister of the French Bourgeoisie. *L'Esprit de famille, l'empire des sentiments et des mœurs domestiques*, these must guide the policy and animate the example of a ruling middle class. From the moment in which such a class ceases to reverence the presiding sanctities of social order, or begins to welcome, as liberal and enlightened, notions that assail them, its political ascendancy is doomed.

But the common characteristic of all the imaginative writers most studied and extolled by the French Bourgeoisie during its brief political supremacy was undisguised contempt of every principle and sentiment essential to the preservation of that supremacy. In their works the betrayed husband figures as a fool or a brute; the faithless wife as a suffering angel; the adulterer as her legitimate champion. They portray the convict as a prodigy of natural goodness

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spoiled by vicious institutions; the priest as an impostor; the noble as a blackleg; the trader as a knave; the working man as the sole possible regenerator of a society thoroughly corrupted by property, law, and religion.

Now my father entered public life full of faith and hope in the stability of the new constitution given to England by the Reform Bill of 1832. But the Orleans monarchy of 1830 was not more substantially the coronation of the French middle classes than the Reform Bill of 1832 was the investment of the English middle classes with a very preponderant power in the State. The whole literature of the Victorian age has been a literature addressed mainly to an upper middle-class public; and my father, when, in later life, he began to review his own contributions to it, was scrupulously anxious that their influence should be, if possible, conducive, but in no case prejudicial, to the healthy condition of a society in which the satisfactory duration of representative government had become increasingly dependent on the social virtues, intelligence, and courage of the middle class. Hence the suppression of 'Falkland.'

The book, when first published, was almost unnoticed by the press. After the publication of 'Eugene Aram,' however, it was, to use the expression of one of its American reviewers, 'resuscitated by the success of its younger brothers,' and involved in the indiscriminate abuse then freely poured out upon them all by their English critics. It was, said those critics, 'pernicious without being entertaining,' 'dull from the paucity of its incidents,'¹ and 'deprived of all pretension to be an instructive performance by its unjust and heartless views of human nature.' It is curious to contrast with these unqualified utterances the opinions expressed, at the same time, by the German critics. In a very elaborate

¹ Of this 'dull' book Lady Blessington says in one of her letters to its author: 'At Paris in 1830, during the very heat of the Revolution, when balls were striking against the walls of my dwelling, I forgot all danger while reading "Falkland."'

and careful examination of the author's genius and place in European literature, Dr. Wolfgang Menzel, the historian, observed :

CHAP.
IV.

Æt. 22-3

Of all Mr. Bulwer's works I think 'Falkland' one of the most admirable. The story of it is simple, and the incidents of the most ordinary character; but with what genius is it treated! Falkland is neither a *Lovelace* nor a *Werther*, but a combination of both. To some extent this combination exists in all men: and to that extent Falkland is more natural than either *Werther* or *Lovelace*. In treating subjects of this kind, German and Italian writers lay most stress on the passionate, French writers on the cynical, side of the matter. Our Englishman unites in himself the two aspects of it, and in each he is perfectly natural; for who can fix the boundaries between affection and passion? The exquisite womanliness of the heroine is portrayed by a master hand. No writers succeed so well as the English in depicting the soft and lovely elements of female character. Compared with the heroines of the English novelists those of the French seem mere coquettes, and those of the German silly provincial schoolgirls. But in this Bulwer stands unrivalled, even amongst his countrymen. More than any other modern novel 'Falkland' resembles the 'Orphelins' of the younger Cr billon: not in its construction but in its truth to nature. The respective heroines of these two fictions are perfectly different, but they feel and act similarly under the influence of the same passion. And this, because they are true women, and because, in each case, the working of that passion is described by an author who understands it. Love's riddle is simple enough; but how few are the writers about love who are able to read it! 'Falkland,' like all Bulwer's works, is remarkable for its background.

Dr. Menzel's criticism concludes with an analysis of the art by which the character of the scenery is made to assist the interpretation of the sentiment in 'Falkland.'

In this thoughtful and admirably written work (said another German critic in 1831) the author shows himself to be no less excellent as a psychologist than he is in his other novels as a painter of manners. The task he has here undertaken is to lay bare, in all its workings, the morbid self-torturing temperament of those unhappy

Morgenblatt, 1832.

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persons who are, as it were, the busybodies of their own natures. They are always prying into the secrets of their own hearts, and denouncing themselves to themselves. Yet, after suffering causeless self-reproach about trifles, they end at last by becoming the unconscious deceivers and betrayers of the very ideals they have so fastidiously worshipped. The author has admirably depicted such a character, with the evident intention of showing us that it is precisely men of this over-philosophically virtuous disposition who put themselves in the greatest danger of falling into some unattonable sin; because by their habit of morbid self-inspection they have gradually undermined the natural instinctive perceptions of right and wrong. The story of 'Falkland' is managed with great simplicity and truth. Ordinary events lead naturally up to the tragic catastrophe. The concluding scenes are extremely vivid and touching. The *dénouement*, and, indeed, the whole conduct of the narrative, are the productions of a singularly observant, thoughtful, and penetrative mind. The characters are firmly drawn and forcibly felt. The incidents, though few and simple, are well conceived and arranged for the peculiar purpose of the tale. The whole subject is treated in perfect taste; and a powerfully impressive effect is gradually produced by a skilful succession of light and delicate touches.¹

The same estimate of a work unanimously declared by its English reviewers to be 'pernicious,' 'uninstructive,' and 'unentertaining,' was expressed much about the same time by a third German critic.

It is (he observed) only towards the end of the book that the external movement of the story becomes animated, and yet from beginning to end no part of it is monotonous. The greater part of it is told by means of letters and diaries. Apart from the principal actors and their adventures there are few characters, and fewer incidents. But nevertheless the book abounds in richly varied interest, created by the vividness with which the feelings described in it pass quite naturally from one phase into another, and by the remarks of a writer who not only sees into the secretest depths of the human heart, but who understands clearly, and feels deeply, what he sees. Since 'Falkland' was written its author has gained in power of invention and breadth of humour. His grouping is fuller, his colouring more brilliant. But in insight and sympathy, in

¹ *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung*, 1831.

nobleness and tenderness of spirit, this, his earliest work, still remains unsurpassed by any of his later writings.¹

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IV.

ÆT. 22-3

It is not because they are eulogistic that I have thought it worth while to introduce into my father's biography these few extracts from the earliest German criticisms of his first work. I place them here, partly because they are the only criticisms of the work in which there is evidence of a desire to understand the purpose, and examine the art, of it; but mainly because they illustrate a conspicuous condition of the literary life I am recording—a condition likely to claim reiterated notice in the course of my record.

The literature of contemporary criticism is, in all countries and ages, ephemeral and soon forgotten. Those who now read the novels of Fielding, Richardson, Smollett, or Scott, neither read nor care to read what was written about them by the reviewers of their own time; and we may be sure that, if the writings of to-day find any place in the literature of to-morrow, it will be a place wholly unpenetrated by the critical jurisdiction of yesterday. But when the influence of an original writer has been extended during his lifetime beyond the limits of his own country, it is already on its way beyond the limits of his own age: and it is in the impressions made by his works upon contemporary critics not in his own but in other countries, that he is most likely to find some indication of the probable character of his permanent place in general literature. This happens, I think, from two causes. In the first place, almost every original writer has some mannerisms or tricks of style which, as they lie on the surface of his work, are what strike most quickly the notice of those who read it in his own language and country. The degree of pleasure or displeasure excited in local literary coteries by these superficial idiosyncrasies is generally out of all proportion to their relative importance in reference to the intrinsic merits or defects of the work. But that part of a book which best stands and

¹ *Allgemeine Litteratur-Zeitung*. Jena: 1830.

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oftenest survives the test of translation is the mind that is in it—the thoughts, the ideas, the sentiments, or the knowledge, it is capable of conveying to other minds. And, as these are of the very essence of the book, it is upon their character that its permanent interest mainly depends.¹ In the next place, the foreign critics of a book or a writer, though sometimes influenced by national prejudices, and even animosities, can rarely be subject to the smaller political or personal sentiments which do, more or less unconsciously, influence the whole tone of an author's contemporary critics in his own country; especially in a country like ours where political activity is so extensive and incessant, that almost every department of intellectual work is to some extent invaded by the influence of political party, and every writer discussed in relation to his actual or possible influence upon ideas which are in some way or other connected with conflicting political principles.²

¹ 'Authority,' says Hume, 'or prejudice, may give a temporary vogue to a bad poet or orator; but his reputation will never be durable or general. When his compositions are examined by posterity, or by foreigners, the enchantment is dissipated, and his faults appear in their true colours. On the contrary, a real genius, the longer his works endure, and the more wide they are spread, the more sincere is the admiration which he meets with. Envy and jealousy have too much place in a narrow circle; and even familiar acquaintance with his person may diminish the applause due to his performances.'—*Essay* xxiii. : On the Standard of Taste.

² Prince Puckler-Muskau was an intelligent, and not unkindly, observer of English society. He had excellent opportunities of studying it in its most favourable aspects; and no feature of it appears to have more surprised him than the inability or disinclination of its leading members to think and judge for themselves in matters relating to religion, politics, literature, and individual character. 'An Englishman,' he says, 'is much less guided by his own observation than is generally imagined. He always attaches himself to some party with whose eyes he sees.'—*Letters by a German Prince*, vol. i. p. 167.

BOOK VII.

MATRIMONY

AND

PROFESSIONAL AUTHORSHIP

1826—1831



GATEWAY, KNEBWORTH PARK.

CHAPTER I.

UNCERTAINTY AND DEJECTION. 1826. *Æt.* 22-3.

My father's return to England, hastened by news of Miss Wheeler's ill health, was followed by a renewal of his intercourse with her. But not immediately: and his letters in the interval reveal both the uncertainty of his circumstances and the increasing dejection of his spirits.

CHAP.
I.
—
Æt. 22-3

Edward Bulwer to Mrs. Cunningham.

5 Upper Seymour Street: April 30, 1826.

Your letter reached me yesterday. I can only give it a short and hurried answer, as I am on the eve of leaving London. I am going into Hampshire, and shall afterwards throw myself into the Isle of Wight, or perhaps Jersey, for a month or two. Things are still undecided, though going on better than I had foreboded. In other respects I have much to harass and vex me. But—

'Come storm, come wrack,
At least we'll die with harness on our back.'

Or, in sober and less hyperbolical phrase, when all else fails us we

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find the friend of adversity in the best of our faculties—Fortitude. Your letter is somewhat frozen. But I know that beneath the ice there is a living current, and that it flows over a sand of gold; and so I content myself, and wait patiently for the next sunbeam. From my retreat you shall hear of me again. My health is wonderfully improved; but I was never so completely broken and disappointed in mind.

The Same to the Same.

Athenæum Club: May 8, 1826.

I am returned to London for two days only, and I take advantage of them to thank you for your letter, and give you some account of myself. I am still free—at least I may so call myself. But do not congratulate me. The thought of it gives me no pleasure. I cannot sufficiently express to you my admiration, my depth of . . . not love, for it is a nobler, and even a tenderer sentiment for . . . you know whom.¹ And yet I am wretched, and scarcely know what I am writing. Well, it is idle to complain. I will turn from this subject to some other. What shall it be? London? Town is to me as it is always. People in good society find it full and call it gay; people in the second set say it is dull. I have been nowhere, but once to—— It matters not where. All was music, and dancing, and ennui. I went there, not from choice but to see some one; and I could not see that person for hours. But I saw instead, S——; he was walking up and down, all curl and complacency; as fat and foolish as ever. I also saw W—— and asked him about Lady A—— The poor little man was quite frightened.

Is there anything else to tell you? No. Write to me one word about yourself. I cannot say that the road of the passions has conducted me to wisdom; and I believe you will find more wisdom in P—— than in me. It does not do, therefore, for me to talk of advice. But if there be anything in which such a sincere, unbiassed, disinterested, person who has outlived the ordinary springs of fear and selfishness which influence most men's opinions,—if there be anything in which such a person can serve you—need that person tell you of the pleasure it would give him? I have for years laid down one principle. I laid it down when I found how the heart hardened with years, and the petrifying customs of the world—that, whenever a feeling wholly selfish comes upon me, I will root it out and destroy

¹ Rosina Wheeler.

CHAP.
I.

Æt. 22-3

it immediately, whatever be the loss to myself. And from this resolution no sophistry shall deter, no blinding self-partiality delude, me. I do not speak of it from the desire of arrogating merit to myself. Heaven knows I have little wish to appear, even in your eyes, better than I am. But I say it in reference to something which has just occurred, and which deprives me, in all probability for years, of that refuge from reflection which it is peculiar to us men to seek in public life. I had long wished to represent in Parliament the chief town of my own county. Peculiar circumstances had secured its leading influence to the fulfilment of this wish. But directly I arrived in England I found that during my absence in France, I had been supplanted by the use made of letters and introductions I myself had given to another. This had been done from want of thought, not with any treacherous intention. Three words from me would at once have restored my claims and prospects. But five minutes' reflection sufficed to convince me that the utterance of them would be irreconcilable with my established rule. I not only expressed my satisfaction at the success which involved the renunciation of my long-formed plans and most cherished wishes, but, except from yourself, I have concealed the disappointment it costs me. That disappointment, however, is a keen one; for just now I had special cause for wishing to forget myself awhile in the new activities of a political life. However, I shall return to the country, bury myself among my books and papers, and turn from thoughts of the future, which we know not, to study of the past; which, perhaps, we cannot know too well. You tell me I am ambitious; but, at least, when ambition is weighed with those feelings which spring not from the scheming brain but the unpolluted heart, may it ever be with me 'as dust in the balance.' Farewell! and believe me, as said my own gallant forefather, Lord Falkland, 'that this comes from a true hand, and a loyal heart.'

To his correspondent the melancholy tone of this letter must have seemed without adequate cause in the apparent conditions and prospects of his life.

Do not (she replied) so bitterly regret your disappointment about Parliament. It is not yet time for you to become a statesman; you are only ¹ twenty-one. Go abroad, see Italy, freeze your too warm passions on Mont Blanc, or attempt the Jungfrau. All this, and much

¹ He was then nearly twenty-three.

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more, you have time to do. And yet, my dear little man, you will only then have arrived at the years of juvenile discretion. You will not know mankind better; for that divine puzzle requires years of experience before we even begin to find it out. But you must begin. And your great intellect will not help you much in that study. The one key-note is *self*; and it is sounded in every clime, in every tongue. In love, in hate, wherever you go you may trace it; and if you wish to rule others, you must make use of it. There is a lesson for you!

But it was no fanciful trouble that pursued my father from the spring to the autumn of 1826. He would probably have been better able to conquer his feelings for Miss Wheeler, had they been more emotional and more imaginative. What disarmed him was the seeming sobriety of the tenacious affection she had inspired. This threw him off his guard, because it appealed to his heart in a character that had little of the semblance of passion, and much of the appearance of duty. The thought of her attachment to him kept alive his love for her, by investing it with the fascinations of a self-sacrificing sentiment, whilst it infused some aspect of selfishness into every consideration that could fortify his endeavour to resist it. But there was still no prospect of his mother's assent to his marriage: and to marry, not only without her assent, but in the teeth of her strongly expressed disapproval, was a step from which he might well shrink, without reference to its effect upon his worldly prospects, even had his promise not been pledged to refrain from it. His situation, therefore, while he continued to avoid Miss Wheeler without being able to forget her, was every way painful. It left him no peace of mind, no pleasure in society, and no possibility of fruitful intellectual occupation. He seems to have passed the early part of this year between fits of feverish study and lonely desultory excursions; roaming about the country on foot or on horseback, and resting long nowhere. This depressed and agitated state of mind is reflected in the letters he wrote to Mrs. Cunningham from Knebworth in the months of May and June.

Edward Bulwer to Mrs. Cunningham.

Knebworth: May, 1826.

Æt. 23

Confess that I am a better correspondent than you. Your letter, long delayed, has come at last. I answer it by return of post. That, indeed, is a habit I generally adhere to, in order to save myself from the ill consequences of negligence, which my repugnance to letter-writing might otherwise bring upon me. Such consequences, however, I do not expect in my correspondence with you; because my antipathy to letter-writing in general is overcome by my affection in your particular instance. I agree with you in the opinion that we grow more wicked as we grow more old:—

‘ With each year’s decay
Fades, leaf by leaf, the heart’s young bloom away.
The thoughts most cherish’d darken from the breast,
And virtue grows less beautiful. We rest
Not on ourselves, but others: and we shroud
The lofty thoughts too sacred for the crowd,
And bend to their low level,—till the long
And gathering custom knits us with the throng.
Passion, nor feeling, nor the warmer springs
Which move mankind to high imaginings,
Have aught in common with the world. We grow
Too cold for transport, too obtuse for woe;
And, still as years come o’er us, vainer seem
Love’s boyish hope, and manhood’s patriot dream.
Day after day the spirit turns the more
From thoughts and ties it fondly sought before,
Till, to all other interests callous grown,
It shrinks, and cramps, and grapples to its own.’¹

So much for poetry. But before I quit the subject of it, let me remind you that you promised me my character in verse. If it be too severe, and for that reason you will not send it me, make it up at least by the same quantity of verses upon some other subject. I will not let you off a line. Your verses are too good to be lost, though your promises are faithless enough to be broken. I, *also*, am a foe to population, as exemplified in poor P——’s case. But when Irishmen and Irishwomen do get together without quarrelling, by the Lord Harry, it is a good thing for the midwife! Mr. Malthus

¹ These rough lines, somewhat smoothed and strengthened, were embodied in the poem of *O’Neil*; the greater part of which was completed at Versailles, before the date of this letter.

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and Mr. Mill, who have a great dread that some ten thousand years hence we shall be so numerous as to eat one another, for want of anything else to eat, say very solemnly that the only way to prevent this evil is to educate the children of the poor; and that, in proportion to the prudence thus instilled into them, they will despise the folly of propagation. Alas! it will be a sad time for the young folks in the month of May when Messrs. Mill and Malthus have made the world prudent. I wonder, by the by, what Mrs. Malthus says of the system. Perhaps she says, as everyone says of Political Economy in general, 'Tis all very well in *theory*, but when you come to *practice* . . . !' However, joking apart, I promise you that, as soon as I get into the House, I will do all I can against population. This subject brings me to that of Parliament. My two brothers are already canvassing, so that next year I hope I shall never want for a *frank*. But as for myself, . . . well, the King's health makes the duration of the present Parliament so uncertain, that for the next two or three years I shall devote all my time and efforts to the acquisition of a literary reputation. Afterwards, *nous verrons*. In all things, my favourite motto is that of Sir Philip Sidney (I will give it you in English, though it is only forcible in Latin), 'I will either find my road, or make it.' I cannot help feeling amused by our contest as to which of us has the pre-eminence in misfortune. If I say I am unhappy, your answer is, invariably, 'But, my dear Mr. Bulwer, I am much more so.' This assertion, I assure you, I am perfectly disposed to deny. It is somewhat strange that Misery should be a mistress of whose possession one is jealous; and that we should be loth to acknowledge a superior, even in misfortune. Perhaps there is a secret pride, unknown to ourselves, in being unhappy. But the human heart is so dark and intricate a labyrinth, that if, for one moment, we discover the clue through it, the next moment it drops from our grasp, as we stumble against some erroneous conclusion which it has not helped us to avoid: and we are eventually led back to the threshold of our knowledge by the reflection that we have taken the most prolix and pompous method of discovering our ignorance.

The promised sketch of his 'character in verse,' for which he asks in this letter, arrived in due time, and elicited the following acknowledgment:—

*Edward Bulwer to Mrs. Cunningham.*CHAP.
I.

Knebworth: June 25, 1826.

Æt. 23

My dear Friend,—In the first place, I have chosen the very thinnest paper I could find, in order to subject you to the least tax on your reception of my letters: nor, in this selection, have I been altogether without the hope that the thinness of the paper might be emblematic of myself, recalling past associations by a present tenuity appropriate to the subject of them. In the second place, your beautiful verses——. There, now, my pen has stopped at the word verses for five minutes, in order to give me time for words to express how sensibly I was touched and affected, not so much by the compliment your lines convey, flattering and exaggerated though it be, as by the good opinion of me which your sincerity teaches me to believe you entertain. From praise there is this advantage to be derived: we seek to deserve it. And to the grace and elegance of *your* praise there is only one answer to be made, and from it only one conclusion to be drawn.

‘They best can give it who deserve it best.’

H—— has lost his election by letting sixty voters be decoyed from him, notwithstanding *their* promise to vote, and *his* to pay. I pity him. And this brings me to a remark I here submit to your knowledge of the world (which, by the by, is always differing from mine). This remark is, that *very clever people indeed* always have *the most common sense*: *moderately* clever people, the *least*. No, you won't allow it?—neither will the world in general. But I, who claim the right divine to differ from everybody else, assert it is a truism.

My dear friend, reconcile yourself with things as they are. You complain of them. Perhaps you are but too right. Yet you bear them also, and you bear them well. I pity, but (what does not often accompany compassion) I admire you more. I have just cast my eyes over this page. Alas! my dear friend, whatever else Providence may have intended us to be, it never meant either of us to become writing-masters.

I have been at Knebworth the greater part of the time I have now wasted in England—that land of wealth and rheumatism, corruption, vulgarity, and flannel waistcoats. I have been at Knebworth, I say: and would that you could have seen me there, surrounded by books and papers, and dreaming, like the parson in Boileau, in a

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sainte oisiveté! I have already commenced, and made actual progress in, three or four works. The first (solely for my own advantage) are upon Universal History and the Corn Laws. The rest—intended for the advantage of the world (for next season I shall commence regular authorship)—are three light prose works, and one poetical tale. With one of the prose works, which is a sort of Werther, taken from fact, I am tolerably pleased.¹ The other two are satirical, and I don't think much of them.² The poem is nearly finished.³



LAKE AT KNERWORTH.

So much for occupation. Now for indolence. We have, at the bottom of the park, a large piece of water—deep, clear, lined with fir, oak, beech; and breathing sweets from wild flowers, and music from the throats of blackbirds and nightingales. There I spend all my evenings. I am not one of those peripatetic philosophers who never walk without a book. I like my own thoughts better than those of other people. I wander about the banks of the water, or row over it a large clumsy boat,—sometimes till I have been startled to hear the clock strike twelve, and have felt that all the servants

¹ *Falkland.*

² One of these must have been *Pelham*; of the other I can find no trace.

³ *O'Neil.*

would set me down as a madman, or at best a poor young gentleman crossed in love, and very likely to cross himself also in his garters. The water lies in a valley. Above it are trees, hills, a mausoleum, and a little church. For our church here, formerly a private chapel, is in the park. Do you suppose that here my thoughts want occupation? Alas! they are never idle when the dead are around me. But I am not going to be gloomy. Indeed, I have been writing a satire against gloomy people, and the Byronic mania—

'Of young men with pale faces, and raven black hair,
Who make frowns in the glass, and write odes to despair.'

Talking of Byron and poets, I have lately been much amongst the Blue Stockings. I go to town every fortnight for two or three days; and the evenings of those days, instead of being spent at balls, are generally consumed in the soirées of the savans, and the learned and literary ladies. You can have no idea what curious notes these people write me. Their affectation, their hunting after fine phrases, and their aversion to the common language of ordinary mortals, are quite wonderful. 'Write something in my album,' said a celebrated



MAUSOLEUM AT KNEBWORTH.

Blue to me the other night. Teased into consent I wrote—

Fools write here to show their wit,
And men of sense to laugh at it.

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I need not tell you that the Blue looked exceedingly black. If the poems of L. E. L. (*alias* Miss Landon) are yet imported into Paris,



CHURCH AT KNEBWORTH.

I advise you to get them forthwith. They contain more power, pathos, and music than any I have lately seen. She is only eighteen, and as charming and unaffected as she is clever. For want of something better to fill up my letter, I send you the following verses—my own, of course :—

To the Dead.

I.

It is a husht and holy spot
Where death has wrought thy dreamless bed,
And bade thy soul, while unforget,
Forget—that charter of the dead !

II.

At last thy heart is cold. The pain
That wrings my own thou canst not see,
Nor turn to smiles the sullen strain
Which soothes—because it breathes of thee.

III.

And, if my spirit stole the vow
 From love and thee to waste on fame,
 My only use for laurels now
 Would be to wreaths them round thy name.

IV.

I would not thou shouldst cease to live
 While Fame fresh being can bestow,
 And to our broken *passion* give
 The deathless memory of our *woe*.

V.

In life, a sever'd lot we bore;
 In death, mine own, as once, thou art:
 The grave, which severs *hands*, the more
 But breaks the barrier from the *heart*.

VI.

As he who knew a charmed doom,
 And saw friends, empires, ages, fade,¹
 I walk alone amidst the gloom
 Of wrecks relentless time hath made.

VII.

Hope's latest link from life is wrench'd:
 The bird that blest the night hath fled:
 The lamp that lit the tomb is quench'd:
 I stand, in darkness, with the dead.

If, my dear friend, in spite of the ungainly roughness of these lines, and the previous flippancy of my letter, you can imagine me neither mirthful from levity, nor stoical from the wise philosophy of the world—if you can imagine me, solitary and sad enough, Heaven knows, but neither listless nor cynical, struggling fiercely with myself, and the world through which my path is set—neither the master nor the slave of a destiny which divides my life, yet concentrates all its resolutions—if you can imagine me thus, then you will not misjudge the temper and the heart of one who in no selfish sorrows or troubles of his own can ever cease to feel for you and yours the sincerest interest and most faithful affection.

The careless manner in which my father speaks of the stanzas 'To the Dead,' when sending them to Mrs. Cunningham, was the consequence of his intense devotion to the memory of the girl who was the subject of them. He had

¹ St. Leon in Godwin's novel, so called.

said in a previous letter that it was not from want of confidence that he was in some things reserved, but from 'the idea that the manner in which they affected him could have no interest for anyone else.' He had told Mrs. Cunningham of his early love, and the blight it had brought on him. She naturally believed that the effect would be transitory, and in this strain she answered him ; which was a proof to him that she could not comprehend the full compass of his thoughts and feelings. Having embodied them in verse, he left his stanzas to tell their tale as a poetic effusion, and purposely spoke of them slightly to avoid the appearance of inviting sympathy which could not reach to the realities of his inner existence. To us, who are familiar with the story, the poem is one more instance of the paramount influence of that first great love. It will be seen from the third and fourth stanzas that he had consecrated his ambition to the idea that, winning fame, he would use it to confer a 'deathless memory' upon the unknown maiden whose destiny was to experience little of love except its anguish, and find in it the passage to an early grave. In the sketch of the story which my father wrote in his mature years the thought expressed in his verses to the 'Dead' was still present to him. He would not mention a name he revered for fear of exposing it to the scoffs which assailed his own. He would wait till it would be received with the honour due to it, and then only should the unspoken name be disclosed. The verses were sent to Mrs. Cunningham at a period when he still felt himself under a bond to give up Miss Wheeler. Two months later he was engaged to her. That event, with the superior power which belongs to the present, threw, for a time, into the background the supreme memories of other days ; and, if the marriage had ended as propitiously as it began, in the background they would doubtless have remained. But in the disappointments and bitternesses of coming years my father's mind went on reverting to the enchanting child who had died from love to him ,

and whose beautiful and steadfast nature appeared to promise all which he had missed in life, and for which he never ceased to yearn.

CHAP.
I.
—
ÆT. 23

The month after Mrs. Cunningham received the verses 'To the Dead' she herself was mourning the death of a daughter, and my father wrote to soothe her the best he could under a sorrow he understood so well :

The Same to the Same.

Broadstairs : Thursday, July 1826.

I know not, my dearest friend, in what words to condole with you. All I can say to you must be commonplace. All the comfort I can bring you must be cold. You have lost one of the greatest of earthly blessings. I know it, I feel it. How can I dream of consoling you? When I had read eight lines of your letter I stopped. I folded it up. I went to the window for breath. I felt the fulness of your loss as if it were my own. I knew, by what I experienced myself, how great was the shock to your affection. And now, when I sit down to write to you, I *share*, I cannot attempt to *relieve*, your feelings. I know too keenly how imperfect must be my sympathy with a mother on the loss of her child. And yet I *do* sympathise with you, so strongly that, in writing to you, it seems as if it were my own loss I was attempting to reason away. My dear friend, would to God that reason *could* conquer feeling! Would that I could comfort you when I remind you of the treasures you have left, when I tell you that the affection you lavished on her will not return into yourself to corrode the feelings from which it sprung—that you have other affections, other interests into which it will flow, and that the ties you have left will become doubly endeared to you by the increased strength with which you will cling to their attachment. Time, in confirming your tenderness to *them*, will soften what is now so bitter in your remembrance of *her*.

The recollections of the young and innocent have more of the holiness and less of the bitterness which are mingled with regret. If there be no other world, at least they have been spared the afflictions of this : if there be another, it must for them be blest indeed. If we, who are tainted with the sins of years, can bring ourselves to believe in it, we must tremble in our belief. But for them Futurity has no terror. We may doubt, but we cannot fear. The remembrance of the dead is not always dark, not always sad. When we

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suffer here, we can go back in thought to the images of those who are beyond all suffering. Stung by the falsehoods, or wearied by the insipidities, of life, it is some comfort to feel that those, for whose lot we are most anxious, are safe beyond that bourne, dim it may be, and in all things else uncertain, but in our thoughts of them the settled assurance of a state where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. And thus time gives sweetness even to the memory of the dead, and what was regret becomes consolation.

I cannot turn from this to any lighter subject. What is fortitude in you would be want of feeling in me. I know how vain is the comfort I would hold out to you; but of what else can I write? We may trifle at our afflictions, but not at the afflictions of those we love. And though my attempts at consolation must be fruitless now, the thoughts which prompt them forestall the reaction which I well know every sorrow carries in itself. Meanwhile be assured at least that you have one friend who feels for you from his very soul, who thinks that in a new misfortune he has discovered a new tie, and who feels that his sympathy unites with yours the more tenderly because our sympathies are united in the memory of the dead. It is not in gaiety that attachment is cemented. What are the thousand pleasant links with which mirth and high spirits bind and brighten the careless communion of the happy, compared in strength to that one tie, so inconspicuous yet so intense, which sorrow draws around those who have suffered, out of the deepest, most unseen, recesses of the soul? Joy sheds its own lightness over the connections which it forms. But it is grief that gives depth to friendship. Write to me. Remember me now. You may forget me again when you are happy. Think that I share in your distress with the earnestness of one to whom misfortune is familiar, but who has not hardened under it. I do not care to be the friend of the happy; they have no need of friends. I cannot read over what I have written. Whatever it be, it must seem to you trite and weak. It cannot express your feelings, or mine. But never before did I know how truly I might call you my friend, or how faithfully, how affectionately, I was yours.

The Same to the Same.

5 Upper Seymour Street: Tuesday, Aug. 1826.

I am in town for one day, and sorely pressed for time. But I write to you once more, in order that I may once more express the

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regret and sympathy with which I continue to think of you. Pray write to me immediately. Tell me how you are, what you are doing—all that relates to you. Believe me, I feel the greatest anxiety to hear; and the most welcome visitor I shall receive will be the thin paper of France, hallowed by the post-mark of St. Germain.

I have not yet seen the lady who, you say, is so mightily offended with me. *Lo so*. But every day makes me more indifferent to the opinion of the many. And yet I am not, as I once was, rancorous and scornful. I am indifferent to the opinion only, not to the happiness, of others. I wish the world well, and would promote its welfare, if I could, even at the cost of my own. A misanthrope by feeling, I am a philanthropist by principle. Mr. G——, the attaché, is returned. My brother met him the other day at the Duke of Sussex's. He is very much laughed at, poor man! but why, Heaven and the laughers only know. London is much amused by Lady A——'s elopement. Her Jacob was a great friend of my eldest brother's. English people never think they can have enough love without going off. Alas! directly they go off the love goes off too. Its only charm is in the secrecy and the difficulty from which they seek to free it. I am endeavouring, as you see, to get together all the chit-chat the world can furnish in order to divert you for a moment from thoughts of a more serious nature. But I earnestly long to hear from you.

The Same to the Same.

Knebworth: Friday, August 24, 1836.

Do not think me remiss in not having before answered your letter. I have been wandering about, and deserving the *vagabond*, if not the *romantic*, appellation you have given me.¹ By the by, (how nearly I had forgotten it!) I have given my eldest brother a letter of introduction to you, and I feel sure you will like him. I have seen a great deal of him since I came from abroad, and I think him one of the finest characters I know. He is dignified without being haughty, handsome without being affected, clever without being odd. In short, as you will see, he is what I am not, and is not what the world generally says I am.²

¹ Child Harold.

² My father's eldest brother William, who in early life published two or three small volumes of verse, was a man of cultivated mind and some literary taste. Had his circumstances furnished him with any serious incentive to exertion, I have no doubt he would have distinguished himself. But he was without ambition.

BOOK VII.
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 but I may be in Paris before the end of the year. *Cela dépend.*
 Keep up your spirits, dear friend.

The Same to the Same.

Knebworth : October 25, 1826.

I was much grieved to find by your last letter that your spirits were still so affected. I wish most earnestly that I could offer you any adequate comfort. But you know that I feel for you, and all else that I could say would be unavailing. Since I last wrote much has occurred to me. My fate has been nearly altered entirely, and for ever. But the die has been cast otherwise, and I am still—as I have been. This is a long story, and now an idle one. Let me turn from it to other subjects. Miss Landon, whom you ask me about, is very young,—not pretty, but pleasing, and with deep blue eyes,—short and ill-made,—has no fortune but what she makes by writing, which is about 1,000*l.* a year. She is a Dean's daughter, or something of that sort.

It is a dim, heavy, desolate evening ; the trees quite breathless ; one deep cloud over the sky ; the deer grouped under my window, and the old gray tower of the church just beyond. I am here only for a few days, and I shall leave these scenes with the more regret because I am now going to enter upon a new life. Within the last few days I have made myself an opening to the House. In all probability I shall enter it in December. But there is still some doubt on the subject, so that I will say nothing further till all is decided one way or other. However that be, I shall devote myself to society the whole of this year. We govern men, not by our own strength, but by their imbecility. I am completing a Satire upon England and English people. I shall publish it early in the winter. I have heard no news of any sort. But, by the way, I have met a little German Count who knew you at Milan—an extremely likeable man.

CHAPTER II.

ENGAGED. 1826. *Æt.* 23.

My father's allusion (in his correspondence with Mrs. Cunningham) to a change of life which, if made, would have been 'entire and for ever,' but which was not made because 'the die had been cast otherwise,' is explained by his letters to his mother.

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II.*Æt.* 23

Before his feelings were deeply engaged, or his honour committed, he had promised her not to marry without her consent: and, in order to escape the temptation of breaking that promise, he immediately returned to Paris. But Miss Wheeler was not disposed to regard Mrs. Bulwer Lytton's disapproval as an absolute obstacle to a marriage seriously desired by that lady's son; nor did she shrink from the thought of an engagement which, if it depended for its fulfilment on the removal of the mother's objections, might be indefinitely prolonged.

Communications from her had brought him back to England. They met again in the literary coteries of which he speaks so contemptuously in one of his letters to his Paris friend. The intercourse thus partially renewed did not lead to a positive engagement; but it strengthened the tie which left him less and less able to withdraw from it. 'I am still free,' he wrote to Mrs. Cunningham, 'at least, I may so call myself; but do not congratulate me. The thought of it gives me no pleasure:' and it was with a sorely troubled and divided heart that he again tore himself away from that intercourse, in

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obedience to the promise of which his mother was not slow to remind him. In this unsettled state of mind, pride, if not prudence, would probably have weaned him by degrees from all lingering hopes and wishes associated with Miss Wheeler, had he received from her a distinct assurance that she was resolved not to marry him without his mother's approval, or under conditions entailing on him an almost total sacrifice of his income. No such announcement came in aid of his struggle; yet, even without it, the struggle might perhaps have been successful had his mother's recognition of it been of a kind to make him feel that she appreciated and commiserated the pang it cost him. The most sensible woman, however, is sure to mismanage her interests when she is completely under the influence of her feelings; and the love of a mother is often as jealous as that of a mistress. My grandmother was too deeply hurt in her own affection to sympathise with my father's attachment to Miss Wheeler, or to treat with much tenderness the poignant distress of a struggle which proved to her, at every moment, how strong was the dominion already established over her son's heart by an influence hostile to her own.

Smarting from a sense of unrecognised sacrifice, and conscious that by the woman he loved his flight was regarded as a desertion, my father (in one of those sudden and fatal impulses which so often decide the destiny of an entire life) returned to Miss Wheeler. The only capacity in which he could resume the intercourse twice broken off was that of a betrothed lover; and from this moment his course (however painful might be the progress, or disastrous the end, of it) was plainly prescribed to him not by his affection only, but by every sentiment of honour, duty, and devotion.

Edward Bulwer to his Mother.

Knebworth: October 21, 1826.

Let me answer, once for all, what you have so often (was it generously, or even quite justly?) brought up against me, viz., the promise which, long since, out of the warmth and sincerity of my heart, I so incautiously gave you, not to marry without your consent.

In order not to fail the promise thus given, when I received your first letter from Sandgate, I immediately broke off my intercourse with Miss Wheeler. I went to Knebworth. And whilst I was there, writhing beneath the sacrifice I had made to you, and *you alone*, you accused me of feelings and motives so unworthy that from any one else the accusation would have roused my bitterest resentment; from *you* it wounded me to the quick in the tenderest point of what is most sensitive in my affection. It was this, and *this only*, which brought me again to Miss Wheeler. I could not help feeling that the wrong you then did me was undeserved by the loss which, for your sake, I had inflicted on myself. And being, as I then was, in the first flush and vehemence of my attachment, was it not natural that, thus goaded and incensed, I should return to what, every moment, I was learning more and more bitterly to miss?

This was the great epoch of my present situation. From that moment it was impossible for me, or for any man with human feelings, not to be led on step by step till return was impossible. Impossible, not through the fear of any consequences to myself from a renewal of the sacrifice I had already made, but because I myself should no longer have been the only victim of it. It was during this time that, when you twice spoke to me of the promise made in circumstances so different, I twice said to you, 'But it is your approbation, not your consent, that you withhold. You cannot take upon yourself the responsibility of positively withholding the latter.' Twice I understood you to say that you also recognised this distinction. I mention this because it has been always kept in view by me, and I have constantly thought that, when you perceived how seriously and deeply my happiness was involved, your objections would cease. In this hope, moreover, I was strengthened by the occasional kindness with which you spoke to me on the subject of it. But while I refer to this distinction between approbation and consent, I candidly confess that I lay but little stress on

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it. For I certainly made to you the promise you recall, meaning it, at the time, in the fullest sense of the words; and although I think that a promise so made, at a time when by no means could I possibly foresee all that has since happened, cannot fairly be treated as absolutely unalterable by any force of circumstance, yet I own that what causes me the keenest regret in reference to the marriage I now contemplate, is that I am placed by it under the necessity of not thoroughly acting up to that promise.

I say *necessity*. For let me now submit to you the case, as it really stands before me. I am placed between two duties. First, the duty involved in this promise to you, and my desire to comply with your wishes. Secondly, the duty involved in my engagement with Miss Wheeler. If I break the first duty I hurt no one. Not at least seriously. I shall cost you a momentary disappointment and uneasiness upon my own behalf. But *you yourself*, I shall not seriously injure. On the other hand, if I break my engagement with Miss Wheeler, shall I not most seriously injure her—her happiness perhaps for life, her position now at any rate,—all, in short, which at this moment has no other protection than my loyal devotion to its sacred claims? For, put aside *my* feelings—hers too—remember only her position, so singular, so unsheltered. This is the case I, at least, have to consider. Let any *man* decide which is the paramount duty of the two, and whether I am not justified when I say that I am under a *necessity* to regard the other as only subordinate to it. I say nothing about my own honour, so far at least as the opinion of the world can affect it. I really don't care so much about public opinion but that I would readily sacrifice *that* to satisfy *you*.

In what I have said of my situation, I don't wish, I don't attempt, to vindicate my conduct from all blame. I confessed before, and I confess still, that I was originally wrong in yielding to the charm of an attraction, and the growth of an affection, which you disapproved. But, surely I am not wrong *now*, when, in opposition not only to my most important and permanent interests, but also to the strongest instincts and happiest habits of my life, even in its relation to your own, I am yielding to what I believe to be my duty. This also I will say, with respect to that promise of which again and again you remind me. The very circumstance of my having given it is a proof of my desire to gratify you, and a token that nothing selfish or trivial could have caused me to disobey you. The sincerity of this assurance you will not, you cannot,

deny. Because, by insincerity, when we reproach another with that word, we mean a falsehood uttered, or acted, in his own interest by the person to whom we impute it. But all *my* interests lie so wholly on the opposite side of my action, that you cannot for a moment imagine them to be the motives of it. In conclusion, I have only two things to say. First, that, when you speak of marriage as the most important point on which a son can compliment a parent, and when I allow that there is much justice in the remark, *you*, I feel sure, will also allow that marriage is a step which solely concerns the persons who take it, and that although their parents may be *disappointed* by their decision, they have no just ground for *displeasure*. Moreover, just reflect for a moment. What compliment does a son pay to his parents when he makes a good marriage only, or mainly, to further his own interests, or satisfy his own inclinations? The parents must look to the *motive* before they can be rationally pleased with the *action*. Secondly, I have to say that, however poor, disappointed, or embarrassed I myself may be hereafter, neither you nor any human being can ever have cause for 'humiliation' or 'mortification' at a relationship with me. Up to the hour of my marriage, and inclusive of that event, I have committed, perhaps, many *imprudent*, but no *discreditable*, actions. I venture to assert that this will always be the case. It is useless to add anything further. I believe I have answered your letter fully. God bless you, my dear, dear mother! Believe me, I am much more grieved than you can be at disappointing you in anything.

Yet still he lingered on the brink of the marriage thus resolutely maintained and eloquently defended. For still the poor mother pertinaciously combated his decision, and strove hard to enforce her own view of filial duty in regard to it. What it cost him to resist her entreaties and reproaches (more persuasive, as they were, to him than the parental threats which sometimes accompanied them) is apparent in all his letters to her on this subject.

My dearest Mother,—I am not well, and may not answer your letter as clearly as I could wish. But I cannot leave unanswered for a day even, your charge of want of gratitude and affection. Put aside for the present my engagement with Miss Wheeler. I will come to it by-and-by. Can you mention anything else in which I have acted contrary to your commands? You will say, at first, 'A thousand.' But I know well that, upon consideration, you will be unable to name one. You have blamed me many times, and justly; but never for anything worse than some *warm expression*, or an *occasional want of economy*. With regard to the warm expressions, they have arisen from irritation of temper, but never from want of affection. But systematic propriety of conduct is not effaced by occasional irritation of temper. I have never acted against your commands; and, if I have disappointed your expectations, it has been from the imperfection of my nature, not from the inclination of it. Not being all you could wish is surely a very different thing from acting contrary to your wishes. You have also blamed me for occasional want of economy. As it would be irrelevant to dwell much on this *now*, and I do not think you would press it, I will merely ask leave to remind you that it has only been for *occasional*, not for *continued*, or habitual, extravagance, that you have ever had cause to find fault with me. The first is an error from which not even a miser is always free; and I have so seldom fallen into it that, at this moment, instead of diminishing, or embarrassing, I have increased my income, *even without counting the money I get by writing*.

Now that I am speaking of this, it appears to me that Paley and other theologians have rightly described the duty of a son. The best way by which, according to these writers, children can requite the care of their parents (when the parents do not want their pecuniary support) is by a creditable and honourable course of life. And for these reasons—first, because all a son does in the course of his life reflects credit, or the reverse, on the education given him by his parents; and secondly, because what parents wish for their children is the happiness which involves and rewards respectability of character and action, so that, by a creditable line of conduct, children will best fulfil the wishes, as well as repay the care, of their parents. If you judge my past conduct by this rule, I am sure you will not

and in it matter for displeasure. I can safely say that, both at college and afterwards in the world, I have set a curb to tastes naturally expensive, and passions naturally headstrong, in order not to discredit your affection and the education it gave me. Perhaps in the heat of Youth such sacrifices and restraints are more difficult than they seem to the wisdom and composure of Age. But I have done more than this. Instead of being contented with not acting discreditably, I have endeavoured to act creditably. And for the same reason. When I obtained the prize at Cambridge, I felt more pleasure for your sake than for mine; and on the only occasions when I have hitherto been enabled to appear in public—I mean in my writings for the public—I have endeavoured to associate your name with my undertakings in such a way as to reflect upon you whatever credit they might win. *Conduct* is in my own power, *Constitution* is not. If my conduct has been respectable, it is my merit. If my constitution has been irritable (and, consequently, unamiable), it is not my fault. I think therefore that, when you take the latter into such severe consideration, I may justly ask you not to forget the former.

I have now answered an accusation which I feel, and always have felt, most bitterly. I have endeavoured to show that warm words, stricken now and then from the heat of a fretful temper, are not to be taken for defects of affection or acts of disobedience, unless they are coupled with disobedient or unfeeling conduct; and I have wished to win your recognition of what I assert, that my conduct, if judged by fair rules, has not been wanting in affection or gratitude, but rather the reverse.

But I have hitherto been speaking only of the past. I now come to the present, and the question of my engagement to Miss Wheeler. In this my conduct, I admit, has been very much to blame. I ought not to have allowed myself to love her as I do. I ought not to have endeavoured to win her affections. I should have left her directly I found that either she or I were in any danger of caring for each other so much as to be miserable unless we were united. I own this, most sincerely. I repent it most bitterly. Wretched and tortured as I am, this reflection is the most rankling and painful of all my torments. The only thing I can say in extenuation of the fault I acknowledge, is that I fell in love insensibly—that I did not perceive how far I was gone till the moment that revealed it to myself left me powerless to conceal it from her—that I *did* speak to you as soon as I found she really

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loved me—that I *did* separate from her as soon as I received your answer—and that nothing but the extremest misery, aggravated first by your harsh reception of the bitter sacrifice I had made, and then rendered intolerable by the news of her dangerous illness, would have induced me to torment her into a renewal of our former correspondence.

I mention these things as extenuations, not as excuses. I feel that the step was a wrong one ; and, God knows, my own feelings have sufficiently punished me for it. But, whilst I own that this first part of my conduct is inexcusable, I do most conscientiously affirm that, in my marriage with Miss Wheeler, I can recognise no cause for self-reproach, no dereliction of duty, no indifference to your feelings. As for my own feelings, and my own happiness, if these alone were concerned in the matter, I would sacrifice them still to my filial respect for your present wishes, and my grateful recollection of your past kindness. But, whether the path before me leads to happiness or misery, I can follow no other. I am perfectly aware of all the worldly disadvantages I incur (though I think them not so great as they seem to you). I am perfectly aware that I justly incur your displeasure—not for marrying Miss Wheeler, but for having engaged her affections and my own, without due consideration of all the reasons which have distressed you in regard to our marriage. I know, also, that hereafter I can have no claim whatever upon you, and that, in every circumstance, I owe you unabated gratitude for what you have hitherto done for me. But I am not the less sure that, were you in my place, you would act as I am acting. I do not marry from headstrong passion, nor from any sanguine hope of happiness. I have had too severe a conflict with myself not to look to the future rather with despondency than pleasure. And the view you take of it is quite enough to embitter my peace of mind. All I ask you to remember on my behalf is, that it is not because I prefer to your approval any scheme of pleasure or advantage to myself, that I am acting contrary to your wishes ; that it is not your express command I disobey ; that I act not now in any common event, or upon any ordinary motive ; but that I differ from you here in the most important and responsible action of my life, under the full impression (and this I say from my very soul) that not my heart only, but my conscience, can admit no other course of action.

This long letter is not, perhaps, what I should have written had I been well, and in better spirits. In writing it I have endeavoured

to avoid all that might seem an appeal to your feelings. And in that endeavour to avoid all expressions of endearment which might, in the present case, be suspected and misconstrued, perhaps I have fallen into the opposite extreme. But I would not end this letter, if I did not think you likely to doubt my sincerity, without saying something of the regret I feel in displeasing you, and acting (I *must* say, for the *first* time) against your wishes. As it is, I will only most heartily wish you—whatever may become of me—all health, all happiness, and every blessing. And I assure you that I am now, and that, under every change of circumstance, I always shall be,

Your most affectionate son,
E. L. B.

The Same to the Same.

April 16, 1827.

My dear Mother,—I shall be very short in answering your letter, in order not to bore you more than I can help on this subject.

You ask what you could have thought of my wishing to marry Miss Wheeler (after previously saying I did not wish it), but one of two things: either that I had deceived you, or that I had made an ostentatious merit of giving up what had never been intended. I answer to this that, had you not been predisposed to put a bad construction on the action, both these suppositions would have appeared to you improbable and far-fetched. The *most* probable inference would have been that I was *not at first* in love with her, and therefore did not at first wish to marry her; that I *was* in love with her *afterwards*, and therefore did afterwards wish to marry her. Perhaps no man ever desired, on the first acquaintance, to marry a poor woman.

You say, secondly, in the instance of marriage, that a son ought to show respect, &c., for his parent. To this I say again, that marriage is of all cases the one in which a difference with parents is most universally allowed; and that nothing but the full conviction that I should fail in faith and honour to Miss Wheeler, if I did not marry her, would now induce me to do so. I can most firmly and sincerely say that I act conscientiously; and that, even if Miss Wheeler behaves ill to me hereafter, I shall have everything to *regret*, but nothing to *repent*. It may have been my fault to love her; it will not be my fault to have married her.

I said that in no instance had I acted against your commands.

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You answer that I have ; and then you name instances in which *you* acted according to my wishes. This I never questioned, but I beg, my dear mother, to remind you that *your* acting according to *my* wishes is not *my* acting against *your* commands. I said I was knocked about at Mr. Ruddock's. You were kind enough to remove me. But you gave me no orders to stay ; therefore I did not disobey you by not staying. I said I did not like Eton. I do not think you ever expressed a wish that I should go there : certainly you never commanded me to go ; therefore I did not disobey you by not going. Mr. Jowett's is exactly the same case. With regard to Cambridge, I pointed out to you the advantages of going as a Fellow Commoner. You let me become one, but you never ordered me to remain a Pensioner ; therefore I did not disobey you by not remaining a Pensioner. I am sure, my dear mother, that you will acknowledge, upon consideration, that all these were instances of *your kindness*, and not of *my disobedience*.

In conclusion, I beg to assure you that in defending myself I meant, and mean, no imputation to you ; that I am deeply sensible of your past kindness to me, both in pecuniary matters and in all others ; and that though I marry a woman whom I love and respect, I do not feel any of that satisfaction and happiness which I should have felt had you not been displeased with the step. Believe me, unalterably,

Your most affectionate son,

E. L. B.

These letters wholly failed to soften my grandmother's bitter disappointment at the prospect of an event which was now inevitable. My father was forced to abandon the hope of reconciling her to his marriage ; and, with the loss of that hope, he had no longer any motive, or excuse, for prolonging a painful situation. On May 1, 1827, he wrote to Mrs. Cunningham :—

You will deem me a very unreasonable person to be dejected and wretched at the very moment I ought to be most joyous and light-hearted. Prepare, *ma belle amie*, prepare ! I am going to be married !!! And that very soon. Perhaps in less than a month. My intended is very beautiful, very clever, very good ; but, alas ! the human heart is inscrutable. I love, and am loved. My heart is satisfied, my judgment too. If the life before me is not free

■■■■ difficulty, anxiety, labour, yet in the contemplation of these ■■■■ my courage feels only a consciousness, which should be joyous, of power to overcome them all. And still, I am wretched. My plan is, after marriage, to hire a large old-fashioned house I have found in the country, neither near London nor yet very far from it: to live there in great retirement for three years, and give myself wholly up to literature. In which I hope to earn some of that 'breath of fools' which the knaves have wisely called Reputation. At the end of that time I shall travel over Europe for three years more; and then—settle in London, and turn M.P. and politician.

I much wish to send you a little work I have published, and another just coming out. Tell me how I can do so without subjecting you to any expense. The first has created some sensation, and more enemies here. The religionists and pseudo-moralists are furious with it. *N'importe!* My conscience acquits me of all evil design. But you must read it, and judge. I think it will please you, for it is at least thoughtful, and true in its delineation of the feelings it represents.¹ The forthcoming work is a poem,² and a great part of it was written at Versailles. I have been very quiet all this season. Tired as I had long been of society, it has tired me more than ever this year. 'Othello's occupation's gone.' I had no object, and I feel as dull and indifferent to all kinds of social amusement as any old valetudinarian who has seen all his old hopes and friends drop off from him, one by one, and finds himself left to the solitary possession of gloom and gout.

Write to me. Enliven my selfish troubles by the assurance that you are well, and not too mindful of the past. Such news will give me that pleasure which I have always found in the happiness of those who are dear to me. How is your daughter? Remember me most kindly to her. When she marries and comes to England, we shall meet, I hope. As for *you*, I have very little hope of seeing you till I find my own way to your City of the Soul, and—Soups. Meanwhile, you must not deny me the pleasure of your correspondence. As a Benedict, bound to one spot and one woman, I shall have more leisure to write to you. And, to requite your generosity ■■ writing to a married man, I will not intrude on you, out of place ■■ out of season, any discourse about my matrimonial cares or parental emotions. God bless you! and believe me that, whatever be the changes through which my life may pass, they will not change my friendship for you.

¹ *Falkland.*² *O'Neil.*

CHAPTER III.

MARRIED. 1827. Æt. 24.

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THE event referred to in the preceding letter as imminent, did not take place till four months later. Mrs. Bulwer Lytton attributed her son's passionate (and, as it seemed to her, infatuated) admiration of Miss Wheeler to the personal attractions of its object, acting on an exaggerated estimate of the feelings he believed himself to have inspired, and the obligation laid upon him by the strength of that belief.

It was impossible that she should view without repugnance the prospect of having for her sister-in-law a woman who professed the peculiar social and religious principles which Mrs. Wheeler had espoused. Nor was it unreasonable that she should see in the unhappy circumstances of my poor mother's bringing up every conceivable disqualification for the wife of a very young, very proud, and very sensitive man, who was certain to expect from her a more than possible fulfilment of the exalted ideal with which his affection identified her image. She was convinced, moreover, that the love between two natures, which appeared to her so fundamentally different from each other, could not possibly be durable; and that its decline would reveal a radical incompatibility of character fatal to the harmony of married life, under what must be, at the best, very trying conditions. She therefore relaxed no effort to shake a resolution that not only distressed but alarmed her. She had heard, and she believed, that my mother was much older than my father supposed her to be, and that she had already been engaged to some one else. To

the story of the previous engagement, my father replied that it in nowise affected the nature of Miss Wheeler's present feelings for himself; whilst, if true, it would probably increase the unmerited injury she might suffer from the rupture of his own engagement to her. 'I deeply respect,' he wrote, 'the natural penetration of your judgment; but I cannot help thinking that one who has seen a woman several times in trying situations must know her better than she can be known to another who has only seen her a few times in ordinary society. Matrimonial philandering has always appeared to me a contemptible frivolity. I am not blinded to Rosina's faults, as (forgive me for saying it) you, I think, are blinded to her merits. It is not her fault that she could not live with her mother. I know that her bringing up has been a most unhappy one. But it has not deprived her of a mind and heart, for which I love her far too well to flirt with her.' As for the story about the age of his betrothed, he was so convinced that on this point his mother had been misinformed that he agreed confidently, though reluctantly, to abide by the issue of the inquiries on which she insisted. Hence the following letters:—

Edward Bulwer to his Mother.

July, 1827.

Do not, my dear mother, let us misunderstand each other, after all the explanations I have endeavoured to give you. When you talk of 'disentangling' me, I can assure you that there is no entanglement at all. To Miss Wheeler I am tied only by the strength of my affection and the truth of my esteem. This tie nothing can undo but her unworthiness; and that would be my worst affliction. The only circumstance that can now delay our marriage is the prospect of your full consent to it. Nor is my love for Rosina of the blind sort you suppose. I see all her faults such as they are, but I love her mind a thousand times more than her person.

The Same to the Same.

August 2, 1827.

My dear Mother,—For the last two months I have been deferring the definite period of my marriage from time to time, in order to obtain those letters from Ireland which you considered essential.

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At length I am unable, in common decency and honour, to do so any longer. It is now a year (all but one month) since first I spoke to Miss Wheeler. I have, since that time, endeavoured to pay as much attention and deference as I possibly could to your wishes. I say *possibly could*, because, from the moment I spoke to Miss Wheeler, the matter no longer rested only with me. Her happiness was implicated as well as my own; and, however I might have been willing to sacrifice the latter, I had no right whatever to sacrifice the former. I have waited, therefore, from month to month in the hope that, when you saw it was no momentary liking or fancy, your reluctance would ultimately be conquered. Had it been so, I should have considered such an event the happiest in my life. As it is, however I may be grieved, I have no ground of complaint. I should still have continued to protract this step had my own selfish wishes been solely concerned. But I cannot see the very declining state of Miss Wheeler's health without severe self-reproach, and the most conscientious conviction that nothing (not even deference to you) can any longer justify me in trifling with her health and happiness.

I have therefore, *at last*, fixed a day for my marriage (the 29th of this month), choosing one which will allow ample time for the arrival of news from Ireland, and promising you still that, in the event (which I tell you frankly I think most improbable) of the date of Miss Wheeler's birth being proved to be 1800 or 1801, I will not marry her.

I grieve, more than any human being can conceive, at acting against your wishes in this matter. God knows I have not had one day of happiness for months; nor do I anticipate any great store of it hereafter. Miss Wheeler's affection, which I trust entirely, may do much, but not all. Nor shall I ever feel even *content* till an event occurs which I still fondly hope and cling to—I mean the removal of your repugnance to this step, and the conquest of your prepossessions against Miss Wheeler.

God bless you, my dear mother, whatever becomes of your unhappy but sincerely affectionate son,
E. L. B.

The Same to the Same.

August 5, 1827.

After our repeated conversations, and after the many months during which the period of my marriage has been deferred, I own that, in *my* turn, I am surprised to think you should imagine an event so often discussed, and so long protracted, either sudden or *unexpected*.

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You must, my dear mother, be aware that, after having proposed to Miss Wheeler several months ago, it became necessary at one time or other to appoint a day for our marriage. This, in deference to you, I deferred as long as I possibly could ; but, Sir John Doyle having received the King's orders respecting his arrangements for the summer, it was necessary to come to a definite conclusion before he left town. The day, therefore, being settled, it cannot be again unsettled. But you tell me to wait for news from Ireland. I will. For, in the first place, I send you a letter from Miss Wheeler's guardian, a gentleman of respectability, which to my mind sets the matter at rest. And, to add to the certainty of your agent's being deceived, Miss Wheeler's sister was born in the month of September, 1800 ; which explains the mistake. Now, should this not satisfy you as it does me, you have still ample time, in addition to the long period you have already had, to obtain further evidence. But, if you cannot rely upon your own agent being able to procure it either by writing or sending, I will, *myself*, take your office, and send over on Monday a lawyer, who shall obtain the fullest and most legal proof that can be got, and who is pledged to return with such proof long previous to the day appointed. I beg to assure you, my dear mother, that I shall think nothing of the trouble and expense, if it satisfies—not *me* (for I am satisfied) but yourself.

You tell me to reflect and pause. The time is past when I could pause without breach of faith and duty ; and, as for reflection, the thought of what I am about is never absent from my mind. Could you tell how heavy is the burden of it, and how bitter the effort to bear it, I know you would think less harshly of one who was never more lovingly, or less undutifully, than at this moment, your affectionate son,

E. L. B.

The Same to the Same.

August 7, 1827.

Owing to a mistake of my servant, a short note I wrote to you yesterday did not go. To-day, having received no letters, I have sent off a lawyer with full and express particulars. He is a Chancery one, and used, by the course of his profession, to inquiries into births. He is to have the evidence properly and legally attested and sworn, and is to forward an exact duplicate to you.

For the rest of your letter, I have already replied to it as far as I can ; and I am sufficiently unhappy not to need any additional working upon my feelings. Everything depends upon the result of this inquiry. I own that I have no doubt of it whatever. We may hear in seven days, certainly in ten. Believe me, as to the rest,

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that neither Miss Wheeler nor any other person, or circumstance, can ever rob you of the affection of your most affectionate son,

E. L. B.

The Same to the Same.

August 18, 1827.

My dear Mother,—I have procured and enclose the most positive evidence that can be obtained in default of the register.

As you will see, it proves that the youngest child was born in 1802, on November 4, and that the child's name was Rosina. It is useless to comment upon this evidence.

You will see now that on this subject there can be no further discussion. The Honour I speak of as binding me to Miss Wheeler is not what you suppose. There are two sorts of Honour. One regulates our conduct to the world, the other to individuals, and to ourselves. The first is what is commonly called Honour; the second is Conscience. The first bids us deserve the good opinion of others; the second forbids us to forfeit our own.

I have no claim—I never advanced any claim—upon you. Whatever may be my future fate, I must, I shall, support it.

God bless you, my dear Mother, and farewell!

E. L. B.

The Same to the Same.

August 20, 1827.

My dear Mother,—For God's sake spare me! I have neither health of body, nor strength of mind, to bear half, no, not one-tenth part, of what I do suffer.

Put yourself in my place for one moment. Imagine that *you* make no part of my feelings. Only suppose that I see every hope, every object of ambition, I have cherished for years and years, cut down at one stroke; that this stroke must be dealt by my own hand; that I see myself condemned, in the very spring of my age, with every aspiration restless within me, to a life of seclusion and poverty for ever. Put yourself in contemplation of the certainty of such a fate. Recollect my nature—never contented, never at rest. Then ask yourself whether I can be blind or indifferent to such a prospect. Whether I need any aggravation of its miseries by you; and whether it must not be a powerful inducement that can make me confront and endure it. That inducement I have told you in every previous letter. I repeat it in this. It is the conscientious conviction that I am acting rightly. No man has a choice between right and wrong when he has clearly perceived the difference be-

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tween them. What is the use of training the mind more in one direction than another, if the result has no effect upon the direction of conduct? A man is either the slave of passion or the servant of duty. And, in this matter, Heaven knows I am not passion's slave.

Grant all you say. Grant that I exaggerate Miss Wheeler's affection for me, and that she will not break her heart if I leave her. Grant that I also exaggerate absurdly any possible injury to her position from the rupture of our long engagement. I do not dispute what you urge on this last point. I have never supposed that a young lady, whose conduct has been irreproachable, can be permanently injured in her matrimonial prospects by the rupture of an engagement which leaves her more or less heart-free. But I think that no honourable high-minded gentleman is justified in breaking such an engagement as mine solely upon grounds which nothing has altered since he first entered into it. There is only one ground on which withdrawal from such an engagement can be right; and that is the discovery that the young lady's heart is not in it, or that her character is so unworthy, or her disposition so uncongenial, as to destroy all prospect of a union founded on mutual love and esteem. But the length of my engagement has only confirmed my love and esteem for Miss Wheeler; and were I now to forfeit hers for the sake of any worldly advantage, what worldly advantage could render tolerable to me my own estimate of myself?

Enough of this. All you say only makes me more wretched, without moving me one iota from the only path (thorny though it be) which I can tread with self-respect. I scarcely know what I am writing. Go to town, if you wish it. See Miss Wheeler, if you please. If the ties between us are to be broken, she is the only human being who can break them.

E. L. B.

The Same to the Same.

August 27, 1827.

Whatever you think now of all I have said in vain, you will forgive me hereafter for having spoken plainly, even warmly.

If I have lost your affection, it has not been without an agonised effort to retain it. I only entreat you, again and again, to pause before you utterly reject one whose sole motive has been to deserve the sympathy you withhold.

And now, if this is to end all correspondence between us, I can only wish you, most fervently, all possible health and happiness, and assure you that they shall never be disturbed by the unwelcome intrusion of your affectionate son,

E. L. B.

From the 'Morning Post' of Thursday, August 30, 1827.

'On Wednesday last, the 29th inst., was married at St. James' Church, by the Hon. and Rev. W. Bentinck, Edward Lytton Bulwer, Esq., third son of the late General Bulwer, of Heydon Hall, Norfolk, and of Mrs. Bulwer Lytton, of Knebworth Park, Herts, to Rosina Doyle Wheeler, of Lizard Connel, in the county of Limerick, only surviving daughter of the late Francis Massy Wheeler, Esq., of Lizard Connel and Ballywise.

'The bride, who is remarkably beautiful, was given away by her uncle, General Sir John Doyle, Bart., and the happy pair, partaking of a cold collation at the house of Colonel Doyle, Montagu Square, set off for their seat, Woodcot House, in Oxfordshire.

I have now given, from the only authentic record of them, all the particulars relative to the circumstances of my father's marriage. Their multiplied evidence of his early affection for my mother is, I think, no unworthy tribute to her character and conduct at a time when, a young unmarried girl, she was placed in a very difficult and unhappy position. And on my father's side the history illustrates with great force that depth and strength of character which it is my object to portray with the utmost fidelity in my power. The facts which have here been related without reserve will, I trust, greatly abbreviate my task in dealing with the painful sequel of the story; into which it would be impossible for me to enter minutely without the appearance of sitting in judgment on my parents. I might have spared a part of what I have printed already if their ill-omened union had not produced a multiplicity of published extravagances which would not permit me to dismiss the subject with the simple statement that, at an early age, my father married for love, contrary to the wishes of his mother, and that his marriage was imprudent and unhappy.

His own letters will now enable all candid persons to judge for themselves whether the writer of them could have been capable of the brutality, the cruelty, the meanness and selfishness, attributed to him in the numerous libels which he himself scorned to notice, and which cannot be repeated by his son, even for the purpose of refuting them.



WOODCOT (FRONT VIEW).

CHAPTER IV.

WOODCOT. 1827. ÆT. 24.

ABOUT six miles from Reading, a road winding sometimes through pleasant copses, sometimes under park palings, or between banks covered with fern and dotted here and there with pretty little old-fashioned cottages not yet improved into ugliness, emerges at last upon a wider landscape just in front of the pleasure-grounds surrounding a rather large, white-faced, long-winged, building still known as Woodcot House. The house itself has no pretension to architectural beauty, or even good looks, of any kind; but it has the cheerful countenance of a well-built, commodious, comfortable abode; and it is placed on the edge of an upland lawn, partially embosomed by beechwoods, but commanding, from its gentle eminence, a spacious prospect of rich English landscape open to the horizon. On that side of the house which is turned from the road, glass doors give access from the principal ground-floor sitting-rooms to a terraced flower garden. The garden is

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bounded at the back by masses of beech trees, and the front of it overhangs a broad sweep of mingled meadow and woodland.

The interior arrangements of Woodcot House are now adapted to the scholastic requirements of some forty or more young gentlemen, who may be congratulated on the beauty of the scenery in which they are pursuing their studies.

The domain of Woodcot, belonging to the Duff family, includes, besides the pleasure grounds, a small acreage of pasture. For nearly half a century its occupants have been the master and pupils of the school now kept by the Rev. Hubert Nind, and previously by his father (the present vicar of South Stoke, Oxon). From the information kindly furnished me by these gentlemen it appears that the house has not been altered in any of its external features since the evening of the 29th of August, 1827, when it was first inhabited by my father and mother, as what the advertisement of their marriage grandiloquently called 'their seat in Oxfordshire.' My father speaks of the place in a letter to his mother as 'exceedingly retired.' It is so now, and must have been still more secluded in the days when railroads were unknown. The spot was well suited to the requirements of a literary student; being near enough to London for quick reference to the public libraries of the metropolis and easy intercourse with the literary world, and yet sufficiently remote from the nearest provincial town to secure immunity from unsolicited local society. The house, however, was unnecessarily large for any newly married couple; and the rent of house and grounds together must, on the most moderate computation, have exceeded any income on which its occupants could then have reckoned from sources less precarious than the prospects of literary labour.

At the time of his marriage, my father's fortune consisted only of a small capital of 4,000*l.*, secured to him by my grandfather's will, and subsequently raised to 6,000*l.* by a decision of the Court of Chancery. He at the same time became

entitled to the third part of a small gavelkind property. Part of the money left to him by his father he had invested in the purchase of his unattached ensigncy, but he sold out the year after his marriage. His wife's fortune consisted of a little property in Limerick, encumbered by a jointure to her mother, which reduced the income derived from it to about 80*l.* a year. He had no claim to any pension from his mother, whose estate was entirely at her own disposal; and, having married contrary to her wishes, he had no pecuniary assistance to expect from her. The large allowance she had hitherto made him he resigned from the day of his wedding, saying, 'As I bake so will I brew.' In one of his first letters to her on the subject of his engagement, he says, 'Instead of diminishing or embarrassing, I have increased my income, even without counting the money I make by writing.'

He was, throughout life, not only a careful manager, but also a skilful maker, of money. Yet, even at a time when life was twice as cheap as it is now, no man could possibly have paid the rent of a rather large country house near London, keeping at the same time a carriage and two or three saddle horses, and entertaining constantly, out of an income of 500*l.* And though he appears to have contracted some debts, his correspondence shows that they were not more than he was able to pay off in the third year of his marriage, without pecuniary assistance either from his mother or his elder brother. I gather from my mother's letters that at that time she and my father were living in London at the rate of not less than 3,000*l.* a year; and certainly the chief part of that annual expenditure must have been covered by the proceeds of literary labour.

One other source of income, which was also a means of amusement, may be mentioned; though this could not have availed him, either for recreation or profit, till he settled in London, two years later. 'Play,' says Goethe, 'is much to be recommended to young people, especially to those who have a practical sense, and wish to look out in the world for

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themselves.' And, after describing how he studied both whist and piquet, in order that he might procure for himself 'much pleasure and greater freedom in society' than he could have otherwise enjoyed, he observes that those who would qualify themselves for the enjoyment of general society 'should not avoid social games, but rather strive after a certain dexterity in them; inasmuch as time is infinitely long, and each day a vessel into which much may be poured if one will truly fill it up.'¹

Now my father, who was of the same opinion, mentions in his Autobiography that he inherited from his grandmother a love of cards. He was at no time a gamester; for, as I have already had occasion to observe, he had neither the advantages nor the defects of the sanguine temperament. He was therefore without a passion which owes its fascination more to chance than calculation. But he found in the combinations of card-playing a pleasant stimulant to the faculties of observation and judgment, which were at all times active in his nature. In games of cards, moreover, it is necessary, at least for the habitual player, to study not only the cards themselves, and the various combinations of which they are capable, but also the peculiarities of the persons who play them; which, in itself, had for him an inexhaustible interest. He played, by instinct, on the principle which Saville (in his novel of 'Godolphin') commends from experience. But the things we begin to do with a liking for them we generally end by doing well. Whist and piquet were the games my father relished and studied most, because in them the result depends more upon skill than luck; and, from practice and aptitude combined, he soon became, not a first-rate, but an exceedingly good, whistplayer, to a degree which made his winnings an appreciable addition to his income.

Thus, the fortune on which my father married had no other sources than his well-stored portfolio, his teeming brain, and his indefatigable industry. Although he had contracted

¹ *Dichtung und Wahrheit*. Oxenford's translation. Books viii. and ix.

from the roving habits of his boyhood a love, not lost in later years, of wandering about the country, often in disguise, and mingling as an obscure traveller with all conditions of people (whose peculiarities he observed as a landscape painter observes the picturesque in scenery), yet there was nothing Bohemian in his domestic tastes. He liked his house to be decent and graceful, his table well served, and his establishment efficient and orderly. He had a remarkable faculty for making money go far, and getting the most out of it. He never purchased anything he did not want, and was at great pains, when supplying his needs, to procure exactly the thing he required. He was a good bargainer, and a careful account-keeper; and I never knew any man better able to live well on little means, without shabbiness or debt.

Persons of imaginative disposition, and those who are much absorbed in the contemplation of abstract ideas, must, as a rule, be ill fitted to carry on successfully the daily pinching and haggling, which are indispensable to the graceful ordering of an establishment supported on a slender income. But there is nothing in which my father more differed from the common type of the literary character than his interest in such domestic details, and his capacity of dealing with them.

With an instinctive *Lust zu fabuliren*, he turned them all to literary account. Thus, I find among the essays and tales published anonymously during his first five or six years of literary drudgery, and never afterwards collected or acknowledged by him, several upon such subjects as 'Domesticity, or a Dissertation upon Servants,' 'House-hunting,' 'Peculiarities of London Tradesmen,' 'Dining-rooms,' 'Small Gardens,' 'The Kitchen and the Parlour, or Household Politics,' 'Long Journeys with Short Purses.'

But the management of his household expenditure was now naturally made over to his wife. It was his part to make money, hers to spend or to husband it; and unfor-

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tunately she had no idea of its value, and was quite incapable of managing it. Account-keeping was a burden to her soul. To her friend, Miss Greene, she wrote from Woodcot : ‘ Mrs. — says that a woman who is always occupied with other things cannot properly attend to the management of her house ; but I say that a woman who is always occupied about the management of her house cannot properly attend to other things. For my part, I know I should be sorry to spend more than half an hour every morning on the management of the largest establishment that ever was ; and if I am not, like your sublime friend, “ a highly talented woman,” it must be my own fault ; for I have nothing to do all day but cultivate my mind, and I never suffer myself to be troubled, if I can help it, with the vile details of household affairs. However, I have promised Edward to go to town next week to help him to choose a cook ; and I cannot tell you how sorry I am at the idea of leaving my beautiful violets and “ the yellow cowslips,” to be mewed up in an hotel, and become, myself, “ a pale prim Rose.” ’ This distaste, in my mother’s disposition, to the household functions devolving on a poor man’s wife, and, in my father’s habits, a curious mixture of refinement and frugality, were a latent source of future disappointments upon both sides. Such disappointments could not, of themselves, have any serious effect upon the affection which retarded them. But they were calculated, as time went on, to aggravate any distress occasioned by more important divergences of character.



WOODCOT (BACK VIEW).

CHAPTER V.

LIFE AT WOODCOT. 1827-8. ÆT. 24-5.

THE room my father had selected for his study at Woodcot was a small one on the ground floor, overlooking the lawn. And here I may mention that, whatever the size of his house, it was invariably one of the smallest rooms in it that he appropriated to himself as his literary workshop. Small enclosures are more easily fortified than large ones, and his study was his castle; no less inaccessible to the world outside it than the mountain keep of a mediæval baron. He was a moderately early riser, generally up and about by 8 A.M. It was his habit to walk at all seasons, and in all weathers, for nearly an hour before breakfast. From breakfast till luncheon, at half-past one or two o'clock, the time was devoted to composition and correspondence. He was a punctual correspondent; a rapid, and to his few intimate friends a voluminous, letter-writer. During his first years of authorship, he composed slowly and laboriously; afterwards, with great rapidity, rarely correcting a line. He had a taste strongly

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developed and largely indulged (which, but for his careful business habits, and an economy amounting sometimes, in little things, to parsimony, might have proved ruinous to him) for building, furnishing, and decorating. This taste was the natural outcome of his constructive faculty and his passion for improvement. He was always inventing or developing something: his mind and body, by the fullest cultivation of all their faculties; his property and income, by the careful study and bold investment of all their resources. Nor was this desire for improvement confined to what belonged to himself. It extended no less actively to all that he himself belonged to. It animated his interest, and guided his action, in relation to his country, his age, and all the social and intellectual conditions of the human world around him.

Herein lies the explanation of his political views and opinions. He abhorred the politics of destruction and disintegration. The most trifling relics of his childhood were tenaciously preserved by him, with a strong sentiment of conservation. He altered and improved much; but rarely destroyed anything, however useless it might be. He had a profound respect for continuity; and, having great aspirations, but no envy, there was in him nothing of the revolutionist. But he was an ardent reformer wherever he recognised a rational promise of practical improvement. The same tendency occasioned, in early life, his dandyism and love of dress. To make the most and best of his personal appearance seemed to him no less an obligation of self-respect than to make the most and best of his intellectual powers, his moral capacities, and his physical faculties. He was a frequent purchaser of houses and properties, which he invariably resold at a considerable profit on his outlay in improving them. Had he lived in a hovel, he would have contrived to embellish it; and there are few places occupied by him for any length of time on which he did not leave, in some beautified feature or added convenience, the stamp of his creative fancy.

He was at all times a temperate, not to say abstemious,

er and drinker ; and, although his taste, like that of his first
 o, Pelham, was fastidious, his appetite, unlike that of his last
 o, Kenelm Chillingly, was very small. In later life, he had
 tracted the habit, common to most students and solitary
 o, of rushing through his meals with an impatient rapidity
 ich would have shocked the gastronomic conscience of Lord
 losston. His breakfast generally consisted of a piece of dry
 b and a cup of cold tea, or hot tea impatiently tossed into
 umbler half full of cold water ; the remains of which he
 ically carried away with him into his study—stalking out
 he room, silent, preoccupied, in dressing-gown and slippers
 assing-gown long and flowing, and slippers the most slip-
 ed), with staring eyes like those of a sleep-walker.¹ His

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In an essay (published anonymously) 'upon breakfasts,' he says : 'Of
 meals, breakfast is treated most like a friend of the family, for how many
 do we keep it waiting ! We could not behave cooler to it, if it were the
 we loved best in the world. But then, we are more at home in its
 ; we receive it in our dressing-gown and slippers ; loll over it with a
 ; muse in its company upon the state of our finances, or the business of
 day ; suffer it to survey us in our solitude ; and "to know us" (what other
 doth this?) "exactly for what we are." How connected is it with our
 line, how woven with our amusements ! It is the nurse of a myriad
 ys ; it is worthy of an essay itself, and it shall have one.' . . . 'I love to
 of the matutinal habits of great men, especially of those who live in the
 try, and are early risers. I like to know what a fine mind does with itself
 a return to this world from the haunted palaces of dreams. For my
 I, I never consider dreams as things not to be remembered. I look at them
 he mirrors of such thoughts as lie half-shaped and embryo in the mind—
 ights that we should not recognise as our own but for those spectral reflec-
 . Often are we dimly unaware how certain prepossessions are seizing and
 eeling on our minds, till we are startled to find them tyrannising over our
 p. I first knew that I loved the person in the world I have loved most, by
 og her for ever in my dreams. I first knew that I hated the person
 lost whom, for three years afterwards, I burnt with an unquenchable
 egs, by dreaming night after night that I was engaged with him in mortal
 fight. Ah, from what guilty thoughts and evil passions might we save our-
 es in the day did we more seriously acknowledge the monitors of the
 it !' . . . 'And therefore it is that I have a curious interest in learning
 imaginative men, of a certain age, pass the first hours after waking. I
 to hear of Scott dashing, at sunrise, through the dripping woods upon his
 ay pony. I like to read of Rousseau, in his old age, loitering, at early day,
 he lake that nourished his immortal "reveries." I picture to myself the
 l, yet tranquil, and half-developed images that flitted athwart the mind of
 the, as he paused for long minutes by some flower yet wet with the early

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dinner, when he dined alone, rarely lasted ten minutes. He was an incessant smoker. Whatever the result of his morning's work, it seldom left, in his manner, any perceptible trace of preoccupation when once he had put it aside. The rest of the afternoon, till four o'clock, was generally employed in exercise or social intercourse, riding, driving, walking, or visiting.

At the time I am speaking of, people dined early; and six o'clock was, I believe, the customary dinner hour at Woodcot. Literary work was resumed from four to six, and from ten till twelve, or later; but these last hours were more generally passed in reading than in writing.

Such was the author's ordinary working day at Woodcot; but what he accomplished there must have called for many hours of extra toil; and later, as his life became more solitary, it was also more sedentary. Addressing a boys' school in the year 1854, he himself thus described his hours and methods of work:—

Don't think me guilty of egotism if I venture to give you my own experience. Many persons—seeing me so much engaged in active life, and as much about the world as if I had never been a student—have said to me ‘When do you get the time to write all your books? How on earth do you contrive to do so much work?’ I shall perhaps surprise you by the answer I make. The answer is this, ‘I contrive to do so much, by never doing too much at a time.’

dews. The beings of the mind are more chastened and spiritualised while fresh from the bath of dreams, before the low cares and petty troubles of the day begin. But we are in the garden—return we home. The lattice, reaching to the grass, is open—your light repast prepared—your favourite book beside you—your dog at your feet—the projects of the day lie, like a map, before you. Everything in a country life is calm and certain; and, if you are worthy of that life, your own thoughts can preserve you from monotony. The author should not live in towns. In them his soul does not sufficiently feel its majesty. And yet it is in cities that most of us are condemned to live and to struggle on.’

I regret that I cannot here reproduce the whole of this very characteristic, and quite unknown, essay; for in it my father has caressingly described many of his own habits, dispositions, and sentiments—to which the house, the grounds, and the surrounding scenery of Woodcot were thoroughly congenial. But it contains one very beautiful sentence which I cannot forbear adding to what I have already quoted from it. The italics are my own. ‘I question if men would ever smile, had they never seen the face of Nature—it is an *expression that we catch from her.*’

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A man, to get through work well, must not overwork himself—or if he do too much to-day, the re-action of fatigue will come, and he will be obliged to do too little to-morrow. Now, since I began really and earnestly to study, which was not till I had left college and was actually in the world, I may perhaps say that I have gone through as large a course of general reading as most men of my time. I have travelled much, I have mixed much in politics and in the various business of life, and in addition to this, I have published somewhere above sixty volumes, some upon subjects requiring much special research. And what time do you think, as a general rule, I have devoted to study—to reading and writing? Not more than three hours a-day, and when parliament is sitting not always that. But then, during those hours I have given my whole attention to what I was about. Thus, you see it does not require so very much time at a stretch to get through a considerable amount of brain work, but it requires application regularly and daily continued. If you pour once a week a whole bucketful of water on a stone, you leave no impression behind. But if you continually let fall a drop on the stone, the proverb tells you that you wear a hole in it at last.

When a certain political adventurer who had made his way through all the prisons of Europe was asked how he managed it, he said, 'A very small file will eat through iron bars, if you file an hour or two every night,' and so, in the stern dungeons of mortal ignorance, file at the bars—steadily when alone; and no prison can detain you long from escape into free air and celestial light.

This account, however, demands copious qualification. During the composition of the historical romance of 'Harold,' which was completed in less than a month, it is no exaggeration to say that my father was engaged upon it nearly day and night for more than three weeks. His work was no less continuous during the composition of 'Lucretia,' and 'The Caxtons;' 'Kenelm Chillingly,' and 'The Parisians;' books of which the first two and the last two were written simultaneously. This species of incessant literary toil must have been begun almost immediately after his settlement at Woodcot.

Between the years 1827 and 1837, he produced twelve novels, two poems, one political pamphlet, one play, the whole

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of the work entitled 'England and the English,' three complete volumes of his 'History of Athens,' of which only two have ever been published, and all the essays and tales collected in 'The Student.'

These acknowledged publications represent only a portion of the literary labour. For throughout the greater part of that time, he was writing anonymously in the 'Edinburgh Review,' the 'Westminster Review,' the 'New Monthly Magazine,' the 'Monthly Chronicle,' the 'Examiner,' the 'Literary Gazette,' and other newspapers. And for a great part of the time he was also an active member of Parliament, to say nothing of studies to which he did not give the name of work. In later life the circumstances which deprived him of domestic companionship made books his constant board and bed companions; and, even when neither writing nor reading, he was still thinking hard. It was his daily habit, at least in the country, to take long solitary rides and walks, which gave him just as much mental as bodily exercise; for all the while he was either planning out some work, or brooding over some recent course of reading.

Among his most private papers I have found a criticism on his own character (written at the age of forty-three, and for himself only) in which he says :—

Thought is continually flowing through my mind. I scarcely know a moment in which I am awake, and not thinking. Nor, by thought, do I mean mere reverie or castle-building; but a sustained process of thinking. I have always in my mind some distinct train of ideas which I seek to develop, or some positive truth which I am trying to arrive at. If I lived for a million years, I could not exhaust a millionth part of my thoughts. I know that I must be immortal, if only because I think.

And elsewhere in the same paper he adds :—

I have an intense belief in the generative virtue of labour; and I look upon genius as concentration of thought upon one point at a time. I do not believe that true genius is confined in its sphere of operation. It is only because few men of genius concentrate as

much labour of thought on one point as on another that they are not equally successful in every intellectual effort.

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Fortunately for his accomplishment of the many tasks my father undertook, he had a quickly recuperative constitution, a strong active frame, and an elastic temperament. For, though subject to fits of intense depression, and an irritability which sometimes rendered him absolutely unapproachable, yet no sooner was he relieved from the burden of mental worry or bodily pain, than his spirits rebounded into an exuberant sunny vivacity. He became, to all appearance, as light-hearted and easily pleased as a boy; and was capable of taking the most joyous delight in the simplest pleasures and occupations.

But, three years after his marriage, he began to receive warnings (repeatedly neglected) that his health was seriously impaired by the strain he had put upon it. 'I fear there is no chance of Edward getting better,' wrote my mother in 1831 to Mrs. Bulwer Lytton, 'for he undertakes a degree of labour that, positively, without exaggeration, no three persons could have the health and time to achieve. So incessantly is he occupied, that I seldom or never see him, till about two or three in the morning, for five minutes. And it is no use for me to tell him that he will only defeat all the objects of his life by attempting more than he can compass. Poor fellow! my remonstrances only irritate him.'

Still he went on toiling without a moment's rest or relaxation; and two years later, towards the end of 1833, his health fairly broke down. 'Edward,' my mother wrote again to my grandmother, 'leaves Paris next Monday, and is coming home. Poor fellow, he complains sadly of his health, but owns (which he never would before) that he has been overworked, and must at last take rest.'

It was then that he and my mother went to Italy. But *post equitem sedet atra cura*. The temporary release from labour involved no cessation of the causes which made labour the necessity of his life. The change of scene and air, however,

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partially restored his health ; the creative activity of his mind revived, and, taking fresh impressions from the influence of Italy, poured itself forth in a new series of compositions marked by an imaginative power richer and fuller than that of all his previous romances.

Whilst the mental toil, then resumed, went on without pause, the condition of his domestic life was a never-ceasing cause of intolerable suffering to him. Every year was silently accumulating a tremendous debt to nature ; and at last that patient creditor exacted her dues with heavy interest. The crash came in 1844. The wrung nerves revenged themselves upon the tyranny of the exacting brain ; and before he had fared halfway upon the journey of his life, the spent traveller sank prostrate under the burdens heaped on burdens he had borne so bravely and so long. My father's 'Confessions of a Water-patient' (published in 1845) contain a passage which is a significant contrast to the one I have quoted from his school speech of 1854 :—

I have been (he says) a workman in my day. I began to write, and to toil, and to win some kind of a name, which I had the ambition to improve, while yet little more than a boy. With a strong love for the study of books, and with a yet greater desire to accomplish myself in the knowledge of men, for sixteen years I can conceive no life to have been more filled by occupation than mine. What time was not given to action was given to study ; what time not given to study, to action—labour in both ! To a constitution naturally far from strong, I allowed no pause nor respite. The wear and tear went on without intermission—the whirl of the wheel never ceased.

Sometimes, indeed, thoroughly overpowered and exhausted, I sought for escape. The physicians said 'Travel,' and I travelled. 'Go into the country,' and I went. But at such attempts at repose all my ailments gathered round me—made themselves far more palpable and felt. I had no resource but to fly from myself—to fly into the other world of books, or thought, or reverie—to live in some state of being less painful than my own. As long as I was always at work it seemed that I had no leisure to be ill. Quiet was my hell.

At length the frame thus long neglected—patched up for a while

by drugs and doctors—put off and trifled with as an intrusive dun—like a dun who is in his rights—brought in its arrears—crushing and terrible—accumulated through long years. Worn out and wasted, the constitution seemed wholly inadequate to meet the demand.

The exhaustion of toil and study had been completed by great anxiety and grief. I had watched with alternate hope and fear the lingering and mournful death-bed of my nearest relation and dearest friend—of the person around whom was entwined the strongest affection my life had known: and when all was over, I seemed scarcely to live myself.

At this time, about the January of 1844, I was thoroughly shattered. The least attempt at exercise exhausted me. The nerves gave way at the most ordinary excitement—a chronic irritation of that vast surface we call the mucous membrane, which had defied for years all medical skill, rendered me continually liable to acute attacks, which from their repetition, and the increased feebleness of my frame, might at any time be fatal. Though free from any organic disease of the heart, its action was morbidly restless and painful. My sleep was without refreshment. At morning I rose more weary than I laid down to rest.

But to return to Woodcot. Its first visitor was my mother's early friend, Miss Greene, whom she had invited to stay there with her during her confinement, and who came from Ireland for that purpose. Miss Greene thus describes her first impressions of my father:—

Mr. Bulwer came for me in his carriage. The first sight of him pleased me much; but I said to myself, 'he is too young.' For, young as he was, he looked still younger. We had an hour's drive, however, from Nettlebed; and in the course of it I found him singularly agreeable: his manners not at all those of the boy he looked, but of an experienced man of the world, and his conversation charming—very original, but thoroughly unaffected. He talked with great admiration and affection of his beautiful wife. It was nearly dark when we drove up the lawn. In the hall I was met by the handsomest woman I have ever seen. She and her husband seemed devoted to each other.

After my mother's confinement, my eldest uncle, who was then lately married, came with his wife to stay at Woodcot;

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and throughout the whole period of their residence there my father and mother were seldom without long visits from their friends and acquaintances in London.

Two permanent members of the Woodcot household may be mentioned here. One was a little Blenheim bitch given by my father to my mother, who was extremely attached to it. The little dog was her constant companion, and its name, Fairy, she had printed upon tiny visiting cards, which she used to leave, with her own, upon her friends and neighbours.¹ The other was a large black Newfoundland, named Terror. This dog was a literary character, for he figures in 'Pelham,' as the inseparable companion of Sir Reginald Glanville.²

My father's marriage did not involve any lengthened interruption of correspondence with his friend at Paris. On January 14, 1828, he wrote to Mrs. Cunningham from London, where he was already house-hunting :

¹ She was deeply afflicted by the death of this little animal, which occurred about the same time as that of Mr. Wyndham Lewes, the first husband of the late Lady Beaconsfield; to whom she wrote a letter of condolence on that event, comparing their respective losses, and lamenting her own as being, in the nature of things, the heaviest and most irreparable of the two.

² 'The other evening I was coming home from one of Sir Lionel's preserves and had sent the keeper on before, in order more undisturbedly to ----'

'Con witticisms for dinner,' said Wormwood.

'To make out the meaning of Mr. Wormwood's last work,' continued Vincent. 'My shortest way lay through that churchyard, about a mile hence, which is such a lion in this ugly part of the country because it has three thistles and a tree. Just as I got there I saw a man suddenly rise from the earth, where he appeared to have been lying. He stood still for a moment, and then (evidently not perceiving me) raised his clasped hands to heaven, and muttered some words I could not hear distinctly. As I approached nearer to him (which I did with no very pleasant sensations) a large black dog, that had till then remained *couchant*, sprang towards me with a loud growl—

"Sonat hic de nare canina

Litera,"

as Persius has it. I was too terrified to move—

"Obstupui steteruntque comæ,"

and I should infallibly have been converted into dog's meat if our acquaintance had not started from his reverie, called his dog by the very appropriate name of Terror, and then, slouching his hat over his face, passed rapidly by me, dog and all, &c.'—*Pelham*, chap. iv. and *passim*.

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My dear Friend,—Many thanks for your obliging letter. You mistake the account of our correspondence. It stands thus. Two letters from me produced at the end of six months one from you. I resolve to take the same time in answering, when I get your second. But meanwhile, I take compassion on you, and write. It will give me the greatest pleasure to see you in England, more especially at Woodcot; and my wife will be most happy to make your acquaintance. So pray come and visit us. And the sooner the visit, the greater the favour. In August, indeed, I shall probably leave Woodcot; having then finished the term I originally proposed to myself for 'retirement.' I shall then, in all probability, spend a great part of the year in London, or its immediate neighbourhood. Indeed, I have been spending the last three weeks here in searching for a house. But in vain. Houses are so dreadfully dear in town. There are some places, I see in the map of London, on the other side of that great boundary of the civilised world, Oxford St., called Portman Square and Portland Place, or some such names, where houses are rather, but not much, cheaper. Perhaps, as I am a sort of recluse, I may therefore select a hermitage in either of those spots. I had the pleasure of seeing Cuthbert to-day at Brooks's Club. Charming youth he is. I hear Schoenfeldt is dead. That could not make much difference in him; he never seemed quite alive. Cradock I had a glimpse of the other day. He was . . . as good-looking as ever. Adieu.

The Same to the Same.

Woodcot, April 8, 1828.

My dear Friend,—Your letter gave me great pleasure. But that I need not tell you. As to your affirmation of being not my debtor but rather my creditor, in our epistolary balance, I yield an incredulous assent. *Se non è vero, è ben trovato*. You are right in your cautionary admonitions. It is quite astonishing what a false interpreter the world is. We live in an atmosphere of lies; and whatever we breathe becomes a lie directly it is breathed by another. Lies, lies, lies, wherever one turns! I begin to believe, with Bishop Berkeley, that the world itself is a lie, and that there is nothing true in the universe but one's own mind. At all events, there never was a wiser precept than that which advises us to live with our friends as if they were one day to be our enemies. Pity that, like all these sayings, it is so unpleasant to practise. I would sooner be always calumniated than always suspicious. I thank you for wishing

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to know my Rose. You would like her much. Indeed, she is so good, amiable, and warm-hearted, that it would be impossible not to like her. I say nothing about her beauty, but that you shall one day judge of yourself. Meanwhile, she is in your style. Dark hair, bright complexion, dazzling teeth. My quiet woodlands, as you call them, are anything but tame. They are so wild and waste that you might imagine yourself in a desert. Judge how delightful such scenery is to me.

Directly my new book is out, I will send it to you. As also the other two, 'Falkland,' and 'The Rebel.' The latter, a poem, has been translated into French, and has, I am told, had great success in France.¹

The former has horror-stricken the Prudes and Canters. I am anxious to console myself by your opinion of it, for I am in hopes that you, who have felt, will find in it the only merit I claim for it—*truth* in the delineation of feeling. Its fault is that it is too stilted. That is a fault in the style, not in the sentiment of it. But one does not become perfect in a day. Don't frighten me with your malevolent predictions of a numerous tribe. Nothing is so hideously uninteresting as an author with a large family. Tell me what you think of Leigh Hunt's 'Life of Byron.' People here are furious against it. My brother is settled in our neighbourhood. His wife is a very nice creature, and a great friend of Rose's. 'Interesting news!' you will say. But what better can you expect from a hermit who sees less of the living than the Egyptian Sorcerer saw of the dead; that is to say, one a month? Your account of Miss Cunningham's health gives me the greatest pain. So beautiful and innocent as she is, it is impossible not to feel deeply interested in her. Pray remember me most respectfully and truly to her, and let me hope that your next letter will assure me of her convalescence.

God bless you, and yours,

E. L. B.

¹ In the foreign correspondence of one of the daily papers of this year (1828) I find the following, dated Paris, March 21:—'You will be gratified to hear that your young bard, Mr. Lytton Bulwer, is duly appreciated in this country. It must be allowed that no nation is more liberal of praise, where it is merited, than this; and envy, the attribute of little minds, seems to be almost unknown amongst men of genius here. Of Mr. Bulwer they say, "*La manière de Bulwer ressemble beaucoup à celle de Byron; mais il l'imité sans le copier. Le talent sait rajeunir comme il sait créer, et l'un n'est ni moins difficile ni moins glorieux que l'autre.*" The translation of '*The Rebel*' has already passed through two editions.'

CHAPTER VI.

ESTRANGEMENT BETWEEN MOTHER AND SON. 1827-8. *Æt.* 24-5.

MEANWHILE my grandmother remained unreconciled to her son's marriage. Her door was closed to both husband and wife. The estrangement between mother and son was complete, and the bitterness with which the son felt it is shown by the following letters:—

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Edward Bulwer to his Mother.

Woodcot, near Nettlebed, Oxfordshire : September 22, 1827.

My dearest Mother,—I heard from Henry with the greatest regret that I had offended you by sending you cake. The fact is, I could not bear the idea that you and your most intimate friend, Mrs. Sherbrooke, should be the only persons I knew to whom that compliment was not to be paid ; and therefore (contrary to Rose's opinion, who was afraid you *might* be offended) I wrote your name with my own hand. Pray forgive me if this *did* offend you. I assure you it was an error of judgment, and not done without great consideration. For God's sake write to me one line—to say something—not *very* harsh!

The place I have come to is exceedingly retired, and affords every facility for living according to my fortune. I hope the land will pay for the house. I do not like to write more now. But I could not help writing one line of remembrance, and to implore you to let me hear from you. God bless and keep you.

Your most affectionate son,

E. L. B.

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The Same to the Same.

Woodcot : September 29, 1827.

My dearest Mother,—Although I have not heard from you—not even one line—I cannot help intruding myself again upon you, to say how sorry I am at the inconvenience you must feel at the death of Cornwall,¹ of which I only heard the day before yesterday. It would give me great, very great, pleasure to hear how you are, though it were but one word only. But I do not wish to force myself on your recollection. Of myself I say nothing, convinced that all which relates to me will be uninteresting to you. I do not, however, and I never can, cease to be, with every good wish and warm remembrance,

Your most affectionate son,
E. L. B.

The Same to the Same.

Woodcot : October 19, 1827.

My dearest Mother,—As you spoke to me about my books when I last saw you before my marriage, I suppose they must be in your way now. I should be very much obliged if you would kindly send them to me whenever it suits your convenience. The waggon will be their best conveyance ; and perhaps your butler would be good enough to see them booked, and let me know when they leave London or elsewhere for this place. I was a little comforted to hear from my brothers that you are well, and am, my dearest mother,

Your ever affectionate son,
E. L. B.

The Same to the Same.

Marshall Thomson's Hotel : November, 1827.

I cannot leave town without writing to you one line. I am deeply unhappy that you have not only refused to see me, but that you still refuse even to hold any kind of direct communication with me. Perhaps hereafter, when you do more justice to yourself, your own kind feelings will be more just to me also. But, after all allowance for any natural anger and disappointment, I cannot but feel that your conduct to me is more than harsh. It is unjust.

¹ Her agent.

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All my letters unanswered. All your messages to me of the most uncompromising nature, and made in the most contemptuous terms. The very least memorial of me returned as if to exclude from your house every relic, and from your thoughts every remembrance, of me. And your door inexorably shut in my face. This is the last time I shall mention or revert to these things. If I have a right to feel, I have none to intrude; and I will do so no more.

You cannot, however, but be sensible that, if I really *have* erred in the action which has offended you, that action brings with it its own punishment; and that such implacable unforgiveness on your part is no more required as an addition to the many evils and privations I must have to contend with, than it can possibly be judged hereafter by your juster and gentler feelings, as a duty to yourself.

If, also, at any time previous to my marriage, my happiness made your motive for dissenting from it (as you led me to believe), it is quite clear that this motive could not dictate the unmitigated harshness you adopt. For, if I am unhappy, that motive would make you sympathise with, rather than exclude, me: and, if happy, your object is gained.

E. L. B.

This letter effected no change for the better in my father's relations with his mother. The year closed on their continued estrangement. Early in the following year, he was under the necessity of parting with a little mare, which had once been admired by my grandmother. The occasion suggested to him the opportunity of making further efforts at reconciliation.

Three years ago (what an age ago it now appears!) you seemed to have taken a fancy to 'Lady,' and offered to buy her, should I ever wish to part with her. I would not sell her then, nor will I sell her now to *anyone*. But I cannot afford to keep her longer, and there is only one person to whom I would like to give her. Will you accept her? If so, I will send her to town by the first safe opportunity. If you will but write me one word, my address is still Woodcot, near Nettlebed, Oxon.

This letter elicited an answer, but the answer was sore and reproachful. He replied to it from town:—

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Marshall Thomson's Hotel: Saturday.

I have this moment received your letter, which was forwarded to me from Woodcot. Although you say that all further correspondence between us would be painful to you, yet I cannot be the first to drop it. Nor can I resist expressing the great gratification that any opening, even so faint a one as your letter, affords me.

I am truly and deeply sensible of your former kindness and affection: and, although I cannot look upon past events with any feeling that I have acted towards you with the ingratitude and want of affection for which you condemn me, yet I have not been free from self-reproach, nor have I suffered myself to indulge that satisfaction in my choice which, with *your* approbation, I should have felt. I regret, deeply regret, that I ever gave you a promise I was afterwards unable to keep. But, at least, the promise shows how earnestly I meant to comply with your wishes when it was given. Reflect for one moment whether you or I have been the sacrifice. What did you lose? Nothing. What did I lose? Everything. You put the question wrong when you say that you offered me the choice between relinquishing Rose and relinquishing you. It was not Rose you asked me to relinquish. It was my duty to Rose. You think I have mistaken my duty. But even so, you cannot think me misled by the promptings of self-interest or self-indulgence. I have relinquished fortune, freedom, ambition, enjoyment—all except my sense of truth and right. Could you esteem me if I had relinquished these? If not, why do you now seek to deprive me of my only consolations, my best titles, if not to your affection, at least to your esteem?

If I said I would receive nothing from you when I married, do justice to the obvious meaning of my words—words I would still repeat; and let me put aside from both our minds all idea of ‘interest’ and ‘advantage.’ I assure you that all I ask, all I desire, is that exchange of affection and good-will which I now implore you not to renounce.

But, if I said I would not see you after I married, suffer me to retract and recall words which could only have arisen in that warmth and eagerness of temper so habitual to me, and let me assure you that I feel it is something more than a hardship to find myself excluded from your house.

For the rest, I would wish to avoid all appearance of speaking rather to your feelings than to your judgment. Why do you think

it wise to look only at what has offended or disappointed you in my conduct? Why, even if you will concentrate all your observation only on these aspects of it, do you refuse to take into consideration those extenuating circumstances, or to admit those redeeming motives, of which even the worst errors are not wholly destitute? Look round the world. Where do you find in it that perfection of judgment you require, or that warmth of heart you reject, in your son? Is Society so full of affectionate ties, of enduring remembrances, of tender associations, that we can afford to squander them away, or shut our hearts upon those we have loved, and who love us, even for greater cause of offence than any I have given you? Was not the father in the Parable (I do not mention this as an authority, for I do not believe all that you believe, I mention it only as an illustration), but was not he held out to us as a wise example, though his son had sinned against him? Did he shut the door upon that son's advances and return? Did he not think there is far more joy in reconciliation than in the remembrance of offences?

I should now conclude this letter if I did not think it right to say one word, so far as it concerns yourself, about one whose feelings I have now the most intimate opportunities of knowing.

In spite of all your opposition to our marriage, in spite of all the garrulous officiousness of those *third persons* who are always ready to retail stories from one to another, in spite of wounded feelings which might be termed natural and human, I assure you that Rose has never spoken of, or alluded to you, otherwise than in terms of good will and respect. Nor has she ever ceased to lament the breach our marriage has occasioned between you and myself. God bless and preserve you.

E. L. B.

This letter found Mrs. Bulwer Lytton very unwell. It consequently remained unanswered, and a few weeks later her son wrote to her again:—

Edward Bulwer to his Mother.

Woodcote: April 28, 1828.

I regret that it was only by accident, and through a third person, I heard of your late illness. Believe me, I have been most sincerely affected by it. I do trust you will let me know how you are. I only ask for one line totally confined to the state of your health. I cannot think you will refuse me this. There are times when one

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easily forgets all one has imagined harsh or unjust, and this is one. I will not say more now. But I assure you that I am, with unabated truth,

Your most affectionate son,
E. L. B.

The Same to the Same.

Woodcot: May 6, 1828.

My dear Mother,—About eight or nine days ago I wrote to you, expressing my great regret at hearing of your late illness, and begged you to let me have a line to say how you were. I have been led lately to fear, from some mistakes between my servant and the postman, that this letter may not have reached you. I therefore write again; but only to repeat how much I was grieved by the news I received, and how anxiously I trust that you will not refuse to let me know how you are, if only by a single line. I assure you that I am, with the greatest truth,

Your very affectionate son,
E. L. B.

The Same to the Same.

London (undated).

William¹ yesterday informed me of your message respecting my calling. Had I received it before, I would not have intruded myself unasked in Seymour Street. I am now in town again till Saturday, having come here for the purpose of selling a book. If you will see me during any part of my stay in London, I need not say how happy it will make me. And, if you wish it, I will not say a word about past circumstances.

My dear, dear mother, I do assure you that in this request I am wholly actuated by motives of affection which I beseech you not to disregard.

E. L. B.

The Same to the Same.

Woodcot: May 29, 1828.

Your message to me through Henry² gave me the greatest concern. I only heard accidentally that you had been unwell. Directly on hearing it, I wrote to you. I wrote also to others. I made inquiries from everyone who could tell me of your health. And, although I will say openly, for I feel it deeply, that I look

¹ His eldest brother.

² His second brother.

upon myself as one wronged to the extreme in your opinion, yet I can truly add that I felt nothing but the most unalloyed anxiety for your health. The answer you have now returned to all my inquiries renders it but justice to myself that I should say this, and add one thing more. Now that I can look into my own heart clearly, calmly, even coldly, I find in it nothing that does not confirm my conviction that I have not acted wrongly to you, though I have incurred your resentment.

And this is my consolation for all things which have befallen, or may yet befall, me: all self-sacrifices, all harsh judgments, all unkindness and desertion from those who should have known me better, all struggles with the world; struggles that seem to be contemplated with pleasure rather than sympathy.

Hereafter, when it may be too late, you will perhaps recognise the truth of what I say, and your heart will misgive you when you look at this letter, or any other in a correspondence which now seems to you so irksome.

E. L. B.

It is but just to the memory of my grandmother (a memory gratefully revered by her grandson) that I should mention in connection with this correspondence, what I believe to have been the main cause of her resentment at my father's marriage. She had a strong sentiment of justice, and an intense, perhaps an old-fashioned, appreciation of the self-subordinating service due to that private sovereignty, the Family, from every one of its members and subjects. This feeling was, to herself, an established principle of conduct: and, guided by it, she considered, rightly or wrongly, that her daughter-in-law, when made aware of her objection to the marriage, and my father's pecuniary position in regard to it, ought to have released him from his engagement. She did not, perhaps, sufficiently realise the practical futility of a release which would not have been recognised or accepted by him. But it will be seen hereafter that her subsequent conduct to both the sufferers from a union which (for this and other reasons) had been to her a source of extreme vexation, was not only considerate but generous and (as usual with her) self-sacrificing.

CHAPTER VII.

DRUDGERY. 1828. *Æt.* 25.BOOK
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FROM the mortified feelings expressed in his letters to his mother, from the pain with which they must have haunted the happiest hours and embittered the most anxious moments of a married life, not otherwise unhappy—from the vexing remembrance of relinquished ambitions, and the menacing prospect of most uncertain fortunes—my father had, at least, a daily distraction in the inexorable necessities of his new position. And in some respects, perhaps, it was fortunate for him that the maintenance of the home he had now made for himself entirely depended on the result of his literary labour. Throughout a life more ravaged than that of most men by domestic griefs and violent emotions, he retained a singular power of concentrating all his faculties on the intellectual task of the moment, whatever that might be; and it did not fail him at the outset. He was now to write, not for fame, or for pleasure, but for bread. And, in the acceptance of this obligation, all his mental gifts, and all his force of character, were subjected to the severest regimen by his practical judgment. He well knew that, if his pen was to support him, it must be both popular and prolific. He resolutely resisted the allurements of those departments of literature which most attracted him. In its lowest and obscurest regions he toiled unremittingly. The single object for which he wrote now was to pay his way through the world from year's end to year's end, owing no man anything. And what unknown, unrecorded

drudgery to compass this one poor desperate end! No part of my present undertaking has been to me more piteous than the disinterment of nameless remains from the sepulchres of those extinct ephemerals, Keepsakes, Books of Beauty, fashionable serials, popular almanacks, daily newspapers, weekly, monthly, and quarterly reviews. Multitudes of little stories, notices of trashy books, political articles, imaginary letters and dialogues, hasty sketches of men and manners, the whole of them mostly anonymous, were all poured forth unceasingly into the innumerable rivulets with which a periodical press is for ever feeding the waters of oblivion.

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Here is one out of his many lists of subjects for the articles which he contributed to the periodical literature of that time.

1. On Oliver Cromwell.
2. Historical sketches.
3. The Dreamer, in four meditations.
4. Prose eclogues : classical : Pan and the Dryades, &c.
5. Bothwell and Mary Queen of Scots.
6. The young days of Shakespeare.
7. Comic adventures in Paris.
8. Algernon Sidney in prison.
9. Sketches of Fashionable Life.
10. The present state of Foreign Literature.
11. On Taste.
12. Epistles : 1. Philosophical ; 2. Sentimental ; 3. Satirical.
13. Life in Death, a Tale.
14. On the rise of the Greek Drama.
15. On the Athenian Democracy.
16. On the present House of Commons.
17. On Campbell's poems.
18. Miss Landon's Delia.
19. On the novels of the year.
20. On Miss Porter's novels.
21. Mrs. Hemans.¹

¹ In connection with the name of Mrs. Hemans I may mention that my mother's first gift to my father was a volume of that lady's poems, on which he wrote the following inscription : ' Donum primum atque haud ingratissimum amoris.'

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I fancy that to the mother who, convinced of her son's genius, was justly jealous of any but the noblest employment of it, the degradation of a mind formed for worthier work must at this time have been more apparent than the grim necessity which compelled such wretched taskwork; and that she had addressed some remonstrance to my father which provoked this galled reply.

Edward Bulwer to his Mother.

Woodcot: June 17, 1827.

My dearest Mother,—Your letter has disappointed me. I did not deserve it. But no matter. With respect to my writings, such as they are, while I am flattered that you should take any interest in them, I cannot but feel that, in the first place, there is something of mockery in condemning *a class* of writing which circumstances, as you well know, have compelled me to choose. At present, I must write for the many, or not at all. I cannot afford to write for the few. I do not write for writing's sake. In the next place, I feel that your censure is not just as regards the moral of the *particular* writings to which it refers. That of 'Falkland' you approved (except a single isolated passage which had nothing to do with the tendency of the whole) when you first read it. In your present condemnation, therefore, you have adopted the opinion of others whom I do not allow to be good judges, or else you are extending to my works your condemnation of myself. It is not for me to enter further into the vindication of 'Falkland.' I shall do that at length in the preface of the next book I publish. And to the moral of *that* book I know at least that no exception can be taken.

For the present, I will only add that nothing is so little understood, and so much disputed, as the moral of *any* book whatsoever; and that, while some abuse the moral of 'Falkland,' others, who themselves are exemplary in morals, and eminent in understanding, have given me their high approbation of it. Nor can I perceive on what principle that moral can be called a bad one, in the illustration of which vice, invariably recognised as vice, and never once defended or extenuated even by the lover himself, is immediately and sweepingly punished. I have now only to conclude. I do so by praying from my heart that you may enjoy every blessing of health and happiness. For my part, whatever your opinion of me

now, or your feelings towards me, I shall never forget your former kindness, never cease to lament your present construction of my conduct, nor ever entertain for you any other feeling than that of the sincerest affection.

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E. L. B.

But all this while my father had, lying finished in his portfolio, a work that was destined to lift not only his name, but his genius and its aims, at one leap, out of that morass of literary trivialities in which the circumstances of his life seemed leagued to sink them. It was a work begun under happier auspices, finished with great care, and thoughtfully directed in all its parts to a literary purpose which, though not immediately apparent to some of its earliest critics, was completely and permanently fulfilled by its impression on the public mind. This work was 'Pelham.'

CHAPTER VIII.

'PELHAM.' 1828. Æt. 25.

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ONCE upon a time, when everybody was talking about 'Pelham,' the author of that work was stopped before the door of the Senate House at Cambridge by a college friend, George Burges, who exclaimed, 'I had no idea, Bulwer, that you had it in you to write such a book!'

'Well,' replied the author, 'no man knows what he can do till he tries.'

The reply was characteristic of my father.¹

¹ For this anecdote I am indebted to my friend, Mr. Elwin, who had it from George Burges himself. The original narrator of it, upon whose recollection my father's answer appears to have made a lasting impression, was a man of singular cleverness and oddity. He was born in Bengal, where his father was a watchmaker. Whilst still an undergraduate at Trinity he published (in 1807) an edition of the *Troades* of Euripides, with a preface and critical notes in Latin, which astonished by its excellence the best Greek scholars of his time, and raised the highest expectations of his future achievements as a Hellenist. Elmaley, in his preface to the *Bacchæ*, refers to him as 'vir ingenio, doctrinæ, et græcarum literarum amore, vix cuiquam secundus, qui in Troadum editione, quam pæne puer instituit, talem de se spem excitavit, qualem, meâ sententiâ, nemo ante eum huic studiorum generi addictus adolescentulus.' After leaving the University he was known chiefly by the eccentricities of his conduct and the absurdities of his speculations. He used to drive about London in a two-horsed vehicle of peculiar shape; the panels of which were painted with hieroglyphics emblematical of his views as to the origin of language. He started two coaches, which plied up and down the New Road; and he inscribed upon his visiting cards 'Mr. George Burges, ἀματωροποιός' (coachbuilder). He invested a large sum of money in the construction of a huge whale-shaped machine for the aerial conveyance of passengers from Dover to Calais. He invented a coat, fastened only by a single button in the centre of the back, and wore it in the streets of London, where it attracted general notice, but none of those who chanced to see him in his model dress were induced to adopt it. He then set up as the maker of a new kind of stays, which he called '*corsets à la Venus*'; and he

In his various prefaces he has himself related most of the circumstances connected with the composition, publication, and reception of this novel. A biographical sketch was prefixed to a collected edition of his works that appeared in his lifetime. The opinions expressed in it are those of its writer,

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frightened and offended some of the leading ladies of fashion by the earnestness with which he requested their permission to try this invention upon them. About this time he married, perhaps in order that the *corset à la Venus* might at least have one fair trial under his personal superintendence. Matrimony, or the ill success of his other occupations, disposed him again to authorship; and he wrote an unreadable play called *The Sin of Erin, or the Cause of the Greeks*, which he published with a dedication from 'George Burges to George Byron,' greatly to the resentment of the poet. His next experiment was a series of public lectures upon ancient and modern literature. In the course of these lectures he asserted that the pyramids have a foundation exactly corresponding in shape as well as size with the aboveground portion of them (a foundation consisting, in short, of an inverted underground pyramid), and he sang to the tune of 'Malbrook' the 'Θεῶν λεγέειν Ἀτρεΐδας' of the pseudo-Anacreon. His Greek, indeed, overflowed on every occasion. His knowledge of it was extraordinary, and he especially loved to exercise his fertile ingenuity in amending the text of the Greek dramatists—emendations marked by the same kind of wild invention which distinguished his innovations in dress and carriages. His lectures on literature shared the fate of all his projects. They were neither popular nor remunerative, notwithstanding the apparent attractiveness of the following advertisement:—

'GOOD AND CHEAP FOOD'
WITHOUT RUIN TO THE FARMERS!

'The nobility and gentry in and out of Parliament, and now nearly ruined by the awful depression of the landed interest, are respectfully informed that Mr. George Burges, M.A., of Trinity Coll., Cambridge, will, in his seventh lecture, detail an easy plan by which His Majesty's Ministers may, if they will, increase the revenue a million sterling annually, and so improve the soil of England as to enable it to feed sixty millions of mouths on cheaper and better bread than can be grown upon, or imported from, any other part of the globe.'

In the meanwhile his fortune had vanished into the coaches, the flying machine, the *corsets à la Venus*, and other creations of his genius, and for some years he earned a scanty subsistence by teaching, and by drudging work for the booksellers. In this long period of toil and penury, with a wife and family to maintain, his buoyant hilarity and self-complacency triumphed over his fits of depression at every momentary gleam which broke in upon his burdened existence. In 1856 a legacy from his friend Mr. John Kenyon (author of *A Rhymed Plea for Tolerance*), and the assistance of Bishop Blomfield, saved him from absolute destitution; and he then settled, with his wife, at Ramsgate, where they kept a lodging-house, and where he died, not long afterwards, from the effects of a paralytic stroke.

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but its statement of facts was doubtless made with my father's sanction; and from this we learn that Mr. Colburn saw in 'Falkland' such a promise of better things that he offered the author 500*l.* for a novel in three volumes. 'I will give you one that shall be sure to succeed,' was the answer. The first volume of 'Pelham' was already written. It had been begun late in 1826, was finished early in 1828, and sent at once to Mr. Colburn. 'Mr. Colburn,' says my father,¹ 'placed it in the hands of his chief reader, Mr. Schubert, by whom it was emphatically condemned as utterly worthless. He then submitted it to his second reader, Mr. Ollier, the author of "Inesilla," whose more favourable report induced him to read it himself.' I learn from Mr. Lumley, the present proprietor of the 'Court Journal,' that 'three or four days afterwards Colburn called Schubert and Ollier into his room, and remarked "I have read Mr. Bulwer's novel, and it is my decided opinion that it will be the book of the year."' From this statement it may be inferred that the offer of 500*l.* for the copyright was conditional on Mr. Colburn's approval of the work. Having delivered his judgment on it, he immediately despatched a messenger with the cheque.

'The clerk sent with it,' continues Mr. Lumley in his communication to me, 'was Mr. Campbell, who says that Mr. Bulwer told him that, if this novel had been declined, he would never have written another, but have devoted himself entirely to politics. I myself heard Mr. Campbell narrate his reception, and the remarks made to him by Mr. Bulwer.'

The road to success is usually through failure. In proportion as the first step costs the second counts. No one ever recognised this more fully than my father, or acted more

¹ I have been assured that, when 'Pelham' was running through its sixth edition, a second 500*l.* was spontaneously sent by Mr. Colburn in recognition of the author's moral claim to a larger share in the profits, which greatly exceeded the expectations of either of them. But I cannot vouch for the truth of this statement; having been unable to find any corroboration of it in my father's correspondence.

resolutely on the principle involved in the recognition of it. That he would have long been daunted by the rejection of his manuscript, or permanently deterred from following his natural vocation by an obstacle at the outset so common to the literary career, is most unlikely. But, as in this fiction he had put forth all the powers of pleasing he was then able to command, he no doubt felt at the moment that, if it failed to please, no second effort of the kind would be received with greater favour.

'Pelham' was published, without the name of the author, on the 10th of June, 1828. The first reception of it seemed to justify the prognostications of Mr. Schubert. 'For two months after its publication,' says my father, 'it appeared in a fair way of perishing prematurely in its cradle. With the exception of two most flattering and indulgent notices in the "Literary Gazette" and the "Examiner," and a very encouraging and kindly criticism in the "Atlas," it was received by the critics with indifference or abuse. They mistook its purpose and translated its satire literally. But about the third month it rose rapidly into the favour it has since continued to maintain.' Looking back upon the enormous popularity it acquired, and contrasting this with the neglect of it by some journals, and its supercilious treatment by others, he drew the inference that it is an error in the producers of books to suppose that the reviewers represent, or greatly influence and guide, the public. 'I knew not,' he says in a preface to 'Pelham' dated 1840, 'a single critic, and scarcely a single author, when I began to write. I have never received to this day a single word of encouragement from any of those writers who were considered at one time the dispensers of reputation. Long after my name was not quite unknown in every other country where English literature is received, the great quarterly journals of my own disdained to recognise my existence.' He held up his own example to those 'aspirants,' from whom he received frequent letters 'lamenting their want of interest and non-acquaintance with critics,' and exhorted them to believe

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that they did not need professional critics for their patrons; 'that the public is the only critic that has no interest and no motive in underrating an author, and that his world is a mighty circle of which envy and enmity can penetrate but a petty segment.' Certainly no work of more than ordinary merit was ever dependent for its ultimate fate upon the verdict of critics. But with the mob of books that come crowding into the world, reviewers rarely have the leisure (even had they in the highest degree the requisite capacity) to test with care the relative qualities of all the volumes soliciting their attention, and to pick out from the throng the worthiest of its innumerable members. To invite much attention from them a book must bring with it, as it were, its letters of introduction; and it was just because my father did *not* 'know a single critic,' that the critics knew little of 'Pelham,' and that for some months the book appeared likely to perish in its infancy. This was no more the fault of its critics than of the book itself.

The sensation shortly afterwards created, however, by the appearance of 'Pelham' as a novelty in English literature, was not confined to the author's own country. It was continental: and throughout Europe the impressions made by it appear to have been unanimous and almost instantaneous. 'On the merits of this remarkable work,' said a writer in the '*Revue des Deux Mondes*,' 'the whole opinion of Paris is, for once, in accord with that of London.' And another of its French critics mentions that within less than a year from the date of its publication in England, it had become a textbook about English society, in all the salons, the cafés, and the clubs of Paris. The work was rapidly translated also into German, Spanish, and Italian; and wherever it was translated it was read with avidity.

Its author has related the manner in which his conception of the work grew up. "'Mortimer, or the Memoirs of a Gentleman'"—a sketch which formed the groundwork of

"Pelham," and was subsequently published with it in 1835 —had been sent anonymously, during the author's undergraduate days, to a fashionable publisher with some other sketches written at the same time. The publisher thought these manuscripts unsuited to publication in a volume by themselves, and returned them with a recommendation to send them, for serial publication, to a magazine. To this the author was disinclined. Soon afterwards he went abroad, taking the manuscripts with him. During his sojourn at Versailles some of these manuscripts were rewritten in the form of imaginary letters, illustrating the growth of a particular sentiment in a particular character. The letters eventually grew into a slight narrative which, under the title of "Falkland," was sent to Mr. Colburn, and published by him shortly after the author's return to England in 1827. "Mortimer" during the same period had been entirely recast, and considerably developed in a direction wholly different from that of its first conception. The author has explained that the original tale was intended to illustrate the corruption of a character from the influence of worldliness; and "Pelham" the redemption of a character through the right use of that worldly experience which enables a man of sense to grow gradually wiser by the very foibles of his youth.'

He says, on another occasion, that the notion upon which he had proceeded in 'Mortimer,' 'of a clever man of the world corrupted by the world, was not new.' The view 'that the lessons of society do not necessarily corrupt,' which was the basis of 'Pelham,' had, he believed, never been worked out; and he thought that it would be 'a new as well as a useful moral to show that we may be both men of the world, and yet something wiser, nobler, and better,' than *mere* men of the world. This was the serious purpose of the work. The form most attractive for the development of such an idea had suggested itself to him before he hit upon a fitting subject for his novel. 'Encouraged,' he says, 'by the reception "Falkland" met

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with (flattering though not brilliant), I resolved to undertake a new and more important fiction. I had long been impressed by the truth of an observation of Madame de Staël, that a character at once gay and sentimental is always successful on the stage. I resolved to attempt a similar character for a novel; making the sentiment, however, infinitely less prominent than the gaiety.'

To give a greater air of vivacity to the picture, he settled that the hero should be the narrator of the story. The design of showing that a man of the world need not be permanently corrupted by it required that Pelham should not be a moralist, looking down with disdain upon the scenes that passed before him, but a person who took to himself the form and colour of the society in which he moved; a man addicted to the foibles the author intended to satirise, and yet possessing a reserve of good sense which rendered him intrinsically superior to them. 'I said to myself,' he wrote when disclaiming the self-portraiture imputed to him under a common impression that in Pelham he had consciously, and deliberately, and to his own satisfaction, depicted his own character,—'I said to myself, my hero is a terrible coxcomb. It suits me that he should be so. I have seen something of the various grades of society. The experience has not been acquired without pain: let it not pass without profit. The scenes I have witnessed I will describe: upon the manners I have noted I will comment: but not in my own person. In the first place, therefore, my hero shall have little in common with his author: in the second place, he shall be suited in outward temper to the sparkling varieties of life, though he shall have sufficient latent observation to draw from the follies he surveys, or even shares, the uses of reflection. His very faults shall afford amusement; and under them he may, without the formality of a preceptor, inculcate instruction.' The two sides to Pelham's nature were set forth still more distinctly in the novel itself; where Lady Roseville says to him, 'While you

seem frivolous to the superficial, I know you have a mind not only capable of the most solid and important affairs, but habituated by reflection to consider them. You appear effeminate, I know that none are more daring; indifferent, none are more actively ambitious; utterly selfish, and I know that no earthly interest could bribe you into meanness or injustice; no, nor even into a venial dereliction of principle.'

Not only did consistency demand that the contrasted qualities of Pelham should be kept up in the presentation of his own peculiar character, but it was also indispensable to the conception of the story that every part of it should be related in the way a man of Pelham's temperament would have told it. This was an obligation that taxed the skill of the author. 'I threw the narration,' he says, 'into the first person to import liveliness to the description of scenes too familiar or commonplace for high dramatic interest. But, in so doing, I had to contend with the difficulty of sustaining through three volumes a character of a peculiar order: and, as this character was represented as gay, light, worldly, glancing at the surface, and incurious of the depth, of things—it was necessary that I should give to every remark in the book (for even those which are not his own are remembered and repeated by the imaginary narrator of it) the special colours with which such a character was likely to imbue them. This difficulty became greatest in the history of Glanville, throughout which I had perpetually to repress all ostentatious tints, whether of language or feeling; because, although Glanville's story is much more sentimental than the rest of the book, it is the unsentimental Pelham who repeats it to the reader. And therefore the art of narrative required that the style of it should in this part be different and rather more poetical, yet not so different as to be altogether incongruous with the general tone of its somewhat flippant hero. I do not know whether in such a task complete success was attainable; but both the story and the whole character of Sir Reginald Glan-

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ville are, in my own opinion, very inferior to the worst parts of the rest of the book. Had I imagined, however, that "Pelham" could be considered a fashionable novel, I would have burnt every page of it. For I understand by the term "fashionable novel" a description of *things*, and I intended "Pelham" for a description of *persons*. It was not my aim to paint drawing-rooms, but to paint the people in them—their characters and humours.'

The execution of this plan assigns to Pelham the part of an actor in all the phases of society which the author himself had witnessed and observed. He frequents the salons and gambling-houses of Paris, and the fashionable coteries of London. He mingles in the counterfeit fashion of English watering-places; knows the tricks, and visits the haunts, of thieves; is privy to the manœuvres of political parties, and an adept in the arts of canvassing at elections. 'This work,' said the author in his advertisement to the edition of 1848, 'is the picture of manners in certain classes of society twenty years ago; and, in that respect, I believe it to be true and faithful.'

I have heard from those who remember the time that the claim is just; allowing only for the humorous exaggeration which preserves the spirit by departing from the letter, and imparts a flavour to incidents vapid in themselves. Even the Latin puns of Lord Vincent, which the readers of our generation might attribute to the author's fondness for a petty play upon words, reflect a then existing mania for interlarding conversation with classical quotations, grotesque or serious. As those who could make them were comparatively few, and those who could understand them were not very many, this pedantic kind of boredom was, happily, short-lived.

The satire in 'Pelham' grew naturally out of the circumstances of my father's life. These had afforded him a prematurely wide experience of society under most of its superficial aspects: and to the shallowness of the sentiments, and the intrinsic frivolity of the objects, with which, under every one

of those aspects, so large a portion of society is seriously occupied, he had been made keenly alive by the enduring influence of that early affection which bequeathed to his character a certain depth of latent melancholy—an abiding sense of inward isolation from the world around him. Though constitutionally shy, he was not constitutionally morose. But before he could taste the pleasures of the world, his mind had been weaned from its vanities: and, had he not been convinced that the scenes in ‘Pelham’ could only be redeemed from insipidity by a constant gaiety in the description of them, his mode of depicting them would have been, I think, more gravely caustic. There is not a particle of levity in any one of the many private expressions of his personal views and feelings about human life, its duties, and its destinies. As it was, however, the zest, the spirit, the airy enjoyment with which Pelham plays his part in the lighter business of the story, became the cause why so many of its readers were blind to the ridicule involved in the pleasantry, and mistook the disposition of the hero for the approbation of the author. But, whether the satire were overlooked or understood, the author did not err in judging that society would relish a pungent representation of itself; and it was this assurance which led him to say to Mr. Colburn, ‘I will give you a novel that *shall* succeed.’ Having already completed his first volume, he had satisfied himself of his power to execute the scheme in a shape which fitted it for the amusement of the world.

He had, indeed, spared no efforts to secure this result. ‘After I had formed in my own mind,’ he says, ‘the character of Pelham, I long and seriously revolved its qualities before I attempted to describe them on paper. For the formation of my story also, I had studied with no slight attention the great works of my predecessors, and had sought to derive from that study certain rules and canons to serve me as a guide.’¹ If

¹ By no novelist of his own age were greater pains bestowed upon the construction of the story. He had elaborately studied the principles of this art, and the mastery of them was a merit he highly appreciated in the works of

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some of my younger contemporaries would only condescend to take the same preliminary pains, I am sure the result would be much more brilliant. It often happens to me to be consulted by persons about to attempt fiction; and I invariably find that they imagine they have only to sit down and write. They forget that *art* does not come by inspiration, and that the novelist, dealing constantly with contrast and effect, must, in the widest and deepest sense of the word, study to become an *artist*. They paint pictures for posterity without having learnt to draw.' Every sentence was, in a manner, a piece of art by itself, to be fashioned with lingering care. 'In the mere art of composition,' he wrote in 1840, 'if I have now attained to even too rapid a facility, I must own that this facility has been purchased by a most laborious slowness in the commencement.'

Many traits in the personages who figure in 'Pelham' must have been taken from originals known to the author. He says in his Autobiography, that whilst delineating Pelham himself he had his friend Villiers in his mind. The original of Pelham's valet, Bedos, was the author's own valet before he married. This man was a Frenchman. He had an odd little talent for constructing figures, and striking likenesses, in pen and ink, out of fantastic combinations of curved lines and flourishes. Portraits drawn by him, in this way, of Louis XIV., Voltaire, Rousseau, and other French worthies, still exist at Knebworth. They were parting gifts to his master; who had them framed and glazed in honour of an artist whose accomplishments were not confined to this peculiar manifestation of them. Although the character of the henpecked Clutterbuck is by no means in all aspects the counterpart of my great grandfather, this strongly drawn portrait of the clerical scholar, concentrating his whole being upon barren classical studies,

others. He considered that the novels of Mrs. Opie, though not otherwise of much literary value, were entitled, on account of the skilful management of their plots, to more praise than they have received.

was undoubtedly suggested by the wasted life of Richard Warburton Lytton. And the small expenses and vast expenditure of that pilfered ancestor have equally their parallel on a reduced scale in the robbery by servants of the simple-minded rector whose world was in his books. Rogers, with his habit of saying ill-natured things, was glanced at in Wormwood. Russelton was Beau Brummel; and Jemmy Gordon was the real name of an eccentric character at Cambridge, notorious for his scraps of learning, his inebriety, and his coarseness. My father gave me to understand that Vincent and Guloseton had also their originals in real life; but he did not mention their names. The murder of Tyrell in the novel was founded on the murder of Weare in 1824, by Thurtell, a low gambler like Thornton; and perhaps no part of the novel shows more skilful handling than the manner in which the real incidents are varied and applied in the description of this fictitious crime. Even Mr. Job Jonson, the thief to whose assistance Pelham is indebted for the proofs of Glanville's innocence, had his prototype in a member of the swell-mob known to the author. And, although not a single character in 'Pelham' is the exact portrait of any actual person, Sir Reginald Glanville's is in all probability the only one for which no features were borrowed from a living model.

Out of the panorama of life presented to us in 'Pelham,' two characters stand prominently forth. One of them is the hero himself, and the other is Sir Reginald Glanville. The latter, says the author, 'was drawn purposely of the would-be Byron school, as a foil to Pelham. For one who would think of imitating the first' (Glanville), 'ten thousand would be un-awares attracted to the last.' He did not in the retrospect, as we have seen, approve either the story or the character of Glanville. The mind turns away with pain from the story: and the sullen moodiness, the prolonged ferocity of revenge, which intermingle with the higher traits of the character, keep us in an unpleasant suspense between sympathy and

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dislike ; not allowing us to rest in either. The character of Pelham, on the contrary, may claim to be regarded as a masterpiece of its kind ; although, perhaps, a due proportion has not been kept between his strength and his weakness. The purpose of the book would have been less liable to misconception, had the transition been more gradual from the scenes which exhibit only the amusing coxcombrty, to those which reveal the sterling qualities, of its hero.

Byronism was the reigning form of foppery when 'Pelham' made its *début*. It is a wonder that the Byronic sham should have been so long sustained by impostors whom nobody believed, and who could not possibly have believed in themselves. But when the physiognomy of society has contracted any particular grimace which it thinks becoming, it is not to be preached or lectured out of countenance. *Similia similibus curantur* ; and although both Pelhamism and Byronism were affectations, the first was a wholesome antidote to the last.

Youths in the fresh exuberance of life supposed it beautiful and heroic to put on a woe-begone expression of countenance, and pretend that their existence was blighted in its bud. They affected to be sated and worn out by premature vice, and darkly hinted that their conscience was tortured by the stings of unutterable crimes. But even were there an atom of truth in all this posturing, the romance of it would have been, not in the facts alleged, but in the mystery which gave to the allegation every attribute of imposture. Whether the dark deeds supposed to overshadow the lives of these blighted beings were theft, forgery, murder, incest, or what not, the instant such deeds were detected, or plainly confessed, the hero would have sunk into the crowd of vulgar criminals, and become an object, not of interest and sympathy, but contempt and detestation. Under every aspect, therefore, the assumed part was a cheat.

The foppery of Pelham was the reverse of all this. It was frank, cheerful, and refined. As soon as the novel became

popular the Byronic mask was dropped; and numbers who had been too honest to wear it hastened to indulge in a fashion which, with all its affectations and self-assurance, aimed at least at being pleasant, sociable, and human. The author of 'Pelham' congratulated himself on this result of his work. Writing of it in 1840, he remarks: 'Whether it answered all the objects it attempted I cannot say, but one at least I imagine that it did answer. I think that, above most works, it contributed to put an end to the Satanic Mania—to turn the thoughts and ambitions of young gentlemen without neck-cloths, and young clerks who were sallow, from playing the Corsair, and boasting that they were villains. If, mistaking the irony of Pelham, they went to the extreme of emulating the foibles which that hero attributes to himself, those, at least, were foibles more harmless, and even more manly and noble, than the conceit of a general detestation of mankind, or the vanity of storming our pity by lamentations over imaginary sorrows, and sombre hints at the fatal burden of inexpiable crimes.'

The assumption of the Pelham type of foppery was encouraged by the admiration with which many women regarded it; and amongst the curiosities at Knebworth is an enormous gold dressing-case, elaborately fitted with every conceivable requirement for the toilet of an exquisite, which was the anonymous gift of some fair enthusiast to the young author of 'Pelham.'

One, at least, of the changes which the book effected in matters of dress has kept its ground to this day. Lady Frances Pelham says in a letter to her son: '*A propos* of the complexion: I did not like that blue coat you wore when I last saw you. You look best in black: which is a great compliment, for people must be very distinguished in appearance to do so.' Till then the coats worn for evening dress were of different colours—brown, green, or blue, according to the fancy of the wearer; and Lord Orford tells me that the adop-

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tion of the now invariable black dates from the publication of 'Pelham.' All the contemporaries of Pelham would appear to have been simultaneously possessed with the idea that they were entitled to take to themselves the 'great compliment' paid by Lady Frances to her son.

Those who admired, and those who derided, the fopperies of this fictitious personage agreed, at least, in believing that the author intended him for a model, and was himself the superlative dandy he described. In a dialogue between him and his hero, which was prefixed to 'The Disowned' in 1829, he says: 'Have they not all, Mr. Pelham, with one voice, critics and readers, praisers and impugnors, fastened your imperinences and follies upon me?' He emphatically repudiates the charge, and states that he determined, when he began his novel, that 'never once, from the first sentence to the last, should the author appear' in it. 'Mr. Pelham,' he continues, 'did I not inflexibly adhere to this resolution? Did I ever once intrude, even in the vestibule of a preface, or the modest and obscure corner of a marginal note? That I might not for an instant be implicated in *your* existence, did I not absolutely forego my *own*? I have never wished to favour the world with *my* character, its eccentricities or its secrets; nor should I ever be disposed in the person of any hero of romance to embody or delineate myself.'

And indeed, widespread though it was, the notion that 'Mr. Pelham' was my father's ideal of man, was not the less preposterous. No one with the capacity to write this novel could possibly have formed the design of composing a work for the glorification of puppyism. But the author, on his side, was also deluded when he fancied that there was nothing of himself in his hero. Dandyism could be but a trivial item in the life of a man whose brain and pen were ceaselessly at work; and, when taken to task for the attention he paid to his personal appearance, he aptly replied: 'Like the camel-driver, I give up my clothes to the camel: let him trample *them* in the

belief that he is crushing *me*.' This infinitesimal element, however, though not the '*me*,' was part of the '*me*;' and there are abundant indications in my father's private letters and journals that, when he wrote '*Pelham*,' he was not without a certain tincture of the qualities he has imparted to his hero.

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The foibles a man understands best are his own: he is acquainted with their inner springs as well as with their external effects; and, no matter how firmly a novelist might resolve to repress his personal peculiarities in the composition of his fictions, they would appear there in spite of him. Many a marked idiosyncrasy would never have been represented in books unless it had been native to the author in whose works we find it. Goethe could not have written '*Werther*' had he been incapable of Wertherism, and the most complete embodiment of Byronism was Byron himself. The author of '*Pelham*' was not exempt from this law. There were times when he might have been said to live the characters he created; his vivid conception of them ruling within him, and regulating his outward demeanour. I have seen him, in his later years, for months together, now in one new character (or, to speak more correctly, in one new phase of his own many-sided nature) and now in another; and this temporary possession of his whole individuality by special traits was only explained to me when I afterwards read the fiction he was writing at the time.

When '*Pelham*' first appeared the two great literary magnates of the age were Scott and Byron. Leaving aside what was faulty in the conception of Glanville, '*Pelham*' owes nothing to either of them. Next to the author of '*Waverley*,' but *longo intervallo*, the novelists most in vogue were Dr. Moore, Miss Burney, Miss Edgeworth, Miss Austen, and Godwin. '*Pelham*' bears no resemblance to any of their works. Its originality is conspicuous. The manners it portrays have changed: the society it describes has been fundamentally modified: the kind of sentiment against which it was a pro-

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test is extinct: the audience it addressed has nearly passed away. Time has taken from the book every source of adventurous or temporary interest, yet it is still among the fictions in regular demand by young and old. The knowledge of the world which underlies its obsolete forms, and the wit which sparkles through its pages, are probably the cause of its continued vitality. The literature of wit is longer lived than that of sentiment. A world which has ceased to weep over the sorrows of 'Werther' is still amused by the adventures of 'Gil Blas;' and the popularity of 'Pelham' may perhaps outlast the attraction of works in which its author has sounded profounder depths of feeling, or risen to loftier heights of imagination.

The following letter was written shortly after the publication of the book:—

Edward Bulwer to Mrs. Cunningham.

My dear Friend,—You won't write to me? Well then, don't! You can't find a better correspondent, so your silence will punish itself. I want to send you my books, but don't know how. Think of some conveyance if you can. 'Pelham, or the Adventures of a Gentleman' (my last) is now taking wonderfully. You will see by it that I have not spared my Paris acquaintances, nor forgotten my *one* Paris friend—you. I dare say you can hire it at Galignani's. I am sure, at all events, that it will not be long before it is there. People here are in a terrible ferment about the Administration. I would I were in the House. But I know nothing to tell you—nothing at least, till you write me a long letter, fairly filled, letting me know exactly how my beautiful acquaintance, your daughter, now is. Adieu. Ever as ever.

E. L. B.

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CHAPTER IX.

BIRTH OF A DAUGHTER AND PUBLICATION OF 'THE DISOWNED.'

1828. *Æt.* 25.*Edward Bulwer to his Mother.*

Woodcot: June 22, 1828.

My dearest Mother,—Although I cannot hope that you will feel much interested in a late event of some importance to me, yet even if respect to you did not require me to announce it, I could not resist the opportunity which the birth of a daughter, five days ago, affords me to renew my inquiries after your health. Believe me, I am *most* anxious to hear how you are, and to be informed from yourself, (whenever it will not be irksome to you to give me a line) of your entire recovery. Pray pardon me when I say that nothing gives me more pain than to recall your last letter, and to think myself so unfortunate as still to labour under an opinion which I must venture to call unmerited. I do not say this, however, as a complaint. But if a feeling of disappointment which can only have its origin in affection gives to my words, either in this letter or in my last, any tone the least displeasing to you, I shall be most sincerely sorry, and must entreat you to place it to what, upon reflection, *can* only be ascribed to its real cause.

In informing you of a new tie, it is a great happiness to me to feel convinced that everything which tends to open or soften the heart makes it more deeply sensible of former claims upon it, and that every fresh affection only strengthens and confirms that which is the earliest and the most ineffaceable. With every sentiment you could desire, believe me, my dearest mother,

Your most affectionate son,

E. L. BULWER.

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This child was christened Emily Elizabeth. She died in 1848. Her birth was the subject of some lines addressed to my father by Thomas Campbell.¹

My mother, who had suffered much in her confinement, was unable to nurse the infant herself. The doctor strongly deprecated all attempts to bring it up by hand; and it was impossible to find in that rural district any respectable married woman willing to go out as a wet nurse. The child was therefore entrusted to a farmer's wife who had been recommended by a neighbouring family, and who lived a few miles from Woodcot House. This, in the circumstances of the case, was the only possible arrangement. But it was nevertheless unfortunate; for it deprived my mother of the interest she might otherwise have found in the tender cares of the nursery, while my father was absorbed in literary labours now rendered heavy and incessant by the extent to which the maintenance of his home depended on their profits.

¹ They were published in the twenty-third volume of the *New Monthly Magazine* of that year, from which I copy them here.

' My heart is with you, Bulwer, and portrays
The blessings of your first paternal days;
To clasp the pledge of purest, holiest faith,
To taste one's own and love-born infant's breath,
I know, nor would for worlds forget the blisa.
I've felt that to a father's heart that kiss,
As o'er its little lips you smile and cling,
Has fragrance which Arabia could not bring.

Such are the joys, ill-mock'd in ribald song,
In thought, ev'n fresh'ning life our lifetime long,
That give our souls on earth a heaven-born bloom;
Without them we are weeds upon the tomb.

Joy be to thee, and her whose lot with thine
Propitious stars saw Truth and Passion twine!
Joy be to her who in your rising name
Feels Love's bower brighten'd by the beams of Fame!
I lack'd a father's claim to her, but knew
Regard for her young years, so pure and true,
That, when she at the altar stood your bride,
A sire could scarce have felt more sire-like pride.

T. CAMPBELL.'

Miss Greene mentions in her memoirs that, during her visit to Woodcot in the summer of 1828, my father and mother were continually 'driving or riding over to see little Emily,' and that 'the baby, though born sickly, appeared to be thriving.' In the autumn of this year my mother was suffering from a painful weakness in her eyes. The doctors, when other remedies had failed, prescribed change of air. Woodcot was let to my eldest uncle, William Bulwer, for his wife's first confinement, and my father and mother went to Weymouth. From that place the latter wrote to Miss Greene: 'Edward wished to have Emily weaned that we might bring her with us; but I thought it unsafe, and she is well cared for where she is. That kind Mrs. Vanderstegen, who has the child brought to her every week, tells me she has a colour like a rosebud, fat white shoulders, and long dark eyelashes.' In a letter, written a few weeks later to the same correspondent, she adds: 'I have just heard from Edward, who went back to Oxfordshire a few days ago to see "little Boots," as he always calls her. "Never," he says, "did I see a child so improved, nor, for her age, so pretty. She has beautiful eyes, and her little plump limbs are as firm and smooth as marble."' To the lady mentioned in this letter (Mrs. Vanderstegen) she also wrote about the same time: 'I have heard of mothers being jealous of their daughters, and if I were at all of a jealous disposition, I really think I should be jealous of mine, from the rapturous way in which her father speaks of her.'

My father and mother did not return to Woodcot till the following year; and then only for a few months preparatory to leaving it for ever. On the eve of their departure my father wrote to his mother.

I have heard, with feelings I cannot possibly express, that you have still the remains of illness, and that you do not think or speak of me quite so unkindly as I had imagined. God knows that, if I had not thought you were utterly steeled against me, I would not have written to you as I have done, even to defend my-

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self. But when one thinks there is no affection left, and that all one's overtures are thought mercenary or selfish, writing is indeed a difficult and delicate task. My dear, dear mother, do not think, do not believe, that I could be such a wretch as not to feel the deepest and truest anxiety for your health; or that new ties and relationships of any kind could ever efface those that subsist between us. Do not believe, also, that I have reconciled myself to your displeasure, or that any selfish motive could have induced me to incur it. But this I won't talk of now. I write with my heart full, and I will make haste to finish what I have to say. William tells me you are gone to Knebworth, and have all kinds of annoyances there. I cannot bear the idea that you should be there only with servants and strangers. Do, for God's sake, let one of us—*me*, if I might ask it—come to you. We could, at least, save you some trouble, and be of some assistance to you. For my part I will not consider it in any way compromising you to a reconciliation with me, if you are not willing to it; nor ever speak to you on any subject but business. All I would wish is to be of use to you. God bless, and keep you my dearest, dearest mother.

E. L. B.

My grandmother did not accept the offer; nor, whatever inward struggles may have been produced by her son's appeal, does she appear to have exhibited as yet any signs of relenting. The publication of 'The Disowned' afforded him another opportunity for renewing his attempt to bring about a reconciliation; and, with a copy of the work, he sent her this letter, dated 'Weymouth, December 1, 1828.'¹

My dearest Mother,—Some time ago, when you wrote to me about 'Falkland,' I mentioned that I had another work in the Press which would contain a moral tendency, likely to please all people. This circumstance makes me venture to send you the accompanying volumes, and it will give me great pleasure if you like them. I cannot avoid the opportunity of adding that it is now a year and three months since you have seen me, and that I feel the most increasing concern at your continued displeasure.

¹ Books published at the close of one year commonly bear the date of the next; and, deceived by its title-page, all the persons who have written sketches of my father's life, have stated that *The Disowned* did not appear till 1829.

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May I hope at last that when I come to London, it will have abated sufficiently for me not to consider myself quite proscribed from your house, or quite an alien from your affections? Often and often, notwithstanding your refusal to see me, or even to hear from me, I have been tempted to intrude myself more on your remembrance than I have done. But I have been placed in peculiar circumstances; and you cannot consider those circumstances without feeling that I had to struggle against any misconstruction of motives, or any suspicion of being actuated in my conduct by other causes than affection for you. At length, let me hope that I need no longer do so. A year and three months have passed, and I have been enabled by my own exertions, not only to obtain for myself an independence, and a fair ground of calculation that in time this independence will become affluence, but also to have paid off debts previously incurred to the amount of several hundreds. I say this only with the view of freeing all concession to you (and I am willing to make every concession you can wish) from the shadow of any feelings but those which can alone be pleasing to yourself and honourable to me. I cannot but think that it will be to you not quite ungratifying to feel and know that it is from the most real affection, and from the bottom of my heart, that I beseech you to suffer me once more to see you, and to subscribe myself, my dearest mother, with every sentiment of love and respect,

Your most affectionate son,

EDWARD L. BULWER.

The book, the letter, and the course of events, had a softening influence on his mother, and prepared the way for an interview. But before I continue the personal narrative, I must dismiss the book. Like 'Pelham,' it was published anonymously. In the dedication to his eldest brother, William, their relationship was not mentioned, and the dedication was unsigned.

It has surprised me to find, on reference to contemporary notices of 'The Disowned,' that by the majority of its first critics it was rated higher than 'Pelham.' But, if the book itself was written in haste, the reviews of it, in all probability, were written still more hastily; and the comparison

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they draw between the first two novels in favour of the second, notwithstanding its marked inferiority, is perhaps attributable to surprise at its unlikeness to 'Pelham' in purpose, sentiment, and style.

'Pelham,' written (the greater part of it at least) in high animal spirits, gave embodiment to an idea which had grown and fructified for years in the brain of its author. 'The Disowned' was conceived and completed in less than a twelvemonth, at a time when my father's mind was oppressed by many causes for anxiety, and when the compulsory production of much ephemeral work must have inflicted a fatiguing strain upon his faculties. 'I will fairly own,' he says in his preface to it, 'that when I sat down to the composition of these pages, I had thought to make them far more deserving of the notice of the public than they are. But many circumstances have combined with inability to disappoint my hopes. I can no longer abstract attention from the realities of life; and the spirit of creation within me is not what it has been.'

Some of those 'realities of life' which distracted his mind, and marred his literary efforts, suggested leading traits in his conception of the two heroes of his double plot. In Clarence Lindon he has traced the varying fortunes of a well-born and high-spirited youth, suddenly thrown upon his own resources, with the resolution to win for himself a position not inferior to the one he inherited, and *voluntarily* surrendered. In Algernon Mordaunt he has described the sufferings of a noble and proud nature, struggling with a poverty embittered by his inability to shelter from it the wife for whose sake it was confronted. He further drew upon his own experience in the picture of gipsy life; and the main features in the career and character of Crawfurd were derived from the then notorious history of Fauntleroy, the banker, who was executed in 1824 for forgery.

This man's malversations were conducted on a mighty

scale. His appropriations of the property of his customers in the course of a single year were estimated at not less than 170,000*l*. Other parts of his conduct were discovered to have been faulty. His wife, who was of a respectable family, had borne him a child before marriage. He was said to have married her under compulsion, and he did not live with her after the day of their union. Previous to his arrest he had enjoyed a reputation for scrupulous integrity. After the detection of his guilt, public opinion (always in extremes) attributed to him a systematic and boundless depravity of which he was probably innocent. Persons who had enjoyed his sumptuous hospitality remembered with indignation that they had often seen him fall asleep after dinner ; from which they now inferred the complete callousness of his conscience during the perpetration of his frauds. When reproachfully reminded of this habit after his condemnation, he made the striking confession that, from the beginning of his criminal career, his fear of what was to come had been so unceasing and intense that always the apprehension took possession of him in the stillness of night, and drove away sleep. Lights, wine, and the presence of animated guests were, he said, sedatives to his mental torment, and the brief after-dinner slumbers only the result of exhaustion. The Fauntleroy of the novel, Richard Crawford, was designed to bring into full relief the moral excellence of Mordaunt.

With the primary materials of 'The Disowned,' drawn fresh from life, one would have expected a work widely different from that which was produced by my father's treatment of them. But many of his earlier novels were avowedly the experiments of an eager student in his art ; and the defects of 'The Disowned,' independent of haste and a mind distracted by domestic trials, were the consequences of the theory on which the book was constructed. To an edition of it published in 1835, he prefixed an essay 'On the different kinds of prose fiction ;' and in that essay he divides the 'Narrative Novel' into three principal forms—'the Actual,

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the Satiric, and the Metaphysical.' Anxious, he says, not to repeat himself, he attempted to cultivate in turn each of these different kinds. In the 'Advertisement' prefixed to the edition of 1852, he tells us that 'at the time when the work was written he was engaged in the study of metaphysics and ethics.' Not unnaturally, therefore, he was tempted to turn these studies to account in a 'metaphysical novel'—of which he considered 'Wilhelm Meister' to be a successful example. His conception of the 'metaphysical novel' is given in the essay. 'It is not,' he says, 'to be regarded as a mere portraiture of outward society.' . . . 'It often wanders from the exact probability of effects in order to bring more strikingly before us the truth of causes.' . . . 'It often invests itself in a dim and shadowy allegory which it deserts or resumes at will, making its action but the incarnation of some peculiar and abstract qualities.' And he says expressly of 'The Disowned'—'the development of the Abstract was its principal object.'

The form which this 'development of the Abstract' assumed is set forth in the preface to the Second Edition (December 1828). The author there states that his design was 'not to detail a mere series of events in the history of one individual or another,' but 'to personify certain dispositions influential upon conduct.' For instance—'Vanity (Talbot); Ambition (Warner); Pride (Lord Borodaile); Selfishness and Sensuality (Crawfurd); Philanthropy (Mordaunt).' He says further, in the same essay, that 'King Cole' was the abstract development of 'the love of liberty' from the poet's point of view, and 'Wolffe' of the love of liberty under its political aspect. Every one of the characters was the personification of an abstraction: and, for this reason, they could hardly be living men.

My father was aware of the risk; and he fancied he had avoided 'the error common to most metaphysical writers of fiction—of sinking the human and physical traits in a too

elaborate portraiture of those which are immaterial and mental ; and so creating, not creatures of flesh and blood, but mere thinking automata and reasoning machines.' He did not perceive that the side from which he approached the subject was inevitably fatal to his good intentions. He did not begin by recalling to his mind types of character. He started with his 'abstract qualities,' and then considered how he could people his novel with the concrete 'incarnations' of these abstractions. There was an error, which could not be cured, in the first concoction of the design. Metaphysics was the author's chief object, and human nature was sacrificed to it.

The author believed that the didactic matter in 'The Disowned' would be compensated in the eyes of ordinary novel readers by the accompaniment of exciting incidents and the full play of powerful passions. This was a second miscalculation. The more you raise interest by stirring scenes and a pathetic plot, the greater becomes the impatience at disquisition and digression. Instead of the romance operating as a relief to the philosophy, the philosophy is felt as an incumbrance on the romance. The situations intended for a counterpoise to the metaphysics even appear to have been exaggerated with the view of rendering them more effectual. And this tendency to melodrama was an additional evil incidental to a mistaken conception.

Of the personified abstractions in 'The Disowned' Mordaunt is the chief. My father says of him : ' His character is an allegory in itself ; being the development of the love of knowledge, as producing necessarily the love of virtue—the incarnation of that great stoic principle of Christian Ethics, self-dependent and above fate.' No character in a novel can inspire much interest if it is 'above fate,' and the mere personification of an abstract principle in ethics. But the problem in human life which the story of Mordaunt opens out has in itself the most powerful elements of dramatic interest. It is

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as new to-day as it was in the days of Job; and to-day the conditions of it are infinitely more complex and uncertain.

I can conceive no subject worthier of treatment by a great novelist than this conflict between Character and Circumstance in the case of a man of gentle birth and noble mind who, by a sudden stroke of fortune, is plunged into irremediable destitution, with the loss of not only wealth and rank but all the other social attributes of his prosperity. If the *Deus ex machinâ* be excluded, which will prove the strongest, Character or Circumstance? My father started this problem in 'The Disowned' when his genius was still immature, and his art undeveloped by practice and experience. Later novelists have attempted to deal with it, and all have eluded the gist of the question. In his 'Roman d'un Jeune homme pauvre,' Octave Feuillet has made it the subject of a beautiful fiction. But his hero is restored in the end to all the advantages of his original state by a circumstance independent of his volition, and not directly brought about by the action of his character. In my father's treatment of the career of Mordaunt there is the same evasion. And this is one of the unfair liberties which Fiction takes with Metaphysics and Ethics when she assumes the special patronage of the reduced circumstances of these poor teachers. As it fared with the Man of Uz, and the Homeric Heroes, so it fares with all her favoured champions in their fierce but fictitious conflicts with the evil odds against them. Just when the battle is hottest, the good knight's sword broken, and his shield beaten down by the foe, his protecting Providence intervenes, and snatches him unhurt from the field.

To myself Mordaunt appears the least successful of all my father's creations. Long after he had recognised the numerous defects of the story, he retained for this character a singular predilection, which must be ascribed to his having transferred to it many of the qualities predominant in himself when he wrote 'The Disowned.' It is said of Mordaunt in the novel,

'he mixed little if at all with the graver occupants of the world's prominent places. Absorbed alternately in his studies and his labours of good, the halls of pleasure were seldom visited by his presence; and they who, in the crowd, knew nothing of him but his name, and the lofty bearing of his mien, recoiled from the coldness of his exterior; and, while they marvelled at his retirement and reserve, saw in both but the moroseness of the student and the gloom of the misanthropist.' And in a summary of the character given by my father in one of his prefaces, he says: 'I have attributed to him all the feelings usually supposed to belong to the misanthrope. pride, reserve, unsociability, a temper addicted to solitude as to a passion, and unable, from its romance, its refinement, and its melancholy, to amalgamate with others. These peculiarities, I beg particularly to state, I do not consider ornaments but blemishes.'

He was conscious, nevertheless, that the peculiarities were his own. 'A misanthrope by feeling,' he says in one of his letters to Mrs. Cunningham, 'I am a philanthropist by principle,' and in his private sketch of his own character at the age of forty-three, he makes this confession: 'When abused and calumniated, I feel it as more than injustice, I feel it as ingratitude. You calumniate me, O men, and I would lay down my life to serve you.' The philanthropic side of his nature is marked by traits in the novel, if not more faithful, yet more distinctive, than that of the misanthropy. Compare the passage in which Mordaunt speaks of his zeal for mankind with the vow made by the author at the grave of the poor girl who had been all in all to him, and it is impossible to doubt from what original he drew. 'My earliest desire,' says Mordaunt, 'was ambition; but then came others—love, and knowledge, and afterwards, the desire to bless. The love of true glory is the most legitimate agent of extensive good. For me it survived all but the deadness, the lethargy, of regret. When no one was left upon this altered earth to

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animate its efforts, then the last spark quivered and died. I would say that for me ambition is no more: not so are its effects. The hope of serving that race whom I have loved as brothers, but who have never known me—who by the exterior pass sentence on the heart, in whose eyes I am only the cold, the wayward, the haughty, the morose,—this hope, the hope of serving *them*, is to me *now* a far stronger passion than ambition was before.' The comprehensive benevolence of Mor-daunt, his 'love of knowledge producing the love of virtue,' and his self-dependence in his poverty, had all of them some counterpart in my father's temperament at that period of his life. And thus he valued the portrait for more than its intrinsic literary worth, because, in an exaggerated form, it was a record of his own feelings, trials, struggles, and triumphs.

The mistaken attempt to people a stirring novel with abstractions fully accounts for the unreality of the characters in 'The Disowned,' and that the author should have tried the experiment of blending incongruities is explained by his youth and inexperience. But when every fault has been enumerated, a discriminating critic will still find, even in the novels written during my father's first three years of enforced and immature authorship, abundant matter for surprise at the wealth of conception and ideas which could produce in such rapid succession 'Pelham,' 'The Disowned,' 'Devereux,' and 'Paul Clifford.'

CHAPTER X.

RECONCILIATION WITH HIS MOTHER, AND REMOVAL TO LONDON.

1828-9. *Æt.* 25.

'I know not,' said Mordaunt in 'The Disowned,'—speaking with a presentiment, which had no apparent cause, of his impending death,—'whether you judge rightly in thinking the sphere of political exertion the best suited for me: but I feel at my heart a foreboding that my planet is not fated to shine in *any* earthly sphere. Sorrow and misfortune have dimmed it in its birth, and now it is waning towards its decline.' My grandmother could not read 'The Disowned' without noting the many particulars in which her son had portrayed himself in the character of Mordaunt. Her maternal solicitude caught up the apprehension that this 'foreboding' was one of them. At the same time she was informed by my uncle William that my mother had, from ill-health, nearly lost the sight of one eye. The title of the novel had an ominous application to the position my grandmother had assumed towards her son: and, with these intimations of calamities, present and prospective, her alarm began apparently to get the better of her resentment. If any terrible crisis were to occur during, and perhaps in consequence of, her alienation from him, her self-reproaches would be dreadful. Her fears came to second my father's persistent and touching appeals to her. Her response to his first advances was indirect, through a letter to her eldest son, in which she expressed sympathy for the

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malady of my mother; who tells the event in a letter to her friend Miss Greene:—

8, Royal Crescent, Weymouth: December 17, 1828.

My dearest Mary,—I thank you for your curiosity about my eye. It is *in statu quo*, and I am going to try the churchyard specific of letting it rest in peace. William writes to me that he told his mother Edward had brought me here on account of my health, and that I had nearly lost the sight of one eye. I inclose the extract he sends me from her letter in reply. It is really very kind of her to take in me, whom she dislikes, so much more interest than any of my own relations have ever shown. I feel grateful to her for it, and wish she did not think of me so badly as she does.

I am surprised that 'The Disowned' has not yet reached Dublin, for it is now a fortnight since it was published. It is in high repute here, and the King sent for it twice before it came out. My uncle has heard from Lord Cunningham that he is delighted with it. Walter Scott wrote to his son-in-law, Mr. Lockhart (the editor of the 'Quarterly'), a letter in which there was a whole page filled with enthusiastic praises of 'Pelham.' But he (Scott) adds, 'It is a pity the author has such a twist in his politics, and it is doubly a pity coming from so *very* able a pen.' Of course, nothing but rank Toryism will do for Walter Scott.¹ I should be very much obliged to you if you would tell me candidly which is the most generally popular at your side of the water, 'Pelham,' or 'The Disowned.' Not that it much matters; for, with all due deference be it spoken, Irish opinions somehow or other always appear to me either down at heel, or wrong side out.

A letter from my grandmother to my father soon followed: in which she offered him pecuniary assistance, to save him from the toil that was wearing out his strength. He declined her bounty unless he could first have her love, and again implored her consent to a meeting.

'Most truly happy should I feel,' he wrote on December 23, 1828, 'to be indebted to you for *any* mark of kindness, to be dependent upon you for *anything* calculated to assist me in

¹ The author of *Waverley* was an old, when the author of *Pelham* was a young, man. The unimpassioned wisdom of age is 'rank Toryism' to the impulsive cleverness of youth.

this world. But unless favours proceed from affection, what could be so unworthy as to receive them? My dearest mother, how, if I were grinding my very heart out in toil, how *could* I touch a sixpence of your money so long as you forbid me to see and to thank you? For the love you have formerly borne me, for the sake of your own intended generosity, for the sake of what, not as a son but as a human being, I have a right to request,—a hearing, I beseech you to see me. Do not think I wish to press this hastily upon you. Take your own time, name the place, fix the manner, the conditions, let it be when, where, and how you will, I only ask you to let me have this interview. It is the greatest favour you can do me, the one most worthy of yourself, the one for which I shall ever feel most truly and deeply grateful.'

His entreaties prevailed: and we learn from a letter he wrote to his mother on Christmas Day that she agreed to see him when she went to town. She was not yet prepared to receive him at Knebworth as a guest.

Edward Bulwer to his Mother.

Christmas Day, 1828.

My dearest Mother,—Although I have just directed a letter to you at Knebworth, yet, as you seem to think it desirable I should send a duplicate to Seymour Street, I do so.

I endeavoured to express to you in that letter how deeply, most deeply, your last had affected me; and how happy I felt at receiving any mark of your returning affection and interest. The passage you mention in 'The Disowned' did certainly express private feelings; but at the time I wrote it I was in worse health than I am now, nor have I *now* any reason to believe that I shall not live long beyond that presentiment of death which I have for some time deeply felt, and which is not the less unconquerable because it is not to be accounted for.

In the letter I addressed to you at Knebworth by this post, I did not think it irrelevant to mention something of the successes I had gained for the present, and the reasonable grounds I had to hope for successes in the future. I did not think this irrelevant, because

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it gave me the opportunity to assure you from the bottom of my heart that no success was half so desirable or so dear to me as the single hope of recovering a place in your affection. I shall most anxiously look forward to your return to town and your permission to let me see you there. And while, upon this day, I thank you again for your kind wishes for me (*wishes which you can best realise*) I beg most sincerely to return them. May you, my dearest mother, enjoy a long, a very long, continuance of health and happiness. My own happiness will be best attained by the fulfilment of my hope that in an intercourse of mutual affection I may be allowed in some slight measure to contribute to yours.

Ever your most affectionate son,
E. L. B.

P.S.—I send you a short notice of ‘The Disowned,’ merely because you wished to know why I thought you might like it. I am most touched by, and sincerely grateful for, your inquiries after my wife’s eye. It is exactly the same. She cannot see the least with it. But we will try your recipe.

A brief passage from a letter of my mother’s to Miss Greene records the important event that my father and grandmother had met.

‘About a month ago,’ she wrote from Weymouth on January 17, 1829, ‘Edward got a letter from his mother, which I thought a relenting one. Upon which he went to town. She saw him, and he has been there ever since.’

No resentments are so inconsistent and inexorable as those of lacerated affection. Indignant at what it conceives to be an insult to its own omnipotence, the self-tormenting love rejects the reconciliation for which it pines; and, when the effects proceeding from the disregard of its authority are irreparable, the difficulty of forgiveness is vastly increased. My grandmother could never accept my father’s just distinction that he had not set his love to Miss Wheeler against his love and duty to his mother, and given the preference to the former; but that gradually, and to a certain extent unawares, he had engaged his honour as well as his heart, and that from this

moment it was no longer a question of *self-sacrifice*, since he could not abandon his own dearest hopes without basely sacrificing a second person to whom he had implicitly pledged his faith before he plighted it in words. Let him say what he would, the divergence on this point remained; and the reconciliation, which took place in form at the interview, did not restore altogether the old cordiality between mother and son.

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My father's manifold relations with the press rendering it needful for him to be nearer to the centre of its operations, he finally quitted Woodcot in September 1829. Fulham was a convenient resting-place during the search after a suitable house in London; and here, at a little place called Vine Cottage, he and my mother remained, with their infant daughter, till the close of the year.

They then removed to No. 36 Hertford Street, a house which in the meanwhile my father had purchased and furnished. The protracted negotiations about it were carried on with the notorious Nash, the then fashionable architect: and the remembrance of his vanished reputation may give some interest to my mother's description of him in a letter to Miss Greene:—

Mr. Nash having been very obstinate, I went with Edward to see if, both of us together, we could manage him better. We found that worthy seated in his own splendid library, or rather gallery; which is half a mile long and done in mosaic to imitate the Vatican. He was more obstinate than ever, declaring with an oath that he would not abate a farthing, and then he changed the subject. At last he said, 'Pray, sir, are you any relation to that wonderful young man who has written the delightful novel of "Pelham"?'

'Allow me,' said I, 'Mr. Nash, to introduce you to that wonderful young man.'

Upon which Nash jumped up, made Edward a low bow, and said, 'Well then, sir, for Pelham's sake, you must have the house on your own terms, and I'll make it one of the handsomest houses in town for you, with the best library. And, if you ever again write anything half as good as "Pelham," by God, I shall be glad to think I planned the room you wrote it in.'

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After this fine speech, he offered Edward casts from all his statues, showed us all over his house (or rather palace), and finished off by throwing open the doors of another suite of rooms, where, ensconced in her domestic bower, sat Mrs. Nash.

'My dear,' he exclaimed, 'I have brought the author of "Pelham," and his wife, *for you to look at.*'

Thereupon we put out paws, wagged our tongues (in default of tails), and walked up and down in the most docile manner, to be stared at, as the first Pelham and Pelhamess ever caught alive in this country.

At this juncture of affairs, old Nash began to fumble in his pockets (which he has a great trick of doing).

'Oh, never mind paying now,' said I, 'I'll take the bronze chimneypiece to my boudoir instead.'

'Very well,' he replied, laughing, 'so you shall, and anything else you like.'

And so I hope at least that Edward will take the house, which he likes very much, and that this matter is settled. No other news to-day. Miss Fanny Kemble is the eighth wonder of the world, but some people do say that she has the appearance of being schooled by her whole family.

My father's removal to London involved a new adjustment of his domestic relations with his mother. She had hitherto declined to receive his wife. This might be attended with little annoyance when mother and son were resident in different places: but when both had houses in town, with many friends and acquaintances in common, her refusal to speak or bow to the wife in whom she only saw the source of all her heart-burnings was a daily source of embarrassment. The difficulties attending upon the family ties, with the increasing evils of overwork, form the main chapter in my father's trying life at this period.

CHAPTER XI.

EFFECT OF THE LITERARY UPON THE MARRIED LIFE.

1829. Æt. 26.

My grandmother predicted that, if my father married Miss Wheeler, he would be, 'at a year's end, the most miserable of men.' Her forebodings had not been verified : but, in a way unexpected by any of the persons concerned, her displeasure at the marriage was leading, by its effects, to the fulfilment of the prophecy in the future.

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When my father married, relying mainly upon his pen for his income, he had no intention of reducing his style of living to that of an author with straitened means. In the career he had shaped out for himself he was looking forward to a seat in the House of Commons, and he was bent upon retaining a social position which, in times more exclusive than the present, would not be a bar to his parliamentary pretensions. Nor, in this, was he uninfluenced by a proud determination that, in spite of my grandmother's refusal to countenance his marriage, his wife should lose nothing of the status which belonged to his mother's son. Looking back to the little reputation he had acquired when his resolution was formed, it is impossible not to be astonished at the courage and confidence which embarked him in a scheme of life that was based upon the expectation of earning from one to two thousand a year by his writings. His success had been equal to his daring. He at once attained popularity in the department of literature which, appealing to an extensive public, is

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the most remunerative; and which an imaginative mind, having its stores within itself, can the most readily produce.

But the tax on his mental and physical powers was extreme. Having to supplement his novels by a multitude of anonymous contributions to periodicals on subjects of the most trivial and transient interest, he consumed hours upon hours in repulsive drudgery. If these intrusive labours were fretting from his distaste for them, his fictions were exhausting from the hold they took on his imagination. With the necessity for quick production, the pauses (far too brief) in the manual labour were filled, not by placid ruminations, but by his acting over in feverish thought the dramatic situations of the coming chapter.

His temperament was by nature sensitive and irritable. His overtasked faculties and enforced confinement rendered it morbidly acute. 'He seemed,' says Miss Greene, who was then on a visit to my mother, 'like a man who has been flayed, and is sore all over.' Fighting always against time, every hindrance and interruption was a provocation to be resented. All the petty household worries were to his exasperated brain, exactly as Miss Greene describes, what frictions and jostlings are to highly inflamed flesh. His mother was alarmed for his health, which was in jeopardy: but a worse and more subtle evil was preparing.

My father has put on record his feelings towards his wife during these years of excessive toil. He had an ardent affection for her, and unbounded esteem. Whatever virtues are in woman he believed to be in her. But, in the crowded fevered life, she did not reap the fruits of his love. He was nearly always either writing, or meditating in preparation for it. She had, and could have, but little of his society; and, when they were together, his nervous irritability vented itself at every unwelcome circumstance in complaints, or taunts, or fits of anger. To harsh words and unjust reproaches his wife returned meek replies. Any distress his warmth occasioned

her, she carefully concealed from him. She was studious to please him, and endeavoured to anticipate every want and wish. Her gentleness and forbearance increased his gratitude and devotion to her; and, whenever he perceived that he had wounded her, he was full of remorse. But the flaw subsisted all the same—that the demands of their daily existence would not permit the homage of his heart to be translated into act.

The mischief was aggravated by the unfortunate occurrence that, my mother being unable to suckle her first-born child, it had been nursed out of the house. Her maternal instinct, thus thwarted in its origin, never revived. The care of children was ever afterwards distasteful to her. Losing this satisfaction to her affections, unless she had the company of my father or of visitors, she was alone in the home: and, if her other occupations filled up her time, they could not be a substitute to her for what she missed. Her disappointment at not having had more of my father's society, with feelings unruffled and mind disengaged, was not the only result to be deplored. She was deprived of the educating effects of an intercourse which might have trained her, in the particulars wherein she was deficient, to be his companion to the end. This, could it have been, would have effected even more for the redemption of her happiness than for the rescue of his. For from the pang of disappointed affection or wounded feeling men have, at least, an escape commonly denied to women, in their capacity to live amongst abstract ideas. But in nine cases out of ten the happiness of a woman's life (nay, even the whole tendency of her nature) depends almost entirely upon the character of its personal relations; and, if these are unsatisfactory, the injury as well as the suffering they involve are aggravated by the narrowness of her interests and the extreme personality of all her feelings.

As it was, neither of them saw the issue to which the divided life was tending. They entirely agreed in recognising

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the necessity for the slavery which kept them asunder. My father did not work more for himself than for his wife: and of the two she was the one that cared most for the surroundings which imposed on him the labours that were casting these dark shadows over the sunlight of their love.¹

Here it was that my grandmother's displeasure at the marriage was working towards a later fulfilment of her prognostications. It debarred my father from the subsidy which would have left room in his life for the habitual exercise of his affections. It seemed that the evil would now be remedied. Directly my grandmother was reconciled to him she restored the dropped allowance. Had it been continued, it might have averted the sorrows yet in the distance. But the old umbrage was rather suppressed than extinct; and hardly had the allowance been renewed before words were spoken that drove my father to decline the favour and return the instalment he had received.

This fatality was the reverse consequence of an event which promised to promote the general harmony—his successful efforts to induce his mother to recognise her daughter-in-

¹ On his wife's enjoyment he seems to have thought no expenditure extravagant. Nor was she insensible of his constant wish to please her in this way. Her early letters to Miss Greene make frequent and affectionate mention of it. Thus in one written from Weymouth (January 17, 1829) she says to her friend: 'How do you suppose that audacious husband of mine has been passing his time in town? Why, he must needs send me down what he termed "a little Christmas box," and what was, in fact, a huge box from Howell & James's, full of the most beautiful dresses and shawls, besides sixty-four yards of the finest blonde, and a set of handkerchiefs that look as if they were spun out of lilies and air, and brodered by the fairies. You would think this enough for some time at any rate. But he thought differently; for on New Year's morning down there came by the mail a parcel, in which when I opened it I found a bracelet that must have cost him heaven knows what. And, poor dear, he never spends a penny on himself.' Five months later she wrote, from Tunbridge Wells, to the same correspondent: 'The last time we were at Storr's I found that he had ordered me a gold thimble which he had the absurdity to design himself with little precious stones, and the still greater absurdity to pay fifteen guineas for, when, at the same time, he tells me he is too poor to buy himself a pony which I know he wants.'

These letters give biographical meaning to that passage in my father's un-

aw. The next two letters tell in detail this portion of the story :—

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Edward Bulwer to his Mother.

Æt. 26

Hertford Street, Tuesday night.

My dearest Mother,—I cannot but think that, in some conversation that has taken place between us relative to my request that you should visit at my house, I must have expressed myself so ill that the real nature of the request has not struck you in its proper light.

I therefore think it worth while to restate the question dispassionately, addressing it to you on the two points I have already put before you. First, that of kindness to me as my mother (a kindness which the generous offer you have already made me proves I can well rely upon); and, secondly, that of principle, as a conscientious and right-minded person, which I sincerely think you are to a very uncommon degree. I feel assured by this conviction that you will not be offended if I appeal to the latter as well as the former. I know very well that the subject is unpleasant to you. So it is to me—pre-eminently unpleasant. But it is one which *we ought*, both of us, to force ourselves to consider. To *me* its importance is incalculable; and when you have read all I am about to write, you will perceive that it is a subject which by *you* can no longer be avoided, either in kindness or in conscience.

There are two ways of viewing the request I now renew. Looking at it from the first point of view, that of kindness, if you said—Edward, I have no kind feeling for you. Don't talk to me of wounds or affronts, I don't care how much I wound or affront you,' then on *this* point I could say nothing. I could not appeal to feelings which did not exist. But you say you do feel kindly towards me, and would do anything to serve me. Well, then, you can serve me in no point so materially as this; and without this, all else is vain. What is it that I ask? First, that you will not put upon my wife a public affront which gives me sensible and constant pain; and, secondly, that you will allow me to be with you

in a play of 'Darnley' where the husband says to the wife—'Indulgence! what, was the word misapplied? I might have expected to find even in so fair a partner, a companion, a friend—a home. Can you deny that I have found them not? But when did I repine while you were happy? Wearied, exhausted, in all my cares, in all my anxieties, it soothed me to think that these, my "uncongenial habits," were adding to the joy of your youth.'

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upon those terms of unreserved affection and entire confidence which (as I will presently show you) are rendered *impossible* by the existing nature of our relative positions, however greatly we may both of us desire them.

The affront I complain of is this. I live in the same town with you. You refuse to visit my wife, or enter my house. My brother also displeased you by his marriage; but you enter his house, and visit his wife. You say you distinguish between the two cases. But the world cannot take the trouble to understand such a distinction. It merely sees that, the two brothers being both of age, and having both married gentlewomen, you are sufficiently reconciled to our marriages to see both William and myself, but that your visiting the wife of one, and not the wife of the other, is a marked insult to the wife unvisited. And, even supposing that I cared not a straw for my wife, an insult to her is none the less a double insult to me. The interests of married people (whether they themselves agree or not) are identical.

You say the world does not occupy itself about the matter. But unfortunately that is not the case. In the first place, the world always gossips about dissensions in families, however humble; in the next place, forgive me if I say that I am a very marked person. Every man who writes is talked of more or less; and, when once a man is talked of, all that belongs to him, or that he belongs to, is talked of also. The affront to me is therefore more known, and so more wounding, than it would be if I myself were less known. Besides, what can it be but galling in the last degree for our carriages to pass, and no salutation? For me to come to your house, and attend your receptions alone, and you never to be seen at mine? For my wife to be asked about you by persons who do not know the matter, whilst your name is sedulously avoided by those who do? It is an affront, not offered once and then over, but of daily, hourly, occurrence, which perpetually occasions me the greatest unhappiness and the deepest mortification.

In family differences, moreover, the world always takes two sides, and makes two parties. One will side with you, another with me. Whichever be the one defended, the result is equally injurious to both of us. I cannot but be deeply hurt by a defence which blames my mother. And any disrespectability thrown upon me is inevitably reflected upon you. This is the necessary condition of our relationship. If a person praising your conduct says, 'I dare say there is something against Mrs. Edward Bulwer which we don't know, but which justifies her mother-in-law's refusal to visit

her,' and then begins guessing, conjecturing, and inventing, every word so said against my wife falls with a slur upon all her connections; and you, as one of them, suffer with the rest. But how cruel a wound would such a gossip inflict upon *me*, how deep, how lasting an injury should I then sustain, because you had refused to my earnest entreaties the sacrifice of—what? A resentment only. I understand your reluctance to call here. But what does it arise from? A dislike, a sore and angry feeling. It can arise from nothing else; for there is not a single circumstance in which it could have any other origin. And, therefore, all you would sacrifice in taking from me a perpetual source of misery which embitters all my life, is a feeling not in itself so commendable, but what morality and magnanimity, apart from kindness, are opposed to its encouragement.

The next point I beg you to consider is the obvious impossibility of our ever being, while this situation continues, on those terms of entire friendship and confidence with each other which I ardently desire, and to which I know you are not disinclined. The domestic affairs of the house you refuse to enter are topics which can never be touched on between us. But consider what this involves. Upon all that to every man is dearest and most familiar, all that lies closest to his heart, I cannot open mine to you. If you are prejudiced against a person who is bound up, not only with my affection, but my honour, it is clear that, throughout our intercourse, I must keep a perpetual guard upon my tongue in reference to all that concerns her, lest by an impulsive word, or careless expression, I do her some involuntary wrong. Yet how few things of an intimate and confidential nature can happen to a married man in which his wife is not more or less concerned. I am persuaded that you have not yet realised how perpetual is the pain caused me by a slight which no principle forbids you to remove. But if the matter were not (to myself at least) of an importance which transcends all reticence in alluding to the essential conditions of it, I would refrain from saying a word upon what I must call Duty. Duty, however, is exactly what demands the most detailed consideration in reference to those points on which the best and wisest persons are liable to be misled—I mean points of feeling.

And on this side of the question, first let me say that it is not fair to reply to me, 'You talk of duty, but did you fulfil your duty to me, by marrying against my wishes and entreaties?' Wrong done by one person is no justification for what is wrong in another.

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Still less can the maintenance of an indefensible sentiment or judgment by a person of mature age and experience be justified by the mistake of a young one, committed at that age when all conduct is impulsive. Even to me, what was excusable at twenty would not be excusable at thirty. It would be still less excusable at forty, and so on.

There is a second way of looking conscientiously at this question. All systems of morality, whether Pagan or Christian, concur in forbidding us to harbour feelings of deliberate and unreasoning unkindness towards any one. We have no warrant in conscience or duty for rejecting any opportunity of ascertaining whether our ill opinion of another is a *just* one. Such an opportunity I offer you, I urge it upon you, I entreat you not to reject it. Its claim to attention is specially strong when there is any reason to believe that the dislike or ill opinion it may tend to remove, has been groundless. Here there is such reason. I will tell you why. Some of the original causes for your ill opinion of Rosina are now proved to be erroneous. You imagined that if I married, I should, at a year's end (these were your words), 'be the most miserable of men.' That fear has not been realised. At least, if I am miserable, it is not from any disappointment in my wife's affection, or her conduct. This alone is sufficient reason why you should not refuse the means of testing by your own observation the truth of my assurance. To do so would be a duty, in the like circumstances, even to a person you had known for years, with ample opportunities of observing her character. It is doubly a duty towards one with whom you have had but the slightest possible acquaintance, when your dislike to her is admittedly founded upon rumours and reports. Every day brings forth instances of the falsity of such reports; and the person injured by them here is the wife of your son.

Thirdly, and this is the last point I shall urge, if Slander, which spares none of us (not even the variest and best guarded), *did* whisper, if Envy, from whom none of us are free, *did* utter lies, against a friendless and unsheltered woman, placed in very unfortunate circumstances towards a mother of peculiar habits and tenets, who voluntarily abandoned her, and possessing attractions sufficient to awaken those jealousies which prey upon all but the stupid and ugly—if, I say, this *did* happen, and if it was in your eyes a just objection to my marriage with her, that woman is now my wife. Her cause is mine. By refusing to visit her, you are the first and only person to give substance to these false and cruel

rumours. You are putting a handle to any lies my enemies (and I at least have many) may invent. Our relationship admits of no neutrality. Not to visit my wife is to affront me. Now, ask yourself, I conjure you, if this should set afloat lying and malignant gossip, could your conscience absolve you from having helped, not only to embitter my life irremediably, but, what is far worse, to injure in the most vital point an innocent and unoffending person, who is disposed in all ways to show affection to you, and whose only fault, as regards yourself, is that she is my wife? It is in vain to say you do not do all this by refusing to visit her. I repeat, and the truth is clear, our relationship allows no neutrality.

I have now said all I wish to say. I have purposely put the matter mainly on the grounds of reason and duty; for on these grounds it is surest of your full consideration. I have purposely appealed to your strong sense of justice and rectitude rather than to any other feeling; because, knowing how conscientiously in all parts of your life you have ever sought your duty, and how unflinchingly you have followed it, I feel assured that you will not resent my present reliance on that knowledge. But none the less do I ask this of you as a great favour; and none the less lasting will be my gratitude for an action which, at all times, and in all events, I know you will be able to recall with conscientious satisfaction. Believe me, my dearest mother,

Your most affectionate son,

E. L. BULWER.

This convincing argument, driven home with such force, respect, and affection, could not be resisted. My grandmother at once responded to the appeal, paid her visit to my mother, was dissatisfied with her reception, complained of it to my father, and, in reply to his defensive rejoinder, reminded him that she 'maintained' his wife. To this taunt, after some unavailing remonstrances, he sent a full and final answer in writing.

The Same to the Same.

Hatfield: Thursday.

When, some time ago, you informed me of your intention to allow me so large an income, I was perfectly aware of the great generosity of the offer. Nothing could have induced me to agree

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to your making so considerable a sacrifice but the conviction that, as the proposal could only arise from affection, so I could not more wound that affection than by refusing it. I felt, too, that my health was weak and reduced; that it had been greatly overstrained; that it required a long and considerable relaxation from mental harassment, for its recovery; that, without your proposal, I should not be justified in giving myself such relaxation; and that, as you were so sensible of this that your offer seemed, in great measure, to spring from the knowledge of it, so it would give you, I thought, a far greater pleasure to relieve me from the necessity of exertions which had become injurious, than to be withheld by me from a sacrifice for which nothing could repay you but my sense of its exceeding generosity and kindness. To have refused it at that moment would have been false pride. I accepted it with the warmest gratitude, and it was a pleasure to me to think I owed you so much.

But I must take leave to say, distinctly, that I did not consider this (I did not for a moment believe that *you* considered it) in the light of a '*maintenance*.' Maintenance I required from no human being. My own exertions had, and my own exertions yet could, maintain me and mine in all we required. I took it in this light (and in this light I thought it was given), that, whereas I could, alone, and always, but only by labour, confinement, and great mental anxiety, make more than 1,000*l.* a year, it was your wish, in offering me this sum, not to maintain me, for I was then (and for nearly three years I had been) maintaining myself, but to save me from that labour, confinement, and mental anxiety by which alone I could continue to do so.

Neither my wife nor myself were about to receive any more comforts than we had hitherto been enjoying. In accepting your kindness I proposed to surrender for the future (or, at least, considerably to lessen) the income which my literary exertions had till then procured me.

We should not have been better off in a worldly point of view. *She* would not have gained a single selfish advantage. *I*, it is true, would have gained something, nay much, but not in money. I should have gained an increase of tranquillity and health.

Viewing the matter in this light, as a proposal which it was neither discreditable nor dependent in me to accept, I was never more dismayed or humiliated than I felt at finding I had committed a great error in reasoning; that *you* viewed the matter in

a wholly different light, and that what *I* thought only (it was for *this* *I* was so grateful) the substitution of an easy income for a hard one, *you* regarded as a maintenance, and one, moreover, which rendered me so dependent that it gave you the right to taunt me with it.

I am not above an obligation. I think that to be grateful is a feeling as honourable and delightful as to be dependent is mean and revolting. But, in all obligations of money, the money itself must be so subordinate, that it is the generosity, the self-sacrifice, the delicacy of the benefactor, and not the money by itself, for which obligation is felt without reluctance or loss of self-respect by a really grateful and honourable mind.

If you had said that you maintained *me*, I should have felt it far less. But that I should subscribe to any arrangement which enables you to think that you maintain one whom you dislike and reproach, would imply in me so base and paltry a spirit, that I cannot help again and again recalling that sentence with the acutest pain. It does not fall upon my wife, though spoken of her, and at her. The whole humiliation of it falls on me. *Mine* is the reproach, not *hers*, if any person (much more, any person who does not love her) boasts of maintaining her, while I yet live, and can work. I had still some faint hope that you would allow it was only in a moment of vexation you said words so mortifying to me, and that you would disavow all permanent or serious meaning in them. I have been disappointed.

What remains to me to do is obvious. I feel still persuaded that at the time you made to me so generous a proposal, you did not see the offer as, according to your words, you now see it; and I shall always remember the affection which then dictated it with a gratitude much warmer, I fear, than I should have felt for it had you said those words some years hence, after I had incurred the *unconscious* meanness of contracting a debt I had not the ability to pay.

Firmly, then, and respectfully, I now return to my own resources and my own exertions. The sum you were so kind as to transfer to my account will have been paid back to yours before you receive this letter. The feelings that occasion this decision do not lessen my affection. They only render me, I hope, more worthy of yours. *Maintenance* is a word confined solely to *Charity*; and no person who retains the use of his limbs and brains deserves esteem if he stoops to receive charity for himself. Still less does he deserve

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it if he suffers his wife or children to be dependent on the charity of others.

I have now thrown off the most important part of that burden of vexation I still feel, on my own behalf. But I must say one word on the subject of that vexation which you tell me I have caused *you*.

My sole offence was illness. I had been ill, very ill, for two days. I came to you, ready to drop with sickness and exhaustion, without a moment's rest from a fatiguing journey, when I ought to have been in bed. Nor did I then say a single one of the words you are displeased with, until after you had made to me many painful observations which, in the peculiar circumstances of our meeting, I think you might have spared me. And what *did* I say that you can justly be surprised at? 'Could you,' I said, 'have wished my wife to come to the door to receive you with *empressement* after you had for three years refused to meet her?' I said, and I still say, that she would have been wanting in decorum, in good taste, in good feeling, ay, and also in respect both to yourself and to that disapproval which your absence had so strongly marked, if on such an occasion she had manifested either the worldly ease of a lady receiving a stranger, or the cordial familiarity of a kinswoman welcoming a kinswoman. She ought to have been strongly affected and overcome. And she was so.

I have said this much on her behalf, though the main part of my letter relates to an expression only wounding to myself. I am prepared for everything. I thank God that I am. Exertion finds me, not quite what I was some three years ago, but it finds me still more resolved, and still more persuaded that harassment, labour, broken health, yes, even a prison or death itself, are better than the sense of degradation.

E. L. BULWER.

My grandmother had suffered much from the other persons implicated, and they from her; and not one of the three recalled the past with the smallest self-reproach. My mother, viewing as a wrong the slight which had been put upon her, would not accept the visit as a concession, or a condescension, to be welcomed with rapture. My father, jealous for his wife's dignity, shared her sentiments. My grandmother, having acted in opposition to her antipathies, probably looked

for a reception corresponding to her sense of the sacrifice. The mother-in-law thought of her own magnanimity, the daughter-in-law of self-respect. So the one demanded much, and the other yielded little, and this drew forth the speech to my father about 'maintenance.' The word could only have been spoken in pique. No one knew better than his mother that nothing would have induced him to sell his own, or his wife's, independence for an allowance; and after she had read his calm and noble letter—a letter equally high-minded and affectionate, generous and tender to her, and lofty in the expression of what was becoming to himself—I am at a loss to understand how, rather than retract an inconsiderate remark, she could leave him exposed to the evils he describes, though unconscious of the still more bitter griefs which were to be engendered by his ceaseless exasperating toil. The history is a signal example of the mischief which results from standing upon punctilios in making up differences, if only there is a known foundation of love. Had these three agreed to meet with the simple idea that the one great object was union, years of suffering would have been spared.

It is not a little singular that none of the three appears to have looked with the smallest ill-will upon an incident so big with trials. My grandmother continued to visit at my father's house, and sought many opportunities from which she might otherwise have shrunk of soothing his domestic susceptibilities. When they were not within visiting reach, she corresponded with his wife, who constantly expressed a strong sense of her kindness. Shortly after the birth of her second child, my mother wrote to her:—'Mrs. Marsh (the child's nurse) speaks with tears in her eyes of your immense kindness to her and her boy, as she calls him. I venture, dear madam, to tell you of *their* gratitude. Of *my own* I will say nothing, because it is quite impossible for me to express how much—how very much—I feel all your kindness to me.'

'I cannot express to you,' she says a little later, 'the grateful sense I entertain of your extreme kindness. I must

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tell you a very profane speech which her governess tells me my little girl made on receiving the grapes you sent her: "They tell me that God is the giver of all good, but I think it must be Mrs. Papa." And in another letter she wrote:—"I am so glad to think poor dear Edward is with you, and not slaving himself to death. How proud you must be of such a son, and to think of all he owes to your training!" Just after she and my father were settled in Hertford Street, she said in a letter to Miss Greene: "No, my dear Mary, it was not I who gave the 100*l.* to the Missionary Society, but Edward's mother; and she is a very generous as well as a very conscientious good woman." To this she characteristically adds: "As for poor me, why ten thousand a year would not be a penny too much for my living in London, and three thousand requires all the management I can bestow upon it; for which reason *my* humble charities never extend beyond Bibles and flannel petticoats." I conclude these quotations with a remark from a letter addressed to my mother by Miss Landon: "Having so often heard you say how kind Mrs. Bulwer Lytton has been to you, and how much you like her, it has struck me that you might like to give her one of my books; for which purpose I have great pleasure in sending you one."

My father's letters in this chapter have an intimate relation to his works. If there be one sentiment which more conspicuously than any other pervades them all, it is the sentiment of personal honour, independence, and self-respect. I have heard it described as high-flown; but it was intensely genuine, and like a burning and a shining light within him which illuminated all the avenues of duty. Magniloquence is sometimes the natural language of magnanimity. My father created no character loftier than his own, and its natural stature was considerably above the average. If from his maturer works it is possible to extract more practical counsel than is commonly found in works of pure imagination, it is because their author had himself passed through the trials,

and surmounted the difficulties, of situations similar to those he describes. The voluntary poverty which flows from the sacrifice of fortune to honour had been his in its most painful form; for there is none more painful than the genteel poverty which extends the necessities to the appearances of life. And specially painful must it have been to a man like my father; who, fastidiously high-minded, would rather have starved than live under a pecuniary obligation. In the comedy of 'Money' the author, speaking his experiences through Clara, makes her say to her lover, 'A marriage of privation, of penury, of days that dread the morrow? I have seen such a lot. Never return to this again.' And afterwards, when she explains her rejection of his suit, she adds, 'My father, like you, was poor,—generous; gifted, like you, with genius,—ambition; sensitive, like you, to the least breath of insult. He married as you would have done; married one whose only dower was penury and care. I saw that genius a curse to itself. I saw that ambition wither to despair. I saw the struggle, the humiliation, the proud man's agony, the bitter life, the early death; and heard over his breathless clay my mother's groan of self-reproach. Was the woman you loved to repay you with such a doom?'—'We should have shared it,' Evelyn exclaims; and then she replies, 'Shared? Never let the woman who really loves comfort herself with such a delusion! In marriages like this the wife cannot share the burden. It is his, the husband's, to provide, to scheme, to work, to endure, to grind out his strong heart at the miserable wheel. The wife, alas! cannot share the struggle, she can but witness the despair.'

And with despair—or something not quite so sad—for a companion, the light may be darkened in the bosom of the wife; and wearied love, unless in natures of peculiar mould, suffer declension under the trial. My father's part was the struggle, if not the despair; the 'grinding out of the strong heart at the miserable wheel.' And to this he returned with dogged resolution for the next three years of his life.

CHAPTER XII.

'DEVEREUX.' 1829. *ÆT.* 26.BOOK
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My father had no sooner finished 'The Disowned' than he commenced a novel called 'Greville,' which he never completed. 'I have sought,' he said, in his essay on 'Prose Fiction,' 'to win approbation, not by the sameness of a single material, but by the contrast of many. Scarcely any one of the romances I have woven together resembles its neighbour.' His preference for variety probably induced him to abandon 'Greville.' It was trenching too closely upon the ground he had occupied in 'Pelham.' He determined, therefore, to set his story in the framework of another age, and to try an historical novel.

The splendour of Scott's success in that department had given birth to numerous feeble imitations of him. A great genius is seldom rivalled in the particulars which constitute his individuality. He stands alone in his special gifts to the end of time; and any writer who has true power in himself will study the model to enjoy it, and to profit by it, but not, after his years of pupilage, to copy it. My father ran no risk of such an error. The turn of his mind, and his method in fiction, were different from Scott's. Scott drew his raw materials from history and legendary lore; but these were to him only hints for picturesque scenes which often deviated widely from the pattern of past realities. History was in his novels what fancy chose to make it. It was with his characters as with their accompaniments. They were largely

My
Dearest

Vol. 1st
Book 1st
Chapter: - 1st

1

rather - the youngest - bade adieu to the old Hall
& his only brother - prayed to the grim
portraits of his Ancestors to inspire him -
& set out - to join as a volunteer - the
armies of ^{that} ~~of~~ ^{Stamms} ~~Stamms~~ ^{Stamms} ~~Stamms~~
Of him I shall say but little - ~~these letters~~
~~these letters~~ ^{for the present} - the life of an



the creatures of a fancy, facile in invention—a fancy informed by shrewd knowledge of the world, but representing the mimic actors under guises of its own devising, and delighting more in depicting what was outward in men than in unfolding the inward operations of passion. The majority of my father's novels, on the contrary, were derived, not from his fancy, but from his feelings. His imagination liked to work upon the facts of his life and the experiences of his heart; and when he was dealing with natures dissimilar to his own his standard of insight was that which he exercised upon himself. Less picturesque than Scott, he went deeper into the hidden emotions of men. The difference may be seen in his lovers. They are not lay figures. We know what his women feel better than how they look. For his inferiority, then, in the scenic decoration of history he might expect to find compensation in his profounder treatment of passions and motives; in the human machinery and springs of conduct, as distinguished from the fascinating adjuncts of Scott.

He was confident of the result, and this was not a good omen with him. 'I have always found,' he says, 'that one is never so successful as when one is least sanguine. I fell into the deepest despondency about "Pompeii" and "Eugene Aram," and was certain, nay presumptuous, about "Devereux," which is the least generally popular of my writings.' His circumstances were the obvious cause of the failure. 'If the novelist,' he says in his essay on 'Art in Fiction,' 'aims at lofty and permanent effects, he will remember that to execute grandly he must conceive nobly. He will suffer the subject he selects to lie long in his mind, to be revolved, meditated, brooded over.' Of 'Devereux' the conception and execution were simultaneous, and the execution was as rapid as it was immediate. The pecuniary calls upon the author did not permit him to pause.

He selected the time of Queen Anne for his experiment, and was well acquainted with the history and literature of her

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reign. But the particularities of the age into which his narrative is thrown are not intertwined with the inner threads of it. The manners and customs described appear but as patches on the surface, rather clumsily applied. The delightful panorama, more or less faithful, which Scott would have presented to us is not there. The historical groundwork seems forced and unreal, and the story suffers by this fruitless attempt at illusion. Such of the characters as are historical have the same defect. Bolingbroke, Swift, Addison, Steele, Pope, and others, are brought before us: and, a literary genius being known by his writings, either his talk must conform to this criterion, or else he must talk in a style unlike his own, and then the representation disappoints the expectations which have been raised. Every effort of the kind has been a failure. No man can appropriate to himself in their genuine force the attributes of half-a-dozen geniuses, or even of one. He must be content with his own. The speeches coined for Swifts and Addisons will be manifest counterfeits; and, however brilliant they may be, they will not fit the names they bear.

There remains that part of the story which is independent of the historical elements, and which forms the bulk of the work. Nowhere is the haste more apparent. The plot is crudely constructed. The characters and dialogue are not direct from nature. They are in a great degree theatrical and artificial, the unmistakable emanations of a mind which is reduced to manufacture from the want of leisure to create. The style also is frequently of a conventional cast; and the descriptions and conversations are unduly spun out. The powers of the writer shed a gleam of embellishment over the faults, but they are not concealed by it; and, notwithstanding the excellencies of 'Pelham,' if my father had written nothing after 'Devereux' he would not have needed a biographer.

Like most of his works, 'Devereux' has its autobiographical allusions, if that epithet may be applied to situations in the story which reflect some reality of the author's life. In the

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Autobiography proper he has mentioned my grandfather's desire to make Knebworth an appendage to his Norfolk estate, and the desire not less strong of my grandmother to keep it apart. The Knebworth property not being entailed, it rested with herself to devolve it, if she pleased, on a distinct representative of her own line; but throughout her long widowhood she had not disclosed her intentions to any of her sons. The eldest might be presumed to share his father's views. The younger sons might expect her to give effect to her own wishes. In 'Devereux' the author had two objects. One was to exhibit the manners of a past generation, the other to dramatise the workings of jealousy; and the position of the three brothers in relation to the Knebworth estate furnished him with a fact from which to deduce the operations of the passion. He assumed a similar case in which rival interests are supposed to get the better of fraternal feeling, and his imagination suggested the rest.

Again, between the benevolent Abbé Kinsela, whom my father describes in his Autobiography, and the malignant Abbé Montreuil, who is the evil genius of the novel, there is no moral resemblance; yet I cannot think it a fanciful conjecture that the idea of an astute and accomplished Jesuit, engaged in the secret politics of European courts, and attaching himself to a young man of promise in the hope of shaping his pupil's career to his own purposes, may have had its origin in some reminiscence of his Paris friend. The Irish Jesuit nowhere reappears in connection with my father's life; and possibly the friendship of the real, like that of the fictitious Abbé, may have been changed into enmity or alienation by the rejection of his schemes.

If contemporary criticism were any test of literary merit, or permanent popularity, the author of 'Devereux' might have flattered himself that his sanguine expectation of its success had been fulfilled. The majority of the reviews spoke of this novel much more favourably than they had spoken of

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his previous works, or than they afterwards spoke of later ones, incontestably and greatly superior to it. The world of readers dissented from the verdict of the reviewers; and my father's maturer judgment coincided with theirs. The work was published on the 7th of July, 1829, when its author's age was just twenty-six. An intelligent critic in the 'Examiner' expressed his belief 'that Mr. Bulwer had written "Pelham" for his own pleasure, "The Disowned" for his bookseller, and "Devereux" for the support of his fame with the public.' But the truth is he had written 'Devereux' for the support of his wife and children. In this respect it succeeded, and in this alone. His name had risen steadily in market value; and whereas he got 500*l.* for the copyright of 'Pelham,' and 800*l.* for 'The Disowned,' for 'Devereux' he got 1,500*l.*

One singular illustration of the interest with which the work was read when it first appeared must not be omitted from this account of it. The illustration is contained in the first of some letters upon which my father has written this endorsement:—'Very curious. From the notorious Harriet Wilson, whose memoirs made a sensation in my college days. Of course I never acceded to her wish to know me. The letters were written to me when I first came up to town, after my marriage, and in my second year of authorship.'

Harriet Wilson's memoirs appeared in 1825, and Walter Scott says of them—'There is some good retailing of conversations, in which the style of the speakers, so far as known to me, is exactly imitated.' He had an impression of having supped with her at the house of Monk Lewis twenty years before, and says, 'She was far from beautiful, but a smart saucy girl with good eyes, and dark hair, and the manners of a wild schoolboy.' That the 'smart saucy girl' survived in the woman is shown by the extracts from her letters to my father.

From Harriet Wilson (extracts).

I have disliked reading all my life ; except Shakespeare's plays, because these are true to nature and so am I. ' Pellham ' was not to my taste, for I thought all its light chit-chat pedantic, and not nearly so good as my own. But it is a sensible book and a wise one ; its fancies brilliant, its thoughts deep, its observations true ; and so—I got to the end of it, and felt obliged to you for writing a book which had not bored me. ' The Disowned,' I liked better. But as for that imbecile (Mordaunt) who, like a helpless blockhead, allowed his wife to be starved,—his want of what I call philosophy made me sick. Do you consider a man virtuous, or sensible, whose little soul makes him ashamed of doing his duty in the state of life in which it has pleased God to call him ? He had arms and legs, wealth and intelligence. Why did he not clean his wife's room, whitewash the walls of it, earn by his daily work a mutton-chop, and then fry it for her himself *à la Maintenon* ? In England there is no such thing as starving for an intelligent man who will turn his hand to anything rather than see the beloved of his soul dying of hunger. No ! that man ought to have been sent to the treadmill.

Now for ' Devereux.' I have nearly finished the first volume, and am so charmed with it that I have laid it aside to tell you how proud I should feel if you were disposed to honour me with your acquaintance. I say this because life is too short and too miserable to risk the loss of a possible pleasure by not asking for it. And it is just possible that we might find some sort of innocent pleasure in being acquainted with each other. I am not a bit agreeable, however, except to those who are predisposed to like me, and so take offence to what is likable in my character. For I am very shy ; and when people do not encourage me by showing this predisposition, I feel *gênée*, and am therefore not amiable. I am also very ignorant : I can't even spell correctly.¹ But then there is this advantage in my ignorance. All you clever men, and especially you clever writers, are copies of something or other into which nature has been manufactured already. I am nature itself. If I say anything that strikes or pleases you, you may be sure that it comes from my own head or my own heart, and not from books or speeches made out of the heads and hearts of other people. I was never a general

¹ Her memoirs illustrate the truth of this confession. Their orthography is not the least original part of them.

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favourite ; but no one likes me a *little*, nor, having once known me, ever forgets me. *Qu'en pensez-vous ?* Perhaps you would like my society better than I should like yours. After all, *entre nous*, I like contemplative people, and *so far* you would suit my taste. But if there is no comedy in your composition, none of the amiable folly of romance, without which no man has a good heart, we should bore each other.

I could write you a much more sensible letter by copying the style of some of my correspondents and consulting my dictionary. But this would be too troublesome. And, after all, your choosing to make my acquaintance is such a forlorn hope. The chances are five hundred to one against me. Yet I am not ugly, as they describe me in the newspapers ; but, on the contrary, rather handsome. Particularly by candle-light, and when I am amused. I am now just forty-three, very *journalière*, and often *joliment abattue*, but never very ugly in the face, and in person just as pretty as ever ; though this does not appear under the disguise of my costume, which is much more loose than my morals. In spite of all the newspapers say about them, my morals are *not* loose. I am now a true and faithful wife, leading as innocent a life as any hermit well can ; and if my husband, Mr. Rochfort, knew that you allowed me the advantage of making your acquaintance it would give him the greatest possible pleasure. I believe that you also are married ; but you will do me a great injustice if you suppose that I wish or expect you to neglect others for so insignificant a person as myself. We grow humble as we grow old. I am weary of the world in general. I care little for any sort of society, and I solicit the honour of your acquaintance with the full knowledge and conviction that any sentiment resembling love for me—or even the most passing caprice—is entirely out of the chapter of possibilities. No wife would pay me the compliment of objecting to my occasional enjoyment of a little innocent conversation with the most sensible young man I know. ‘ But,’ you say, ‘ Madam, you do *not* know me.’ Yes, sir, I do ; and perhaps I know the best of you. It is in your books, and I know them better than many people know their intimate acquaintances.

The beginning of ‘Devereux’ is in my humble opinion quite perfect. I am sure that Sir Walter Scott could not (even *I* could not) improve a line or a thought of it. But you both fall off in the love scenes. These you write from memory, from fancy, from anything but the real thrill of romance. The fault (as I said to the

Duke of Beaufort ¹⁾ is not in your heart, but your want of heart. I will tell you what would make a perfect novel. You write it—all but the love scenes. Leave those to me.

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This letter was followed by another, complaining that it had not been answered.

October 1, *deux heures après minuit.*

My fire is out and my head is aching. But I cannot rest till I have expressed to you my regret that you not only refuse to see me, but have not even condescended to acknowledge my letter. *On sait à peu près ce qu'on vaut*, and therefore I had made up my mind to endure with indifference your silent contempt. But it has lasted six weeks, and my philosophy can last no longer. Lord Byron did not refuse to make my acquaintance. They say you are morose. But no one is ever morose with me. I inherit from my dear mother a certain softness as well as archness of disposition which disarms morosity. *Mais enfin !* If you won't be friends with me you won't, and your neglect must be borne by me *like a man* for in spite of my effeminate qualities I am, as Lord Ponsonby declared, a 'good fellow.' In which capacity I forgive you for cutting me : I wish you every prosperity and happiness which can be obtained, in a world *fait exprès pour nous enrager*, and I shall always continue to think of you with highest possible respect.

HARRIETTE ROCHFORD.

And then, after the lapse of several years, comes the following still more characteristic and typical communication.

2, North Cottages, near the Catholic Chapel, Chelsea.

Dear Sir,—Years ago when I was a sinner, and still a good-looking one, I thought you right to refuse me the honour of your acquaintance. But now,—now I have been 'born again,' as the Methodists say, and am a saint. What is more, I am a dying saint. Very old, very sick, desperately ill indeed, and the mind wears out with the body. Nearly a year ago I was received into the bosom of the Catholic Church by baptism and confession with confirmation, &c., after six months' *hard study*. I did not think I could ever read so hard, or so many books of controversy, both Protestant and Catholic. So intense was my curiosity that for many months I neither slept nor dined without a pile of Catholic books on one side of me, and another, larger still, of Protestant books on the

¹ This alludes to a scene described in her memoirs.

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other side of me. Once or twice a week a most venerable Catholic priest and preacher came to hear and answer all my objections, with the patience of a true saint. To conclude, I am now a strict Catholic on conviction. Faith is a supernatural gift. I could not get rid of mine if I would, and I should be wretched without it. I can do nothing, and love nothing, *coldly*. I was created for love; and now all the love my heart is capable of is turned to God. I was never taught religion by my parents or lovers. I was always, what I still am, a bigot in my distaste of the Protestant creed and all its sects. For a while I also disliked Popery, according to the fashion. But ultimately, I could not resist the lectures of my revered priest Dr. Wiseman, or the whispers of my own conscience which said to me, *Your destiny is to die a Catholic*. I go to Mass daily, weak and suffering as I am; and to the Communion Table twice a month. I have now as much distaste of all worldly things as if I were a nun. My life is the life of a hermit. My dear, good, innocent virgin priest has little time to visit me, though he does not want the inclination, for he holds me up as an example to all good Catholics. I hate, as I have ever hated, stupid society, and so my doors are denied to everyone. But it would much honour and gratify me if I might be refreshed by your conversation, though it were but for a few moments once a year. You cannot now mistrust my motives. I am old and sick. When I was young and admired I was never unfaithful to those I loved. And I never loved any of you as I now love God. Who could wilfully offend what they love? I have no object but the gratification I know I should feel in talking for a few moments to a person who could understand me. I tell everything to my confessor, and have told him that of all things I should like to converse with you before I die.

Yours, dear sir, truly,

H. DU BOCHET.

Rechristened, Mary Magdalen. By my own desire at the Catholic Confirmation.

And so fades away this passing glimpse of two curious, ever-recurrent types of character. *Sic itur ad astra!*¹

¹ This interesting letter is undated. It would appear to have been sent by hand, for the paper bears no postmark. Even the watermark is wanting, and there is nothing to indicate the year in which it was written.

no money one for any thing but her

father - little 'longy' after the son had closed
over his remains. — The very actions of
the latter priest was left dangerous to
the spirit of the former. — and when the
first keenness of sorrow had away — &
her mind gradually & mechanically
returned to the remembrance of Clifford,
it was with the ~~an~~ ~~left~~ ~~fact~~ ~~intensity~~
left strong & left potent to her health & on

CHAPTER XIII.

'PAUL CLIFFORD.' 1830. Æt. 28.

THE publication of 'Devereux' and that of 'Paul Clifford' are two dates standing close together in my father's first period of authorship. But between the relative merits of these books there is an immense distance.

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'Paul Clifford,' of which the first edition was published on May 4, 1830, and the second on August 27 in the same year,¹ is, I think, the first of that class of fictions, now common enough in England and elsewhere, which the Germans designate *Tendenzstücke*.² The ostensible object of the book was, as stated by its author in his preface to a later edition of it, 'to draw attention to two errors in our penal institutions, viz. a vicious Prison Discipline, and a sanguinary Penal Code.'

It has, under a misconception of that object, been cited by Louis Blanc and other French philanthropists, as evidence that my father advocated the abolition of capital punishment.³ But he did nothing of the kind. His objection was, not to capital punishment, but to the promiscuous application of it,

¹ Not in 1831, as generally stated in previous notices of my father's life.

² Such, e.g., as *Oliver Twist*, *Alton Locke*, *Never too Late to Mend*, &c. It seems to me impossible to describe *Caleb Williams* as a tendency novel, in the conventional sense of the term. Its object is the presentation of a psychological problem, not (in the first instance, at any rate) the reform of a law, an institution, or a policy.

³ 'Ajoutez à cela que la peine de mort en Angleterre a contre elle aujourd'hui plus d'un livre sage et puissant. Puis-je omettre de mentionner le beau, le philosophique roman de Sir E. Bulwer Lytton, *Paul Clifford*?' &c. &c.—Louis Blanc in *Le Temps* of February 5, 1864.

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coupled with a total neglect of the most elementary principles of prison discipline. And to this he objected, for the same reason which made him in all things a conservative reformer, on the broad ground that destruction is irrational in every case where improvement has a balance of practical advantages in its favour.

To appreciate the object proposed in 'Paul Clifford,' it is necessary to recall the condition of the criminal law, and the system of prison management, at the time when it was written.

Horse, sheep, cattle, and letter-stealing were offences still punishable by death. Only a few years earlier, men had been hanged for stealing five shillings' worth of property; and prisoners' counsel were not permitted to address the jury in capital cases.

'In the seven years from 1819 to 1825, both inclusive,' it is said in the postscript to the fourth volume of the 'Newgate Calendar,' 'the total number of persons committed for trial in England and Wales was 93,718: viz.—78,918 males, and 14,800 females; against 12,426 on whom no bills were found. Of these, 17,874 were acquitted: and of the remaining 63,418 no fewer than 7,770 were executed—an average of nearly 88 annually. Large as this number is, it is very small in comparison with the extraordinary number of those on whom the awful sentence was passed. And it must also be remembered that juries frequently find offenders guilty of stealing to the value of thirty-nine shillings only, when the property is proved to be worth ten or twenty times that sum; a pious fraud to which they are driven by the sanguinary character of our criminal code, even to the violation of their oaths.

'The offences made capital by the law of England amount to about 223. Of these 6 were so made in the course of the one hundred and fifty years that elapsed from Edward III. to Henry VII.; 30 in the next one hundred and fifty years from Henry VII. to Charles II.; and 187 in the last one

hundred and fifty years. Taking another view of these enactments, 4 offences were made capital under the Plantagenets: 27 under the Tudors: 36 under the Stuarts: and 156 under the family of Brunswick. More offences were made capital under the single reign of George III. than during the reigns of all the Plantagenets, Tudors, and Stuarts put together. There are persons now living at whose birth the number of capital offences did not exceed 70, and during whose lives such offences have been multiplied more than threefold.

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'If we inquire whether with this increasing severity crime has been kept under, the answer is very much the reverse. But the fact is, as we have already shown, that the severity is more nominal than real. Out of an average of 110 on whom the awful sentence is annually passed, the number executed does not quite average 83. Among those who are thus solemnly exhorted to prepare for another world, a large proportion know that their offence is one for which the awful punishment is never inflicted. What beneficial effect can result from the mere ceremony? In the name of reason and common sense what purpose is answered by keeping the statute-book in this state?

'We have already said that the number executed in the seven years of 1819 to 1825 was 579. Their offences were as follows:—Arson and other wilful burning of property 10. Burglary 128. Cattle-stealing 2. Maliciously killing 1. Forgery and uttering forged instruments 62. Horse-stealing 21. House-breaking in the daytime and larceny 9. Larceny in dwelling-houses to the value of forty shillings 27. Secreting and stealing letters containing bank notes 5. Murder 101. Shooting at, stabbing, and administering poison with intent to murder, 30. Rape 31. Riot (remaining assembled with rioters one hour after the Riot Act had been read) 1. Robbery from the person on the highway and other places 95. Sacrilege 2. Sheep-stealing 29. Unnatural offences 15.

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High treason 5. Total number of persons executed on the above charges 579.'

From these figures it appears that, of all the persons who were hanged in England between the years 1819 and 1825 inclusive, less than one-fifth were guilty of the crime to which capital punishment is now confined.

The publication of 'Paul Clifford' did much to stimulate public opinion in favour of carrying Criminal Law Reform far beyond the point at which it had been left by the labours of Romilly: and the book itself was an incident in my father's constant course of endeavour to improve the condition of that large portion of the population which is most tempted to crime through poverty and ignorance,—not by the proclamation of utopian promises, or recourse to violent constitutional changes, but through a better intellectual training facilitated by timely administrative reforms.

For some time after the date of 'Paul Clifford,' however, the idea of associating reformation with punishment was still unfamiliar to the public mind, and greatly mistrusted by the highest legal authorities. Lord Eldon declared his conviction in 1832 that the fear of death was a most effectual preventive to minor offences, and that after the experience of half a century he had never known a lawyer or a politician able to point out to him a satisfactory substitute.

The lightness of the offences for which people were hanged diminished the infamy attaching to the punishment. Goethe, in his autobiography, tells us that, just before the composition of 'Werther,' when he was contemplating suicide and considering what might be the least disagreeable forms of it, he rejected hanging as ignoble. But, he adds, in England a man might adopt it 'because in that country one sees, from youth upwards, so many persons hanged *without the punishment being precisely dishonourable.*'¹

At a later date the prisons of England and Wales were

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described by the Committee on whose Report the Bill of 1835 was founded, as places where old offenders were confirmed in iniquity, and young ones trained up to it. The Scotch prisons were worse. But while my father objected to the barbarous and indiscriminating treatment of our criminal classes, on the ground that it was irrational, the indiscriminate sentimentality of their subsequent treatment appeared to him, for just the same reason, equally objectionable. He was at all times in favour of subjecting habitual and incorrigible criminals to a restraint from which they are still exempt, and of inflicting severe corporal punishment upon hardened ruffianism.¹

The advocacy, however, of a reform in our treatment of the criminal classes was only the *ostensible* purpose of this book. Other ends less apparent, but more far-reaching, are aimed at by its good-humoured satire on the anomalies of a complex and artificial society in the Tomlinsoniana and the general conception of the story.

It is not in its immediate purpose, nor is it in its superficial allegory (which is rather an excrescence), that the real power of 'Paul Clifford' is best displayed. The sketchy caricatures of certain eminent persons, incidentally introduced into scenes of low life as a cursory satire upon high life, appear to me the least attractive features of the work; especially now that they have lost whatever passing interest they may have formerly derived from the gossip or the humours of the day.

The idea of representing the 'Ruling Classes,' not maliciously, but whimsically, in the characters of highwaymen,

¹ *The Rogue's Recipe.*

Your honest fool a rogue to make
As great as can be seen, sir,
Two hacknied rogues you first must take,
Then place your fool between, sir.

Virtue's a dunghill cock, ashamed
Of self when pair'd with game ones;
And wildest elephants are tamed
If stuck between two tame ones.

—Song by Long Ned in *Paul Clifford*.

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and the 'British Public' in that of their admiring victim,¹ though well suited for a short *jeu d'esprit*, was incapable of playing any important part in the wider conception of this fiction. The plan was not new. Gay had already embodied it in his 'Beggar's Opera;' and the notion of giving it a more extended application is stated by my father, in the dedicatory preface, to have been suggested by Godwin.

'I am indebted,' he says, 'for the original idea of "Paul Clifford" to a gentleman of considerable distinction in literature, whose kindness to me is one of my most grateful remembrances. This idea, had the work been shorter, would have pervaded the whole. As it is, it will be found embodied in those parts which are likely, I think, to be the most popular, such as the scene at "Gentleman George's," the sketch of "Bachelor Bill," &c. But, in justice to my friend, I should add that I have given a very inadequate form to his conception, and have made use of it rather as an adjunct to my story than as the groundwork or the principal feature of it.² For the personality of any of the caricatures

¹ 'Augustus Tomlinson, rising with one hand in his breeches pocket and the other stretched out, said, "Gentlemen,—I move that Paul Lovett be again chosen as our captain. . . . Life is short. Why should speeches be long? Our lives perhaps are shorter than the lives of other men: why should not our harangues be of a suitable brevity? Gentlemen, I shall say but one word in favour of my excellent friend. . . . A Prime Minister is not more useful to his followers, or more burdensome to the public (*loud plaudits*). What I shall urge in his favour is simply this. The man whom opposite parties unite in praising must have supereminent merit. Of all your companions, gentlemen, Paul Lovett is the only man who to that merit can advance a claim (*applause*). You all know, gentlemen, that our body has long been divided into two factions, each jealous of the other, each desirous of ascendancy, and each emulous which shall put the greatest number of fingers into the public pie. In the language of the vulgar, the one faction would be called "Swindlers," and the other "Highwaymen." I, gentlemen, who am fond of finding new names for things and persons, and am a bit of a politician, call the one *Whigs* and the other *Tories* (*clamorous cheering*). Of the former body I am esteemed an influential member. Of the latter faction Mr. Bags is justly considered a shining ornament.'—*Paul Clifford*, chap. xviii.

² This idea of Godwin's probably suggested the title of 'Masks and Faces,' which my father at one time thought of giving to the work: a title which, if adopted, would have been not only inadequate but altogether misleading.

I alone am responsible. All that my friend suggested was the satirical adaptation of living personages to fictitious characters in the station or profession of life adorned by "Old Bags" and "Long Ned," &c. I mention this because it is only fair that I should take the chances of offence upon myself; though the broadness and evident want of malice in these caricatures will, I venture to foretell, make those who are caricatured by them the first,—perhaps the only,—persons to laugh at the exaggerated resemblance.'

This expectation was justified by the good nature of the sketches, and fulfilled by the good humour of the persons sketched. Their names were mentioned by my mother in a letter to Miss Greene:—

'To save you the trouble of guessing them,' she says, 'I will tell you who are the characters. "Gentleman George" is the King; ¹ "Fighting Attie," the Duke of Wellington; ²

¹ "'Have you never heard of Gentleman George?" "What! the noted head of a flash public-house in the country? To be sure I have, often; my poor nurse, Dame Lobkins, used to say he was the best-spoken man in the trade!" "Ay, so he is still. In his youth George was a very handsome fellow, but a little too fond of his lass and his bottle to please his father, a very staid old gentleman, who walked about on Sundays with a bob-wig and a gold-headed cane, and was a much better farmer on week days than he was head of a public-house. George used to be a remarkably smart-dressed fellow, and so he is to this day. He has a great deal of wit, is a very good whist-player, has a capital cellar, and is so fond of seeing his friends drunk that he bought some time ago a large pewter measure in which six men can stand upright. The girls, or rather the old women, to whom he used to be much more civil of the two, always liked him; they say, nothing is so fine as his fine speeches, and they give him the title of '*Gentleman George*.' He is a nice kind-hearted man in many things. Pray Heaven we shall have no cause to miss him when he departs. And I do not think we shall, either; for his brother, who, poor fellow, has been a long time in the Fleet, is a sensible dog in his way, and will succeed him. At all events, Bill Squareyards, or Mariner Bill (as we call him), will, I fancy, be more scrupulous about the public stock than Gentleman George, who, to say the truth, takes a most gentlemanlike share of our common purse." "What, is he avaricious?" "Quite the reverse. But he is so cursedly fond of building, he invests all his money (and wants us to invest all *ours*) in houses; and there's one confounded dog of a bricklayer who runs him up terrible bills,—a fellow called 'Cunning Nat,' who is equally adroit in spoiling ground and improving *ground rent*.'"—*Paul Clifford*, chap. x.

² "'Here, younker," said Gentleman George, "here's a fine fellow at my right hand" (the person thus designated was a thin, military-looking fellow in

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"Old Bags," Lord Eldon;¹ "Long Ned," Lord Ellenborough;² "Scarlet Jem," Sir James Scarlett;³ "Bachelor Bill," the Duke of Devonshire;⁴ "The Sallow Gentleman,"

a shabby riding-frock, and with a commanding, bold, aquiline countenance, a little the worse for wear), "an old soldier. Fighting Attie, we calls him. He's a devil on the road. 'Halt—deliver—must and shall.' 'Can't and shan't.' 'Do as I bid you, or go to the devil.' That's all Fighting Attie's palaver, and, 'sdeath, it has a wonderful way of coming to the point. But the highflyers don't like him.'"—*Ibid.*

¹ "It was edifying to hear the rascals. So nice was their language, and so honest their enthusiasm for their own interests, you might have imagined you were listening to a coterie of Cabinet Ministers, conferring on taxes, or debating about perquisites. "Long may the *Commons* flourish!" said punning Georgie, filling his glass. "'Tis by the commons we're fed, and may they never know cultivation!" "A little moderate cultivation of the commons," said Augustus Tomlinson modestly, "might (to speak frankly) not be amiss. For it would decoy people into the belief that they might travel safely; and, after all, a hedge or a barley field is as good for us as a barren heath, where we have no shelter if once pursued." "You talks nonsense, you spooney," cried a robber of note, named Bagshot, who, being old, and having been a lawyer's footboy, was sometimes called "Old Bags." "You talks nonsense. These innovating ploughs are the ruin of us. Every blade of corn on a common is an encroachment on the rights of the Gemmen Highwaymen. I'm old, and mayn't live to see these things, but mark my words, a time will come when a man may go from Lunnon to Johnny Groat's without losing a penny by one of us; when Hownslow will be safe, and Finchley secure. My eyes, what a sad thing for us that'll be!" The venerable old man became suddenly silent, and the tears started to his eyes.—*Paul Clifford*, chap. x. Although the predictions of 'Old Bags' had been fulfilled before *Paul Clifford* was written, the age of highwaymen could still be remembered by the generation to which it was addressed. In 1826 (only four years previous to the publication of this work) Lord Carnarvon had stated in the House of Lords that a friend of his had within his own recollection 'been robbed on the highway; another wounded by a shot fired at him by a footpad; and a third had narrowly escaped with his life by seizing the muzzle of the pistol which the robber had thrust into his carriage, and wresting it out of his hand.'—*Hansard, Parliamentary Debates*.

² "As for the cove on the other side," continued the host of the "Jolly Angler," pointing to Long Ned, "all I can say of him, good, bad, or indifferent, is that he has an unkimmon fine head of hair."—*Paul Clifford*, chap. x.

³ "That gentleman," said he, "is Scarlet Jem, a dangerous fellow for a press; though he says he likes robbing alone now, for a general press is not half such a good thing as it used to be formerly. You have no idea what a hand at disguising himself is Scarlet Jem. He has an old wig in which he generally does business, and you wouldn't know him again when he conceals himself under the wig. Oh, he's a precious rogue, is Scarlet Jem!"

⁴ "This personage was of Devonshire extraction. His mother had kept the pleasantest public-house in town, and at her death Bill succeeded to her property and popularity. . . .'*κ. τ. λ.*—*Ibid.* chap. iv.

Mr. Huskisson;¹ "Harry Finish," Henry De Ros; "Allfair," Lord Alvanly; "Augustus Tomlinson," the Whigs in general; "Peter MacGrawler," the Scotch ditto. *Et voilà tout!*

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The Duke of Devonshire was so pleased with the caricature of himself in 'Paul Clifford' that he left his name on the author as 'Bachelor Bill.' And although these little pen-and-ink portraits were broadly exaggerated in every feature, no one, from His Majesty downwards, either felt, or had any cause to feel, personally hurt by a banter which, on the whole, was of a rather flattering character. The single exception is in the odious person of Peter MacGrawler.

Journalism was yearly growing a more influential and remunerative calling. A large number of energetic, thrifty, and more or less impecunious young men annually issued from the Scotch Universities. These young men found in the pay of the wealthy English press a congenial means of subsistence. The staff of most of the London journals, from the editor downwards, was said to consist chiefly of Scotchmen, who were thought by the writers of books not to exercise their functions meekly. In the preface of 'Paul Clifford' my father says that, in his case, critics, enemies, and Scotchmen, were commonly appellations for the same thing; that it was difficult seriously to dislike the land that had produced Burns, Scott, and Campbell; that our fellow-subjects on the other side of the Tweed had, nevertheless, the foible of believing that Provi-

¹ *Lyric version of Mr. Huskisson's resignation.*

Attie.—' Rise at six—dine at two—
Rob your man without ado—
Such my maxims—if you doubt
Their wisdom—to the right about.

[*Signing to the Sallow Gentleman to send up the brandy bowl.*]

' Pass round, — of a gun,
You musky, dusky, husky son.'

Husky.—' Attie, the bingo's now with me,
I can't resign it yet, d'ye see.'

Attie.—' Resign it, resign it—cease your dust,
You have resigned it—and you must.'

[*Takes the bowl from him.*—Paul Clifford, chap. x.

dence had made them a gift of England; that they were preposterously angry if an Englishman interfered with their monopoly, and got ever so small a name and fortune in his own country; and that as, when we rise a step in the world, we are sure to be abused, so, nine times out of ten, we shall find on inquiry that the abuse has been uttered in broad Scotch. He said that his retaliation was in the spirit of English warfare, blows one moment and good humour the next. And perhaps in the very extravagance of the portrait of MacGrawler we may detect the intermixture of a good-humoured caricature.

He is described as a crapulous literary reptile without principle of any kind. In the opening scenes of 'Paul Clifford' we find him living in the back slums of Whitechapel or St. Giles's, and employed, in the capacity of a scurrilous critic, upon an obscure journal called 'The Assinaum.' The trade not being profitable, he descends (if a descent it be) from murdering reputations to picking pockets. Unscrupulous, yet always unsuccessful, he sinks lower and lower in crime and destitution, till at last he becomes the menial of the 'gentlemen highwaymen,' whose leader is Paul Clifford. As an object of charity they shelter and feed him, and he, in return, betrays them to the gallows.

Such a character is not uncommon in the criminal class. Nor is there anything incompatible between the vices of this profligate and the slender education which enables him to write 'smart' articles for an obscure newspaper. The annals of crime abundantly exhibit the low tastes, mean shifts, and vile companionship, into which men have fallen with a measure of knowledge and cleverness unaccompanied by principle. But it is impossible to imagine a whole group of educated men infected by the qualities ascribed to Peter MacGrawler. Taken, therefore, as a satire, its exaggeration destroys its force.

And the want of likeness is increased by the name of the periodical MacGrawler serves. This would naturally be sup-

posed to refer to the 'Athenæum': a conclusion adopted by the conductors of that journal, who pointed out in their notice of 'Paul Clifford' that one of the specimens given in the novel of the species of criticism written by MacGrawler for the 'Assinæum' contains passages from the 'Athenæum' review of 'Devereux.' But then, the 'Athenæum' was less conspicuously associated with Scotchmen than almost any other organ of periodical criticism: and the articles which appeared in it upon the early novels are, in the main, more serious and less uncivil than the treatment they received in the monthly and quarterly reviews.

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The probable cause of the discrepancy is that MacGrawler had to serve a second and more important end. The agency of just such a character was indispensable to the fundamental conception of the story; which requires that 'Little Paul,' in his forlorn childhood, should receive an education superior to its surroundings—an initiation of some sort into that ideal world which exists in literature to redress the balance of the real world.

No doubt he could have derived no benefit even from an instruction more comprehensive and refined than it was in the power of Mr. MacGrawler to impart, had he really been the offspring of parents belonging to a generation of thieves and prostitutes. But he is more than gently born. Before it trickled into the puddle where we first find it, the stream of the child's life had descended from no common height. His father was a man of exceptionally powerful intellect and commanding character, his mother a woman gifted with surpassing beauty of the most refined expression. Perhaps no part of this novel is conceived with a finer or a truer instinct than that which exhibits indirectly the almost inexhaustible power of hereditary tendencies to assert themselves when not absolutely stifled by outward circumstance.

Still, some humanising influence was indispensable to counteract the brutalising effect of degraded associates: and a

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preceptor had to be found for 'Little Paul' who, to the vice which rendered him a frequenter of the haunts of crime, added some acquaintance with the better kind of books. And I think it a further subtlety in the art of the story that the person who betrays Paul Clifford, and hands him over to punishment, should be the man who first unconsciously imparted to him the germs of those sentiments which throughout his career of crime are continually weaning him from it.

In his dedicatory epistle my father said of his attack upon the Scotch, 'I know what to expect in return, and shall scarcely be the one "who first cries, Hold, enough!"' But he had overshot his mark, and the Scotch Reviewers were unable to recognise a kinsman in Peter MacGrawler.

He himself was at that time a contributor to the 'Edinburgh Review;' and a letter to him from the Editor may be accepted as an indication that the clan took the matter lightly.

Macvey Napier to Edward Bulwer.

Edinburgh: September 7, 1830.

My dear Sir,—As I am uncertain whether you have been returned, as I think you expected, to the 'Honourable House,' I do not know whether we of the Land of Cakes are to have our northern obliquities held up to reprobation by a new and vigilant censor in that great assembly, or only to be scourged as heretofore through the medium of Messrs. Colburn and Bentley.

If the 'Honourable House' claims you as its own, and you are to bring in a bill to put down the unwarrantable Scotch monopoly of periodicals, it is to be hoped that you will give early notice of that militant purpose, in order that the wretches concerned may be enabled to look to the means of procuring their daily bread by other courses than those followed by their unfortunate and ill-used countryman, Mr. Peter MacGrawler.

I cannot guess what effect the following communication may have upon your views regarding the said land and its sons, but, as you are a friend to the inductive philosophy, you will at any rate be thankful, I am sure, for being put in possession of the facts. I have got something like a promise for a certain periodical of a favourable article on certain publications of yours by a *Scotchman*, while I have

also received two tenders of articles on the same publications, both by *Englishmen*, and both purporting unfavourable criticism. Now as I would wish, upon a principle of Scotch prudence, to keep well with you, lest I should come in for a share of the anti-Scotch scourge some day or another, I would be glad to be informed, being in just doubt upon this point, whether an unfavourable article by an *Englishman* is more worthy of acceptance than any of Scotch manufacture, however favourable.

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The reference to 'the MacGrawler' is certainly good-humoured; and Mr. Napier appears to have been under an impression that it was also humorous, for he continues:—

I must come to an end and be serious. I hope you have not forgotten your promise to give me another article for the October number of the Review. If it is ready, be so good as to send it under cover to Messrs. Longman, Rees & Co., desiring them to forward it immediately.

Mr. Napier was continually writing letters to my father expressing approbation of his works; and the praise was always accompanied by excuses for the want of an adequate article upon them in the Review. The difficulties invariably got the better of his good intentions.

Before I dismiss Mr. MacGrawler, the strained connection of him in 'Paul Clifford' with the 'Athenæum' induces me to add a letter which my father wrote later to Mr. C. W. Dilke, the then proprietor of that journal, because it shows what a change a few years had effected in his mind, and how temperate were his views of criticism in 1837 compared with the heated impressions of 1830:—

Albany: January 14, 1837.

Dear Sir,—The frank and ingenuous manner in which you have dealt with me in your letter I venture to take as a personal compliment. I cannot enter into that Serbonian Bog, the kindly controversy between an author and a critic. To the end of time the man who writes will view things differently from the man who judges. You may be right. Perhaps I may be right. But we could scarcely convince each other.

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With respect to my supposed critic in the 'Athenæum,' your explanation suffices for all practical purposes. You have confidence in his integrity, and you consider him selected from the best class of critics you can find. I am willing at once to accept your experience as guarantee for him in both capacities. I do not think he expressed the opinion of the Public: but he expressed an opinion very general in the Press. I believe I have the Public with me. The Press I never had. This again trenches on the debatable land, and becomes one of those disputes which are only honourable to literature, and contribute to the life of its action so long as, in the present instance, the motives of the disputants are at least done justice to.

I have, &c.,

E. L. BULWER.

My father must be reckoned among the few great novelists who, like Victor Hugo, have given the authority of their example to the introduction of *argot*, or the dialect of the very lowest classes of the urban population, into the dialogue of fictitious characters who would naturally use it in real life.

When 'Paul Clifford' appeared the experiment was novel, at least in English literature: and in his dedication he defended it on the grounds, *firstly* that what we call 'thieves' slang' is not simply a corruption of good language, but a distinct dialect, with much in it that is both philologically and philosophically interesting; *secondly* that provincial dialects had already been admitted into the higher order of fiction; and *thirdly* that their occasional employment is justified by their capacities as vehicles for humour, and that this particular dialect is replete with a latent irony specially adapting it for such a purpose.

There is no doubt much to be said on the other side. For my own part, I confess that the broad Scotch which fills so many pages of Scott's most charming fictions detracts from the pleasure with which I read them, and it can hardly fail to be a drag upon a story when any considerable part of it is not to be read without a glossary.

But I should be slow to deprecate the occasional use of *argot* in face of the happy idiosyncrasy given by it to such a character as 'Gavroche' and the lively local colouring it imparts to some of the scenes in 'Notre Dame.'

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'With the completion of this work,' says my father in his preface to the edition of 1848, 'closed an era in the writer's self-education. From "Pelham" to "Paul Clifford" (four fictions all written at a very early age) the author rather observes than imagines—rather deals with the ordinary surface of human life than attempts, however humbly, to soar above it, or to dive beneath. Looking back, at this distance of years, I can see as clearly as if they were mapped before me the paths which led across the boundary of invention from "Paul Clifford" to "Eugene Aram." And, that last work done, all less clearly can I see where the first gleams from a fairer fancy rose upon my way, and rested on those more ideal images which I sought, with a feeble hand, to transfer to "The Pilgrims of the Rhine" and "The Last Days of Pompeii."'

Of the early series 'Paul Clifford' is undoubtedly the first in which we find conspicuous evidence of the dramatic power of the author's genius. The tragedy of the story is tremendous; and the skill with which the slightest incidents are made to contribute to the intensity of the *dénouement* has no parallel, and scarcely any promise, in the construction of 'The Disowned' and 'Devereux.'

'I have,' says the author in the curious epistle which serves for dedication, preface, and postscript to 'Paul Clifford,' 'endeavoured to take warning from the errors of my preceding works. Perhaps it will be found that in this the story is better conducted, and the interest more uniformly upheld, than in any of my other fictions. I have outlived the desire of the recluse to be didascalical, and have avoided essay-writing and digression. In a word, I have studied, more than in my two last works, to write a tolerably entertaining novel. I have admitted into it only one episode

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of any importance—the “History of Augustus Tomlinson.” And this exception is only admitted because the history is no episode in the moral, or the general design, of the book, though it is episodical to the current of narration.’

The social and political satire sparkles lightly over a tragic background, sombre, profound, almost awful. Of the *dramatis personæ*, numerous and various as they are, the only one who plays his part with mechanical stiffness is Joseph Brandon, the brother of the terrible lawyer. In this artificial character the author had recourse to a device which he afterwards despised. ‘It was a very cheap purchase of laughter,’ he says in his ‘Essay on Fiction,’ ‘and a mere trick of farce, which Shakespeare and Cervantes would have disdained, to invest a favourite humorist with some cant phrase which he cannot open his mouth without disgorging. The “Prodigious” of Dominie Sampson, the “My father the Bailie” of Nicol Jarvie, the “Provant” of Major Dalgetty, the “Déjeûner at Tillietudlem” of Lady Margaret Bellenden, &c., all belong to one source of humour, and that the shallowest and most hack-nied.’

And to this ‘trick of farce’ also belonged the notion of making Joseph Brandon interlard almost every sentence with a parenthesis so contrived as to appear the absurd antecedent of the words which immediately follow it. To the same ‘trick,’ in ‘The Disowned,’ belonged Mr. Brown’s incessant references to ‘the late Lady Waddilove,’ and the ever-recurring pun of Mr. Copperas on the ‘Swallow Coach.’ To this ‘trick,’ again in ‘Devereux,’ belonged Sir William’s habit of commencing a capital story or jest and stopping just short of the point. The ‘trick’ has always the same vice,—that of making a single conceit or witticism serve some character throughout the entire work. The example of Scott enticed the youthful novelist into the imitation of a practice which, when a little older, he rightly condemned as a barren expedient.

All the remaining characters in ‘Paul Clifford’ (from

Dame Margery Lobkins, the good-natured, hot-tempered, hostess of the Mug, with her unconscious worldly wisdom,¹ to Lord Mauleverer with his refined selfishness) are delineated with a delicacy and precision of touch unequalled in any of the previous novels.

But the master portrait of the whole is William Brandon the lawyer. Had my father never written another novel, this character would have remained the most powerful creation of his genius; and the scene which brings together, for the first time in their lives, the father and the son (the one as the criminal and the other as the judge) would have been his finest effort in tragic art.

The tragedy is softened without being weakened by its association with the charming image of Lucy Brandon. Of all the heroines of my father's *early* novels she is the most attractive. And I have reason for believing that on his embodiment of her gentle character he fondly bestowed the Christian name first associated by him with the love of woman: a name made musical to his boyhood as he sat in the Ealing meadows, among the wild flowers, by the waters of the Brent.

Godwin was so delighted with 'Paul Clifford' that im-

¹ Mrs. Lobkins' advice to little Paul. "'Mind thy Kittycism, child, reverence old age. Never steal, 'specially when any one be in the way. Never go snacks with them as be older than you,—'cause why? the older a cove be, the more he cares for his self, and the less for his partner. At twenty, we diddles the public—at forty, we diddles our cronies! Be modest, Paul, and stick to your sitivation in life. Go not with fine tobymen, who burn out like a candle wot has a thief in it,—all flare, and gone in a whiffy! Leave liquor to the age, who can't do without it. *Taps* often proves a halter; and there be no ruin like blue ruin! Read your Bible, and talk like a pious 'un. People goes more by your words than your actions. If you wants what is not your own, try and do without it; and if you cannot do without it, take it away by insinivation, and not bluster. They as swindles, does more and risks less than they as robs; and if you cheat,—and now go play." Paul seized his hat, but lingered; and the dame, guessing at the signification of the pause, drew forth, and placed in the boy's hand, the sum of five halfpence and one farthing. "There, boy," quoth she, and she stroked his head fondly when she spoke, "you does right not to play for nothing; it's loss of time; but play with those as be less as your-self, an' then you can go for to beat 'em, if they says you go for to cheat!"' *Paul Clifford*, chap. ii.

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mediately after reading it he wrote to my father his warm eulogiums.

William Godwin to Edward Bulwer.

I have just finished my perusal of 'Paul Clifford.' I know that you are not so wrapped up in self-confidence as not to feel a real pleasure in the approbation of others ; and I regard it as a duty not to withhold my approbation where I am morally certain that it will be received as it is intended.

There are parts of the book that I read with transport. There are many parts of it so divinely written that my first impulse was to throw my implements of writing into the fire, and to wish that I could consign all I have published in the province of fiction to the same pyre. But that would be a useless sacrifice ; and, superior as I feel you to be in whatever kindles the finest emotions of the heart, I may yet preserve my place so far as relates to the mechanism of a story. This is but little, and does not justify my self-love ; but I am capable of a sentiment that teaches me to rejoice in the triumphs of others, without subjecting me to the mean and painful drawback of envy. I am bound to add that the penetration and acuteness you display are not inferior to the delivery. I remain, my dear Sir,

Ever faithfully yours,

May 13, 1830.

WILLIAM GODWIN.

Ebenezer Elliott, the Corn-law Poet, wrote in an equally enthusiastic strain from Sheffield.

Ebenezer Elliott to Edward Bulwer.

You have ruined me by writing 'Paul Clifford.' I can think of nothing else. Adieu Jeremy Bentham ! Adieu all my old teachers, more solemn, but not wiser, and less inspired ! I thought that dramatic wit had died with Shakespeare. The meeting between Brandon and his wife is Dantesque. But there are others who can paint such scenes. The dramatic power of the book is wonderful, but it is in its wit that I find its wisdom. Wit I think your forte ; and of all things it is what I envy most. Perhaps because it never can be mine. Your 'Tomlinsoniana,' by the way, seem to have excited some righteous indignation here. In our library copy, numbers 1, 12, 13, 14, and 15, are much torn, and carefully glued

together again. I was sorely tempted to rip No. 23. Your social picture is too true.

May 25, 1830.

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A passage in a letter he wrote a little later shows that the feelings to which my father gave expression in his portrait of MacGrawler were not confined to himself. 'It grates my gizzard to see these Scotch hirelings utterly unopposed, insulting all the good, and even decrying the very names of usefulness and honesty, whilst they are infecting our language with base terms and baseness. To overwhelm them and their patrons it is only necessary to quote their own lucubrations, provided it be done, as you have done it, in a light razor-edged way. This I could never do myself. I am only good for a scene to tear a cat in.'

Of the many prefatory outpourings which throw light upon the aims of my father's early novels, but have disappeared from the later editions of them, none is more characteristic than the rambling dedicatory letter to his old college friend Alexander Cockburn, that was printed with the first edition of 'Paul Clifford.'

Cockburn being now a rising barrister, his name was suppressed. 'It gives me pain, my dear * * * * *, to think that I may not grace my pages with your name: for I well know that, when after years shall have opened the fitting opportunity to your talents, that name will not be lightly held wherever honesty and truth, a capacity to devise what is good and a courage to execute it, are considered qualities worthy of esteem. But in your present pursuits it could scarcely serve you to be praised by a novelist, and named in the dedication to a novel. And your well-wishers would not be pleased to find you ostentatiously exhibiting a sanction to a book which they would fain hope you may never obtain the leisure to read.'

But this semi-anonymous character of the epistle relieved the author from all restraint in speaking of himself; and he

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writes with the freedom of a man who is talking to an intimate and sympathising friend. 'We are no longer,' he says, 'the rovers of the world, setting sail at our caprice and finding enterprise at our will. We have both learned that life has roads harder and more barren than we imagined. We look upon the ways along which we pass, not with the eager wandering glance of the tourist, but with the wary eye of the hacknied trafficker in the world's business. You are settled down to the honourable but exacting labours of the bar. I, "a mere spectator of other men's fortunes and adventures," am drawing from the bustle of the living world such quiet observation as, after it has lain a little in my own mind, I reproduce in these idle novels. Yet I cling not the less fondly to my old faith, that experience is the only investment which never fails to repay us tenfold what it costs; and that we cannot find safer guides through the mazes of life we have still not only to traverse but *retrace*, than the errors, the prejudices, the regrets, which at every interval we leave behind us on our way.'

He imagines that, on receiving the first copy of 'Paul Clifford,' his busy friend will exclaim with a *pish*, 'What a pity that ***** is still writing nothing but novels!' And he asks himself a question, which he says he has often asked himself before, 'In writing something else should I really be writing something better?'

This leads him to review in a cursory way the general condition and aspects of English literature.

To the busy-minded energetic man who skims through a new novel are its three volumes really less attractive, less instructive, or less fatiguing, than the shortest new poem? 'Will you, will any one, read epic or sonnet, tale or satire, tragedy or epigram? Whatever be the variety, do you not except at once to the species?'

So much for Poetry. Philosophy comes next. 'Write on the mind? Speculate on the senses? Alas, to what

end? We may judge of the demand for moral philosophy from the fact that (in their collected form at least) the works of Hobbes are out of print, and Mill's "Analysis" has not even yet been reviewed. I will frankly confess to you that writing is not with me its own reward. In order to write, I must first have the hope of being read.'

Philosophy dismissed, what remains? Political Treatises, Essays, Travels, Biography, History? Treat these subjects as you will, does the biography, the essay, the political treatise, the history, outlast even the year commonly allotted to the life of the most shortlived novel? Its longevity is apparently not greater, its popularity is unquestionably less. 'The literary idler contents himself with some review of it in the "Quarterly;" and the dear familiar friend on whom you bestow a copy of it shuns you for the rest of your life for fear you should ask him his opinion of it.'

Is this the fault, not of the subjects, but the writers? No. "'Bracebridge Hall" is in every book club, "The Sketch Book" in every drawing-room, and both in high request. But the "Life of Columbus" (invaluable if only for the subject so felicitously chosen) and the "Wars of Granada" (scarcely less valuable for the subject so admirably adorned) are—the one slowly passing into oblivion, and the other slumbering with uncut leaves upon the shelf.'

Novels, then, have at least the best chance of being read. And if they are worth reading, they will be worth remembering. So that their immediate popularity need not necessarily be injurious to their permanent influence. And here follows a weighty passage which is even more applicable to the literature of the present day than to that of fifty years ago.

'We live in a strange and ominous period for literature. In books, as in other manufactures, the great aim seems to be abridgment of labour. People will only expend their time for immediate returns of knowledge: and the wholesome and fair profit—slow but permanent—they call tedious in letters and

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speculative in politics. This eager, yet slothful, habit of mind, now so general, has brought into notice an emigrant and motley class of literature—formerly little known, and less honoured, in our country. We throw aside our profound researches, and feast upon popular abridgments. We forsake the old march through elaborate histories, for a “dip” into entertaining memoirs. If from this, our present bias in literature, any class of writing has benefited more than another in popularity and estimation, it is the novel. Readers now look into fiction for facts, as Voltaire, in his witty philosophy, looked among facts for fiction. I do not say that the novel has increased in merit, or that it deserves its increased reputation. On the contrary, I think that, although our style may be less prolix than that of the last century, our thoughts are more languid, and our invention less racy.’¹

No one, if judged by his own practice, had a better title to be the censor of an impatient age. ‘Life,’ he said, ‘has hours enough for all but the idle: and for my own part, if I were not in the common habit of turning to more important subjects as a study, I should never have had the presumption to write even novels as a recreation.’

¹ Scott’s novels he excepted as a matter ‘of course’ from this description.

BOOK VIII.

CONTINUANCE OF LITERARY
AND COMMENCEMENT OF
PARLIAMENTARY LIFE

1830-32



CHAPTER I.

LITERARY SUSCEPTIBILITIES. 1830-2. *Æt.* 28-9.

BIOGRAPHY must deal with the life it records as a succession of parts: and events and traits, which recede into the background when the life is viewed as a whole, are for a while foreground features as each is told in turn. The real proportion is violated by the temporary prominence of circumstances that are small in relation to the rest; and the serenity of the image left at the close, when experience and discipline have had their mellowing effects, is superseded in the narrative by the turbulent picture of past passions and mistakes.

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This reflection applies to the present chapter, in which I have to speak of my father's feelings and conduct in relation to criticism when his impatience of its abuses and injustice was at the highest pitch.

Authors and artists are reputed to be peculiarly sensitive: and it is sometimes true that the constitution of mind which could alone inspire their work is inseparable from a temperament acutely alive to sympathy on the one hand, and to censure on the other. But men of this kind are few; and the annoyance of authors at hostile criticism would rather seem to be the consequence of their circumstances than the special susceptibility of their dispositions.

Persons who never dreamt of printing a line would be as much mortified by the exposure in newspapers of their intellectual deficiencies, as are authors at caustic animadversions on their writings. Every one is familiar with the heartburn-

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ings created by words spoken only in private and reported to the subject of them by that pest of society 'the good-natured friend.' And, since man, literary or social, is always man, there is this further similarity in the effect harsh judgments have on him in either capacity—that, while, alike by those who speak and those who hear, they are forgotten almost as soon as uttered, the person they concern attaches to them an exaggerated importance, and allows himself to be haunted by the self-evoked spectre of a dead and buried criticism. There is no passion more universal than vanity, and none which can less endure to be crossed.

The distinction, then, between men of letters and other cultivated men is, not that they have, ordinarily, a nature more alive to censure, but that authors are more exposed to public criticism, and that in this fact they differ from those who are less pursued by it. The injury appears greater because the comments are more diffused.

The degree of sensibility, for instance, is as various among authors as it is among politicians. The interval between Johnson, proof against all abuse, and Goldsmith, morbidly sensitive to the least touch of it, was not less than that between the Duke of Wellington, caring nothing for attacks, and Canning and Peel, who never got hardened into indifference, whatever self-control they might exercise in public. Only, the irritation of the politician can vent itself in debate, and that of the author is apt to take the form of complaint.

The reviews of an author's books, multiplying with his fame, become legion when he is among the chief celebrities of the day. 'I have maintained the newspapers these many weeks,' said Johnson in 1766. The more popular a writer grows, the more his faults will be pointed out in connection with his merits; and detractors will increase, either from diversities of taste or from jealousy of his reputation.

With the propensity of mankind to sit upon their thorns, public favourites, if they are sensitive, must necessarily suffer

most from critics : and this is seen in the precautions the often take to protect themselves from the annoyance.

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In 1821 Lord Byron wrote to his publisher, Mr. Murray, the stipulations:—‘That you send me no periodical works whatsoever—no Edinburgh, Quarterly, Monthly, nor any review, magazine, or newspaper, English or foreign, of any description. That you send me no opinions whatsoever, either good, bad, or indifferent, of yourself, or your friends, or others, concerning any work, or works, of mine, past, present, or to come. You will say “to what tends all this?” I will answer *that*; to keep my mind free, and unbiassed by all paltry and personal irritabilities of praise or censure—to let my genius take its natural direction, while my feelings are like the dead, who know nothing and feel nothing of all or aught that is said or done in their regard.’

Dickens, in the latter part of his life, followed Byron’s practice, and gave up reading reviews of those works which tens of thousands read with delight, that he might not be disturbed by lectures on defects he had not the power to correct. George Eliot found that censure cramped her energies, and only read the sympathetic articles which were culled for her out of the mass. Others, whose nerves were stronger, have not the less been persuaded, in the fulness of their fame, that the press was against them. Thackeray is said, in his later time, to have been of this opinion. And it is among the penalties paid by authors of renown that, when they commence a progression towards the West, they are taunted with every decline from their meridian splendour.

Foremost among the sufferers from reviews, my father wrote an essay ‘On the Spirit of True Criticism,’ which was published in the ‘New Monthly Magazine’ of 1832. ‘No science,’ he said, ‘requires such elaborate study as Criticism. It is the most analytical of our mental operations. To pause, to examine, to say *why* that passage is a sin against nature, or that plot a violation of art—to bring deep knowledge of

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life in all its guises, of the heart in all its mysteries, to bear upon a sentence of approval or disapprobation—to have cultivated the feeling of beauty till its sense of harmony has grown as fine as the ear of a musician, equally sensitive to discord or alive to new combinations; these are no light qualities. . . . But I doubt if a man can be a great critic who has not, at least, the elementary qualities of a good man. He must keep the intellectual sight clear from envy and malice, and personal dislikes. He must be on the alert to welcome genius. He must be not unwilling to learn something from the work he examines, and he must have deeply studied in other works all the principles of the art he illustrates. Where this largeness of mind is not visible there is always something petty and crippled in the judgment of the professional critic.'

A lady asked Madame de Staël to find a tutor for her son, who was to combine much the same moral and intellectual gifts that my father required in a critic; and Madame de Staël replied: '*Ma chère, si je trouve votre homme, je l'épouse.*' A numerous profession must, in the main, consist of men who are not above average stature; and the bare recapitulation of the qualities essential to true criticism should render authors stoical, on the principle that we must endure the evils which cannot possibly be cured.

My father might probably have accepted this conclusion if his irritation had not been inflamed by the belief that the moral obliquities which are voluntary had more to do with the disparagement of his works than unavoidable incapacities; and this opinion was sanctioned by Macaulay in a letter he wrote my father, rebuking him, in language as reasonable as it was friendly, for having given vent to his dissatisfaction with his critics in a volume of verse published by him in 1842.

'If,' wrote Macaulay, 'I regret anything in the volume, it is that you should, in the last piece, have uttered, in language certainly very energetic and beautiful, complaints which I

really think are groundless. It has, perhaps, always been too much the habit of men of genius to attach more importance to detraction than to applause. A single hiss gives them more pain than the acclamations of a whole theatre can compensate. But surely, if you could see your own position as others see it, you have no reason to complain. How many men in literary history have, at your age, enjoyed half your reputation? Who that ever enjoyed half your reputation was secure from the attacks of envious dunces? And what harm, in the long run, did all the envy of all the dunces in the world ever do to any man of real merit? What writer's place in the estimation of mankind is ever fixed by any writings except his own? Who would, in our time, know that Dryden and Pope ever had a single enemy, if they had not themselves been so injudicious as to tell us so? You may rely on this, that there are very few authors living, and certainly not one of your detractors, who would not most gladly take all your literary vexations for the credit of having written your worst work. If, however, you really wish to be free from detraction, I can very easily put you in the way of being so. Bring out a succession of poems as bad as Mr. Robert Montgomery's "Luther," and of prose works in the style of Mr. Gleig's "Warren Hastings," and I will undertake that in a few years you shall have completely silenced malevolence. To think that you will ever silence it while you continue to write what is immediately reprinted at Philadelphia, Paris, and Brussels, would be absurd.'

My father did not think the envy confined to the dunces. His Trevelyan, in the 'Pilgrims of the Rhine,' when attributing to authors a peculiar temptation to 'the base vices of jealousy and the unwillingness to admire,' goes on to say: 'Goldsmith is forgotten in the presence of a puppet; he feels it, and is mean; he expresses it, and is ludicrous. It is well to say that great minds will not stoop to jealousy; in the greatest minds, it is most frequent. Few authors are ever

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so aware of the admiration they excite as to afford to be generous; and this melancholy truth revolts us with our own ambition. It was from a deep sentiment of the unrealness of literary fame, of dissatisfaction at the fruits it produced, of fear for the meanness it engendered, that I resigned betimes all love for its career; and if by the restless desire that haunts men who think much, to write ever, I should be urged hereafter to literature, I will sternly teach myself to persevere in the indifference to its fame.'

The many glaring and notorious instances of envy in celebrated men will not permit us to suppose that a great intellect is a preservative against the most paltry and ignoble of vices; but there are numerous examples of great men who have been wholly free from it. Walter Scott, the first among novelists in my father's early time, was one; and my father himself was another. I, at least, throughout the whole of our long and close intercourse, could never detect in him the smallest tendency to that exaggerated estimate of the dead, and undue depreciation of the living, which is the characteristic of literary jealousy.

Far from an 'unwillingness to admire,' his invariable habit was to seek for the merits in any new work by an unknown author. 'The effort,' he says in one of his political writings, 'to discover what is good and pleasant in the world around us is the mark of a manly virtue.' This 'manly virtue' he exercised largely in the endeavour to discover what is good and pleasant in the world of books. Even a single high quality appeared to him a title to gratitude not to be invalidated by a multitude of minor blemishes. There were some writers whose peculiar excellencies were not to his taste; and whom, for that reason, he appreciated less highly than I think they deserve. There were others whom he overrated from his sympathy with qualities of a rather humble kind. But, on the whole, I have never known any man more catholic in his relish for all the varied emanations of mind,

or more expert in rating them at their true value: and in no case did a moral vice distort his literary perceptions.

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I have briefly noticed the feelings of other authors about the criticisms on their works, in order that it may be seen how much they had in common with my father. But his sensitiveness was in excess of what is usual; and from his circumstances the sensitiveness was tried to a degree which was not usual either.

Prominent among these circumstances was his shy retiring nature. This was one source of his preference of domestic and studious life to miscellaneous society; and his few very intimate friends and associates were not authors or critics. My mother, writing to Miss Greene in 1831 about some occasion when Moore, Washington Irving, 'young Disraeli,' the 'author of "Laurie Todd,"' and some other literary notabilities had been dining in Hertford Street, remarked to her friend, 'It is astonishing what bores I find all authors except my own husband, and he has nothing authorlike about him; for this reason, that his literary talents are but the least part of him.'

There is in all of us a happy tendency to be a little blind to the faults, and very kind to the virtues, of those we love, or for whom we entertain a feeling of personal regard. And, owing to this tendency, appreciative criticism is, more often than not, the result of a bias toward the author, either from personal knowledge of him, or from the report of friends, or from his previous reputation. These influences stimulate both the effort to understand, and the disposition to admire, him. In the absence of such motives criticism has a natural tendency to disparagement,—a tendency exclusive of envy.

My father has remarked that the critics of greatest fame have exercised their art in pointing out beauties, and not in exposing faults; for it is in the beauties that the world is permanently interested. But it is usually the disposition of a critic, when sitting in judgment on a contemporary for whom

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he has neither good nor ill will, to think that he elevates himself by assuming an air of superiority to his author; that to detect faults and errors is a greater evidence of perspicacity than to distinguish what is best and subtlest in the purpose and execution of the work; and that, at any rate, he is addressing himself to an audience which, on the whole, is more entertained by detraction than by praise. A critic trained in the school of my father's youthful period used to say, 'Give me a book to cut up; the public like anatomy.'

My father, by not belonging to any literary clique, did more than lose the good offices of the fraternity. The rarity of his appearance among them provoked the hatred of many, from their misapprehension of its cause. The offence is stated in an article upon his works, written in a generous spirit, and published in the 'London and Westminster Review' for 1843. 'Sir Edward Lytton is, we are informed,' says the reviewer, 'the younger son of a Norfolk family of good squirely repute. Now an impression has been derived, from what he has himself written, that he wishes to set himself above the literary brotherhood by intimating his possession of a squirely title to rank above them. His squirely equals see that he claims a superiority to *them* on the grounds of his literary eminence. He is in collision, therefore, with the spirit of both classes, and each attacks him as not being one of them.'

I am not aware that my father's writings anywhere indicate a desire to rank the son of the squire above the author. The title he most cherished was that which did not come to him by descent, but had been won for him by himself in the field of literature. But it is true that his shyness was mistaken for haughtiness, and his avoidance of literary coteries attributed to a contempt for the class.

He was earning his livelihood, as his defamers were earning theirs, by writing for the public, and they were offended at the pretension imputed to him of setting himself above them. All the while, he did but mingle in the circle to which

he had belonged from childhood; and even there he was, from his nature, more an actor than a spectator.

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His political career, again, raised up enemies to him in his literary capacity. In his novels he avowed his liberal opinions. This might have attracted little notice if he had not gone into Parliament.

Half-a-century ago a practice had for many years prevailed with some leading journals of punishing an obnoxious politician, if he happened to be an author, by carping criticisms upon his books. The reviewer had no intention of forming or expressing a just estimate of the work: he merely used it for the purpose of lowering the writer.

Few suffered more from this cause than my father. And, as all the circumstances I have mentioned were simultaneously in operation to instigate cold, or captious, or virulent criticisms of his novels (criticisms in which the merits of the novels, even when allowed at all, were the things last looked for, and least noticed, by the critic), he was haunted by a resentful sense of systematic injustice.

One journal, 'Fraser's Magazine,' departing from criticism altogether, indulged in personal scurrilities which, in our more decorous days, can only be understood by a specimen. I take it from an article in the number of that Magazine for December 1831:—

'Do not be seduced into the belief that, because a man in your employer's back shop can manufacture a novel on the shortest notice, and at the lowest price, therefore all other species of literary labour may be similarly performed. Nobody knows better than yourself that to make a fashionable novel all that is required is a tolerable acquaintance with footmen and butlers. This will supply the high life. The meanness of the characters introduced you may draw from yourself. . . . Wishing to put a young man in your position in the right path, I have cast a hasty glance over the first magazine on which you have tried your hand, and am sorry to say it is

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truly beastly, and abominably stupid. . . . My dear Bulwer, this writing of yours is bitter bad, it is jejune base twaddle : twaddle, I say, Bulwer, twaddle. Your paltry grovelling productions have not the power of influencing the opinion of a lady's lapdog. Your politics are of the most sneaking kind. . . . If anybody thinks your talents worth hiring, why, like Colburn, they will hire them ; and if the force of idiocy should so prevail in the land as to induce anybody to think you could be of service in Parliament, let him send you there as he would employ any other mechanic to do his appropriate work. . . . All this I have written in the purest affection. I think you a deserving young person whom Nature intended for a footman, and I pity you accordingly for having missed your vocation.'

His lampooners fancied he prided himself on his supercilious gentility, and they would shock it by calling him with mocking familiarity 'My dear Bulwer.' They thought he was vain of the society he kept, and they insinuated that he derived his knowledge of 'high life' from footmen and butlers. He was a hireling mechanic, to be had for wages by a publisher, or by people who needed a parliamentary tool. His character was mean : his politics sneaking : his productions beastly. It might well cause resentment in critics like these that my father should be a gentleman. The vanity which is a weakness or a vice may easily be confounded with the self-respect which is a virtue. My father's vanity could not be wounded by being told that his writings were 'base, paltry, grovelling twaddle ;' but he thought himself insulted by personalities which violated all the decencies of life, and once or twice he retaliated. He should have treated such outrages with contempt. His replies could only gratify his assailants, and encourage them to continue their impudent vulgarities.

In 1838, when the future author of 'Vanity Fair' was twenty-seven years of age, but had not yet arrived at the

maturity of his powers, he was a regular contributor to 'Fraser's Magazine,' and in intimate relations with its editor. Adopting the custom of the journal, he made my father the theme for gross personalities, and, without being acquainted with him, drew a ludicrous picture of his manners and conversation: a picture which, beyond an extravagant caricature of one or two slight peculiarities, had no resemblance to his talk or his bearing in society. A man intellectually gifted could not have written in the style of the passage I have quoted from an earlier number of the Magazine; but, from my father's language in his Autobiography, I do not doubt his belief, at the time, that Thackeray was not guiltless of many of the scurrilities, all alike anonymous, which proceeded from the degraded dullards he condescended to abet.

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For the sake of a writer whose genius adorned the literature of his country, I am glad to be able to state that he afterwards regretted his mistake in crossing the boundary which separates literary criticism from personal rudeness.

A common friend of Thackeray and my father wrote to the latter in 1861: 'I saw Thackeray at Folkestone. He spoke of you a great deal; and said he would have given worlds to have burnt some of his writings, especially some lampoons written in his youth. He wished so much to see you and express his contrition. His admiration, as expressed to me, was boundless; also his regret to have given vent to youthful jealousy, &c. I tell you all this, because I feel certain he meant me to repeat it.' This was followed by a letter from Thackeray himself.

Looking over some American reprints of my books, I find one containing a preface written by me when I was in New York; in which are the following words:—

'The careless papers written at an early period, and never seen since the printer's boy carried them away, are brought back and laid at the father's door, and he cannot, if he would, disown his own children.'

'Why were some of these little brats brought out of their ob-

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scurity? I own to a feeling of anything but pleasure in reviewing some of these juvenile misshapen creatures, which the publisher has disinterred and resuscitated. There are two performances especially (among the critical and biographical works of the erudite Mr. Yellowplush) which I am very sorry to see reproduced: and I ask pardon of the author of "The Caxtons" for a lampoon which I know he himself has forgiven, and which I wish I could recall. I had never seen that eminent writer, but once in public, when this satire was penned, and I wonder at the recklessness of the young man who could fancy such satire was harmless jocularly, and never calculate that it might give pain,' κ. τ. λ.

I don't know whether you ever were made aware of this cry of 'Peccavi:' but, with the book in which it appears just fresh before me, I think it fair to write a line to acquaint you with the existence of such an apology; and to assure you of the author's repentance for the past, and the present sincere good will with which he is yours most faithfully,

W. M. THACKERAY.

A few letters preserved by my father present his character, and that of his minor defamers in 'Fraser's Magazine,' under a last and instructive aspect. One of them is an appeal for charity, on the ground that my father's 'known magnanimity and generosity' will be irresistibly touched by the avowal that the writer, years before, was the reputable author of some of the 'severe criticisms' in the Magazine. The confidence was justified; for a second letter from the same person contains a grateful acknowledgment of assistance received.

A letter from Mr. Stebbing says: 'I cannot too strongly express my personal feelings of respect for the union of the many noble qualities which appear in your character. Genius is not always united with kindness and charity; and the promptness with which you have answered our appeal on behalf of poor — and his family, has really given me pleasure in so many ways, that I trust you will pardon my using a professional privilege to speak thus plainly.' And on this letter my father notes: 'The person referred to was a poor wretch who had written some abusive stuff about me.

I forget what, but I believe it was something in "Fraser's Magazine."

Later on, another of the lampooners solicited a small colonial appointment for a relation, and apparently obtained it. The individuals, perhaps, were penitent. But there is a general truth underlying the two states disclosed by these letters: and it is, that men of that class are equally ready to fawn or traduce, according as one or the other pays.

In the first period of my father's literary life, when the pens of many writers were against him, he retaliated fiercely on the Editor of the 'Quarterly Review.' He had been on friendly terms with Lockhart. But I find in Lady Blessington's letters to him allusions to ill-natured remarks made on him by Lockhart in private, and the expression of an opinion that the author of 'Adam Blair' resented the popularity of the author of 'Pelham,' or, at least, the personal interest felt in him by some female readers of his book.

Occasional sneers at faults in my father's novels began to appear in the 'Quarterly Review;' and my father, on his side, commented freely on the review in the 'New Monthly Magazine.'

At length, in an article on 'Zohrab the Hostage,' in the 'Quarterly Review' for December 1832, this forgotten piece of fiction, with not one single quality of genius, was pronounced 'the best novel that has appeared for several years, out of sight superior to all the rest of the recent brood,' and was held up to historical novelists as a model for their study and imitation, while my father's novels, from 'Pelham' to 'Paul Clifford,' were cited as contrasts, by their faults, to the masterly 'Zohrab.' There was not any pretence of fairness. The 'Pelham' series was only mentioned to be decried.

My father retorted in a scathing letter to Lockhart, signed 'The Author of Pelham' and published in the 'New Monthly Magazine.' It was filled with invective. Every sentence was an epigram, and every epigram a sarcasm; to which the criti-

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cisms of the 'Quarterly Review' were as vinegar and water to vitriol and fire.

I reject the suggestion that Lockhart was actuated by envy, either personal or literary. I have been told that the whole turn of his mind was sarcastic; that the lurking sneer could be detected in his singularly handsome, refined, and intellectual countenance; and that the habit grew out of a disposition too contemptuous of most things, and not from jealousy of any. In his addiction to jest and gibe he sported with much that he should have taken seriously; and I do not question that any biting remarks upon my father, or his novels, which he may have let fall in conversation, were simply part of his usual practice; and that the attack in the article on 'Zohrab,' though plainly spiteful, was only an incident in the petty warfare that had arisen between the 'Quarterly Review' and the 'New Monthly Magazine'—an incident in no wise related to the rival claims of 'Pelham' and 'Adam Blair,' nor arising, as Lady Blessington supposed, out of a personal rivalry between the authors of those books in the good graces of one or more of their fair acquaintances.

Some years afterwards, he and my father met accidentally at the house of a common friend; and, with a simultaneous impulse, they approached each other and shook hands. Both of them felt instinctively that the old quarrel had been the ebullition of an ephemeral passion; and, had they spoken their thoughts, they would probably have said, with a simultaneous unanimity, 'We are both in the wrong.' It is not likely that their amity was ever again disturbed: and the only letter from Lockhart among my father's papers concludes with the words, 'I feel exceedingly the generous courtesy of your procedure, and am gratefully as well as sincerely yours.'

I have now described my father's relation to his reviewers at this period of his life, and the causes which exposed him to more than his share of slighting comment and unlicensed abuse. I conclude with the passage from his essay 'On the

Spirit of True Criticism' in which he specifies the principles, or at least the practice, that had prevailed, when he wrote it, in the management of the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews. CHAP.
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His sweeping generalisations are only broad truths, which had many occasional exceptions. But the extract is worth giving for the acumen with which it discriminates the leading characteristics running through long rows of volumes, and for its clear indication of what he conceived to be the prevalent error—the lack of a catholic spirit, and an inadequate attention to the best literature of the time.

My father's essay appeared in April 1832, and the article on 'Zohrab the Hostage' in December. Though he spoke of Lockhart in the essay as 'a man of genius,' and said of a particular criticism, that 'the noble spirit (for it ought to be a noble spirit which produced "Adam Blair") is not visible in it,' we may safely infer that the estimate of my father's novels in December was the sequel to his own estimate of the 'Quarterly Review' in April.

'The elder Quarterly Reviews have done more to injure Criticism in this country than literary men have yet observed. People talk of the rise of "The Edinburgh" as a new æra in Criticism: and certainly the first numbers of that Review are exceedingly clever. They contain good squibs, excellent pamphlets, much wit, some philosophy, and not one particle of proper criticism. They did not introduce, but they consolidated and adorned, the pitiful system of reviewing a book by sneering at it. Criticism is analysis: with the "Edinburgh Review" it was irony.

'The writers of that day, moreover, were miserably deficient in true taste. They had not the smallest susceptibility to genius. They were Gallicised to the core: critical Hayleys—on a large scale I allow, but Hayleys still. They ridiculed Coleridge, they despised Wordsworth; they rarely praised anything *largely*, or predicted immortality to any work but the Oration of Sir J. Macintosh (a contributor) on the Trial of

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Peltier; and yet they seriously bent themselves to examine and confess the beauties to be found "in the splendid pages" of Dr. Darwin.

'They originated that vicious habit, now interwoven with our critical practice, of debasing the lofty guardianship of Literature into the truckling defence of a Party. They cut and squared their literary opinions to political purposes. They Whiggged everything they touched. They gauged and docketed all the objects of Poetry—sun, moon, and stars, with the little excise notions of a faction that mistook snarling for philosophy. They were unutterably smart, clever, and small. They dwindled down all the genius they condescended to notice—they would have dwarfed Goliath himself. You never find them expanding with the lofty image, or aspiring with the sublime thought, they copied into their pages. They caught the Gulliver, and then played little tricks around him.

'As their blame, so their praise, minioned to their politics. Their heroes were borrowed from themselves. They reminded you of the Pigmies, who boasted (see Barnes's account of them) that Jove himself was a Pigmy.

'Yet these small critics became great writers when they left Criticism. Their political articles, though not large in spirit, were yet worthy of their present fame. They could not meet Poesy in her high and starred haunts, but they were excellent in attacking a game law, or quarrelling with a Ministry. They discovered and brought forward no new genius in our literature, but they were splendidly sarcastic upon some half-dozen old abuses in our Constitution.

'Seven years after the birth of "The Edinburgh," up started "The Quarterly:" and one might then have hoped that, instructed by the faults of its precursor, the new aspirant to critical authority would have caught at least something of the spirit of True Criticism.

'Not a bit of it! The battledore of "The Quarterly" was merely set up to play at shuttlecock with the battledore of

"The Edinburgh." "Rat!" goes "The Edinburgh," hitting hard at some Tory book. "Rat-tat!" goes "The Quarterly," with a mighty stroke at a Whig one. The same wonderful lack of penetration into genius, the same astonishing poverty of sympathy and admiration, reign equally in both. At its very birth, "The Quarterly" began to prattle of Burns like a fine gentleman praising the clever exciseman; and it thought "Waverley," on the whole, a very respectable work—for the class of literature to which it belongs.

'It must, however, be confessed that "The Quarterly" has committed itself to praise a little more indiscreetly than "The Edinburgh." It has predicted all sorts of immortality to Robert Southey and John Croker. It has spoken most handsomely of Mary Collings, a maid-servant, and John Somebody, a butler. From Mr. Lockhart himself,—a man of genius, and who seems by his life of Burns to have sympathies with genius,—a little of the *mens divinius* in reviewing might have been expected. But nowhere shall we look so vainly for anything resembling the true principles of criticism as in the present "Quarterly." Its last state is worse than its first. Were a foreigner, unacquainted with our literature, to open its pages, he would seek there in vain for any one of those names which are now in everyone's mouth. He would learn from "The Quarterly" nothing whatever about the authors whose thoughts and words are sinking into the heart of the age. He would open upon Croker's "Boswell" as the great book of the times; and the shrinking Muses of England would seem to him absorbed in the recent performance of Miss Fanny Kemble.'

The contemptuous introduction of Southey's name was unmerited by that admirable man of letters, who did not receive more encouragement than he deserved, though others got less: and his correspondence has since revealed that no one protested more strongly than he did against the carping criticism of the day. No man was readier than Southey to foster every indication of talent in all departments of litera-

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ture. 'The journal wants more of the *literæ humaniores*,' he wrote in 1825 to John Coleridge, who was editing for a brief period the 'Quarterly Review,' 'and in a humaner tone than it has been wont to observe.' This was his constant cry. But, being for many years the leading writer in the 'Quarterly Review,' he was commonly supposed to have an influence with its conductors which he did not possess, and to countenance faults which he abhorred.

If my father's sensitiveness to criticism was a weakness, no one was stronger in the self-reliance that rises superior to it. Lord Beaconsfield has described as terrible the blighting effects attendant on the doubt of possessing the mental power to accomplish the achievements which have become the dream of a life. No such doubts tormented my father. His feelings were feminine, but his will and intellect were robust; and he acquired fresh resolution from criticisms that would have disheartened a mind less vigorous and confident. Even his sensitiveness had, on this account, its compensations; and it is himself who says, 'He who most feels the peculiar pains, feels most the peculiar pleasures, of the poet. No matter what the silence of the world, his own heart is never silent: it whispers fame to the last. His statue is not in the market-place: for that very reason he expects the chaplet on his tomb.'

CHAPTER II.

THE 'VICAR OF WAKEFIELD.' 1831. Æt. 28.

ON some occasion when my father's thoughts were directed to the captious spirit pervading many of the articles upon his novels, it came into his mind to draw up what purported to be a contemporary review of the famous 'Vicar of Wakefield,' after the pattern of the criticisms on his own works.

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The plan pursued by carping reviewers was simple. They passed over the qualities that captivate readers who give themselves up to their author, and singled out any features capable of affording them a pretext for cavil.

My father's *jeu d'esprit* was not intended for publication, and he left it incomplete. But the whole could not have served better than the part to show how readily a masterpiece may, by this method, be made to appear a medley of absurdities.

A new age speaks with scorn of the blundering criticisms of the past; and we plume ourselves on our disdain of the ridicule or neglect which awaited Wordsworth, and Coleridge, and Shelley, and Keats. But, as other authors arise who are pre-eminently original in the form and spirit of their works, our self-complacency is not found to have brought us nearer to infallibility, and only from a few, on its first appearance before the world, can genius commonly look for a flattering reception.

With the highest literature it is the *want* of familiarity that breeds contempt.

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DR. GOLDSMITH AS A NOVELIST.

The Vicar of Wakefield: A Novel. By Oliver Goldsmith. 1764.

Dr. Goldsmith is a writer not without some merit. His compilations deserve the praise of industry; and although, from their total want of philosophical arrangement and accurate research, they can never become authorities with the learned, nor even useful as books of reference for readers of maturer years, they have a certain ease of style which well adapts them to the comprehension of the young; so that, with the corrections of a careful preceptor, they may serve as elementary manuals for children between the age of eight and twelve.

Happy had it been for this writer if he had confined his ambition to the production of works thus harmless. For in these works, at least, the errors, however numerous, are not such as can seriously pervert the understanding or corrupt the heart; and their ignorance, though frequently displayed, entails no worse consequences than a smile at the self-conceit of the author, and a reference on the part of the youthful pupil to a few simple sources of information. We bear no ill-will to Dr. Goldsmith. Far from it. We should be too happy to leave him complacent and satisfied in the vocation suited to his abilities, and profitable, we presume, to his pecuniary interests. A sense of the duties we owe to the public alone compels us to expose the false sentimentality, the monstrous absurdities, and the pernicious moral of a book that, under the popular garb of fiction, might otherwise steal its poisonous way to the domestic hearth, to demoralise our sons and corrupt our daughters.

We shall endeavour to give an outline of the plot; if plot, indeed, it can be called, which presents to us nothing but an incongruous tissue of improbabilities, outraging common sense at every turn, and sinning against the most ordinary usages of society.

Dr. Goldsmith entitles his book 'The Vicar of Wakefield;' and in the opening chapter of it, he emulates the phraseology of an auctioneer in a puffing advertisement, to depict his hero and family living at Wakefield 'in an elegant house, situate in a fine country, and a good neighbourhood.' This first chapter is free from the grosser blemishes of those which follow it, and is not without a certain laboured attempt at playful simplicity which is occasionally felicitous. But the author's incredible ignorance of life in its commonest forms, though as yet only apparent in a trifle, prepares

us for what we may expect as his story develops itself. He makes his Vicar talk of the 'Family of Wakefield,' as if their name was Wakefield, not Primrose. We believe Dr. Goldsmith lives somewhere in Marylebone. Did he ever hear of the Rector of that parish, and his household, being styled 'the Family of Marylebone'? Who on earth except this Irish compiler would conceive that by the 'Family of Wakefield' could possibly be meant Dr. and Mrs. Primrose and their six children? or imagine that, like some nobleman, these people took their title from the place in which they chanced to reside? This clergyman, who is represented as a model of all Christian piety, thus describes the manner in which he thinks a pastor of the Church of England should pass his time:—

'We were generally awaked in the morning by music, and on fine days rode a hunting.¹ The hours between breakfast and dinner the ladies devoted to dress and study. They usually read a page, and then gazed at themselves in the glass; which, even philosophers must own, often presented the page of the greatest beauty. . . . When we had dined, to prevent the ladies leaving us, I generally ordered the table to be removed, and sometimes, with the music master's assistance, the girls would give us a very agreeable concert. Walking out, drinking tea, country dances, and forfeits filled the rest of the day.'

Such are Dr. Goldsmith's notions of the occupations of a Christian minister, and the proper mode of bringing up a youthful family. That his daughters should spend half the day in admiring themselves in the looking-glass this Vicar seems to think absolutely commendable, and an employment to be approved of even by philosophers. The Vicar himself, indeed, has one diversion somewhat more lofty, though we apprehend that his Bishop could scarcely have approved it. This is the construction of books, after the theories of Whiston (who is held up to us as a proper orthodox authority) on the sin of clergymen marrying twice. Certainly if all married clergymen led the life of the Vicar of Wakefield,—hunting, dancing, playing forfeits, and bringing up their daughters to study the looking-glass, one marriage would lead to wickedness enough in all conscience.

The Vicar has 14,000*l.*, with which a merchant, in whose hands

¹ Much this scribbler can know about the rural pursuits he affects to describe! He talks of hunting as if it were an amusement all the year round. It is not exactly in the season for fine days that this Parish Priest could have stuck the fox's brush into his broad brim.

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it is lodged, runs away. Out of that sum only 400*l.* remains. Well, but the merchant cannot, we presume, run away with the Vicarage too. Whatever this exemplary pastor may have received from tithes in return for singing, dancing, romping, hunting on fine days, and writing books in favour of Mr. Whiston's heresies, must have remained unaffected by any freaks a merchant in town may have played with the rest of the Vicar's fortune. Yet, by way of economy, and in order to obtain some future means of supporting his family, the Vicar deserts his Vicarage and takes a small cure of 15*l.* a year in a distant neighbourhood! The next time Dr. Goldsmith goes to the Church for his hero he had better, perhaps, make some preliminary inquiries at the Ecclesiastical Courts, whether Vicarages are vacated because merchants in London run away.

This worthy clergyman now despatches his eldest son to town, where his abilities may contribute to the family support and his own,—assuring us that the young gentleman is possessed of integrity and honour. What Dr. Primrose's, or rather Dr. Goldsmith's, notions of integrity and honour may be, we shall see by-and-by when we find them exemplified in the career of Mr. George Primrose.

The family set out for the cure. They put up at a village inn by the way. Here they are informed that a strange gentleman who had been two days in the house wants money and cannot pay his reckoning. 'Wants money?' cries the host, 'that is impossible! It is no later than yesterday that he paid three guineas to our bridle to spare an old broken soldier who was to be whipped through the town for dog-stealing.' Dr. Primrose is instantly fired at the idea of this notable action—begs to be introduced to a stranger of so much charity—sees a gentleman about thirty—and at once offers him his purse. So, according to this new morality, dog-stealing is a highly praiseworthy proceeding, and three guineas spent in buying off the dog-stealer are worthily and nobly bestowed. Heaven defend our dog-kennels from Dr. Primrose and his friends!

With their new companion, Mr. Burchell, the Vicar and his family set out the next day. Mr. Burchell points out a very magnificent house, and tells them it belongs to Mr. Thornhill, a young gentleman who enjoys a large fortune, though entirely dependent on the will of his uncle, Sir William, who, content with a little himself, permits his nephew to enjoy the rest. Herewith the Vicar bursts into ecstasies at the virtue, generosity, and singularities of Sir William Thornhill. Mr. Burchell takes up the theme

with a glowing description of the very exalted character of that gentleman, whose only fault appears to be too exquisite a susceptibility to the griefs of others. And then he lets himself out in the following very artistical manner :—

'He now, therefore, found that such friends as benefits had gathered round him were little estimable—he now found that a man's own heart must ever be given to gain that of another—I now found that—that—I forget what I was going to observe, &c.'

The dullest imaginable reader is at once apprised by this slip of the tongue that Mr. Burchell is himself the great sublime he draws in Sir William Thornhill, and henceforth all possibility of interest in so transparent a mystery (although that mystery forms the pretended plot to the rest of the book) is utterly at an end. Dr. Primrose, however, though he expressly tells us that his attention was so much taken up by Mr. Burchell's account that he did not see his youngest daughter thrown from her horse and in the midst of a rapid stream, is duller than the dullest of Dr. Goldsmith's readers. He remains innocently unsuspecting of the identity of Burchell and the baronet, which that twofold gentleman has just so emphatically announced. Mr. Burchell fishes the young lady out of the torrent, after the approved fashion of romance writers, and then, after dining at the next inn, walks off.

Here the old gentleman falls pretty much into his old habits, and spends his evenings sitting in an arbour while the girls sing to the guitar. One day, while thus employed, . . .

The fragment goes no further : and I rather wonder that my father should not have cared to continue it, for many details in the sequel of Goldsmith's delightful and immortal tale afford a fertile theme for amusing comment in the style of conventional criticism ; especially those incidents which would be impossible unless everybody in the neighbourhood of his own property were unable to recognise Sir William Thornhill simply because he chooses to call himself Mr. Burchell. A fundamental condition of the plot which is itself an impossibility.

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CHAPTER III.

PERSONAL AND FAMILY INCIDENTS. 1829-31. *Æt.* 26-8.BOOK
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My father's relations with his mother increased in cordiality, and quickly resumed their old affectionate footing.

She had some difficulties with the Rector of Knebworth, which had driven her, in 1829, into the preliminaries of litigation, when she fortunately consulted her son ; who, with considerable difficulty, succeeded in settling the dispute to her satisfaction. 'I do assure you, my dearest mother,' he wrote to her on the occasion, 'that nothing gives me such real happiness as to be of use to you, and on the most intimate terms of friendship and affection. Nor am I ever so vexed as when anything occurs that seems to prevent it.'

Not long afterwards, she again offered to renew the allowance which had been dropped since his marriage ; and again he declined it. 'In your conduct to my wife,' he said, 'during this last twelvemonth you have been both kind and considerate. For this I am not ungrateful. But the harsh opinion you have expressed about her remains unretracted. To accept what from any one who entertains that opinion would be a "charity" on her behalf, were a baseness and a vice which, please God, I shall never commit. On consideration you will be convinced of the propriety of my conduct in this. It proceeds from a just principle. My affection for you not only remains the same, but you may now be assured of the true and unalloyed nature of it.'

So entirely in everything else did they separate their feel-

ings and conduct to each other from the one ground of offence, in which neither could yield, that when my father was necessitated to borrow money, he asked his mother for the loan of it; and when he began to repay it she requested him to retain it as a gift. But that would have been an encroachment on the principle which led him to reject the allowance: and, without reverting to the old difficulty, he insisted, for a second sufficient reason, on returning the money.

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ÆT. 26-8

Edward Bulwer to his Mother.

London: February 11, 1830.

My dearest Mother,—I feel it difficult to express all I could wish, or indeed any part of it, respecting my debt to you, and your most kind liberality about it. But, my dearest and kindest mother, you must remember that what is lent is lent, and what is given is given.

I borrowed the money of you, and I must repay it. To let me do so by instalments is the most real kindness you can do me. Since, if you do not let me repay what you have lent me now, I should never again apply to you in any casualty or distress. With every most grateful and respectful feeling for your generous and delicate way of considering the matter, you must allow me, then, to believe that I can venture to depend upon your friendship at any subsequent period, by letting me pay at my own times, and in instalments, the whole amount of my present debt to you.

I assure you that what I have already paid in to your account I was able to afford with the greatest ease to myself. And, had it not been for what remains over of the rather heavy, but exceptional, expenses of first setting up house in town, I could have returned the whole without inconvenience.

Mrs. Leigh, Lord Byron's sister, called on us yesterday, and cried very much on seeing his miniature. She says it is the most like of any she ever saw. She is an altogether nice ladylike woman, though very ugly, and I think you would like her.

The unintermitting toil went on. It was often rendered more irksome by attacks of a severe form of nettle-rash, and by excruciating fits of the earache which distracted him at intervals throughout his life.

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To his literary labours he added, in 1831, the duties of an active member of Parliament. On the last day of April, at the general election in that year, he was returned for the borough of St. Ives.

In some respects he gained by an alteration he adopted in his mode of living at that time. He hired a small cottage at Pinner, where my mother and sister (the latter being then four years old) could have the benefit of country air, and live more cheaply than in Hertford Street. There he joined his family every Saturday, and remained with them till the following Tuesday. The arrangement was of great advantage to him in the exercise he got by riding to and fro; in the change from the loaded atmosphere of London; in the periodical escape from the turmoil of public life; and in freedom from the endless interruptions which interfered with his reading and writing in town.

But still his health suffered greatly from the strain upon a nervous system at all times delicate and irritable. In a letter written by him to my grandmother in 1830, just after his return with my mother from Newmarket, where they had been staying on a visit during the races, he says, 'We returned to town last night, and I have been in torment ever since with a fresh attack of this old nettle-rash.' Later in the same year he says, in reply to her enquiries, 'The pain in the ear was certainly intense while it lasted, but I am rid of it now, and about again.' And from these recurrent troubles he was not entirely relieved by the riding and the country air; for on July 1, 1831, he wrote from Hertford Street to his wife at Pinner, "Don't make yourself uneasy about me. I am better, and shall be with you at the end of the week as usual. If I have any relapse, I will send for you immediately. But I am in good hands. Davis is said to be very successful in cases related to my particular maladies. For which I am thankful; as I fear I shall suffer, should I live long enough, a good deal from similar complaints. They are hereditary in

my family. I have changed my medicine to-day, and already begin to feel the good effects of the change.'

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As time went on, the labour my father imposed upon himself was rendered more and more burdensome by the bodily pain in which it was performed. The activity of his mind and life required a strong serviceable body; but it was ill calculated either to produce or to preserve what it required. Different physicians prescribed to him different remedies for the relief of sufferings which, though constant and acute, had their origin rather in nervous derangement than in organic disease. But all the remedies were more or less ineffectual; and their repeated failure induced him to study medicine for himself, with an avidity which must be more fully noticed by-and-by as one of the peculiarities of his later life.

The letter I have quoted in relation to the subject of his health at this time also contains mention of a project he had then under his consideration, of becoming editor of the 'New Monthly Magazine.' This magazine was the property of Mr. Colburn, the publisher of his novels; and Campbell had lately resigned the editorship of it, which was being conducted *ad interim* by Mr. S. C. Hall.

The letter mentions that Mr. Hall 'has just been here with a copy of "Fraser's Magazine" for this month, which ought, he thinks, to be taken notice of. This he offered to do himself, immediately, in the "N. M." It is a paper called "The Autobiography of Edward Lytton Bulwer." I need not add that it is virulent and abusive to excess, and a tissue of impudent falsehoods from beginning to end. But to me it seemed quite beneath notice, and I told him so. I am now accustomed to these things. To notice is only to encourage them. The unjust will remain unjust, and the filthy filthy, still. Moreover, if I take the editorship of the "N. M.," I shall be able, I hope, by and by, to set a tone (upon literary subjects, at least, and about literary men) that may gradually wean the public taste from all relish for these disgusting

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personalities, which are a disgrace to literature, and all concerned in it. But of this no more just now. The matter is still in abeyance, and it may be well to let it lie by till I have spoken in the House. For, if I speak tolerably well, any small parliamentary success will be favourable to the influence of the magazine under my management. Poor Hall, however, was very kind about it; and I am resolved, in any case, not to take the "N. M." without making arrangements by which he shall be a gainer instead of a loser.'

He finally accepted the office, with Mr. S. C. Hall for sub-editor, and the first number he superintended came out on November 1, 1831. I have already mentioned the circumstances in which he was afterwards provoked by the pertinacity and increasing outrageousness of the personalities in 'Fraser's Magazine' to break the sensible resolution about them recorded in this letter.

My father was reported to have said that he accepted the editorship of the 'New Monthly Magazine' 'to show that a gentleman might occupy such a position.' This is repeated in the article on his works in the 'London and Westminster Review,' and the writer adds, 'If true, the motive was most pitiful, and the affectation mournful, in a man of greatly gifted and truly generous nature.' But it was certainly not true. He never said anything so silly, and so entirely opposed to his own exalted estimate of the dignity of literature.

His views are expressed in his letter to my mother. There is not a word about showing that a gentleman might occupy the position. But, occupying the position, he meant to discharge his office like a gentleman, and in such a manner as to show that an organ of periodical criticism may be conducted in the spirit of a gentleman without being thereby rendered insipid. 'During his editorship,' says Mr. Gilfillan, in a criticism upon 'Zanoni,' which afterwards appeared in 'Tait's Magazine,' 'the "New Monthly" approached our ideal of a perfect magazine; combining, as it did, impartiality, variety, and power.'

His object in undertaking the task, though mainly literary, was partly political. He said, 'Any small parliamentary success would be favourable to the influence of the magazine;' and he intended that the magazine should react on his parliamentary success.

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He did not owe his seat to the assistance of either of the two great parties in the State, for he was not a Whig, nor a Tory. Neither was he a thoroughgoing Radical. He was new to public life; and whatever celebrity he had acquired as a writer of popular novels was more likely to tell against him than for him. Without assistance from his previous reputation or from partisans, he had to make his way from the beginning: and as editor of a monthly journal in which he could give effective utterance to his views on public affairs, he had a better chance of displaying the fruits of his early studies, and proving his qualifications for serious statesmanship, than by trusting only to the opportunities of debate.

When my father became editor of the 'New Monthly Magazine,' my mother was expecting her second confinement. At the beginning of November she wrote to Mrs. Vanderstegen from Hertford Street, whither she had returned for the event, that she was ready to drown herself with vexation at the thought of it, and that she expected the child would be appropriately born on Guy Fawkes' day. The occurrence was got over, however, with less trouble than she expected. The child—a boy—was born on November 8, and on the 28th she wrote again to her friend:—'Many thanks for your kind congratulations, which I am sure you will repeat when I tell you that I was barely an hour and a half ill, notwithstanding all my croaking; and so well immediately afterwards that I could not believe I had a child till I saw it.' This child was christened Edward Robert.

CHAPTER IV.

ENTRY INTO PARLIAMENT. 1831. Æt. 28.

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THE year 1830, when 'Paul Clifford' was published, is memorable as a year of great political excitement.

During the first twelve years of my father's life England had been occupied in the defence of her own shores and colonies, and in assisting the rescue of Europe from the despotism of Imperial France. During the next fifteen years the attention of the nation was absorbed, first in the painful discovery that the blessings of peace are not unmingled benefits, and subsequently in a discussion of domestic questions, stimulated by the cessation of foreign hostilities.

The war, while it lasted, had acted upon the agricultural and manufacturing production of the country like a system of protection more effectual than any which could be maintained in time of peace by the most exclusive fiscal policy. When the war was over, all classes and interests connected with productive industry suffered severely from the sudden loss of this artificial protection.

The later circumstances of her long struggle against Napoleon had excluded England from commercial intercourse with America as well as Europe, and left her almost entirely dependent for her food supply upon the produce of her own soil. The rent of land rose immensely under these conditions, but the prosperity was not confined to the owners. The farmer's profits were proportionally increased by the high prices

of his produce : and the demand for soldiers and sailors raised the wages by reducing the competition of the agricultural labourers.

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The manufacturing interest had profited no less largely from these abnormal conditions. A vast amount of capital and industry was employed upon markets maintained by the war for the supply of the wants it created : and when the peace came, the manufacturing suffered even more than the agricultural population from the distress that came with it. The whole community (capitalists and labourers alike) had been living up to its income. Rents fell, wages fell. Labourers were thrown out of employment. Landlords and farmers were unable to meet their liabilities. Large manufacturing populations lost the markets which had hitherto supported them. Rich tradesmen were ruined. Debtors became insolvent, and creditors unable to realise their securities. Mercantile millionaires were reduced to bankruptcy.

This universal distress was aggravated by the Act passed in 1819 for the resumption of cash payments ; a measure which altered the whole debtor and creditor account of the country, greatly to the disadvantage of the debtors.

The suffering of the agricultural community had received some mitigation from the protective Corn-law passed four years before (1815) by a large majority of both parties in Parliament : but that law was deeply resented by the manufacturing and mercantile classes. To the Corn-law of 1815 may be traced, I think, what has been, ever since, the greatest political weakness of this country : a separation (in opinion at least) of its commercial from its agricultural interests, and the alienation of the representatives of property in manufacture from the representatives of property in land.

Altogether, the social condition of England for the first few years of the peace of 1815 was wretched in the present and full of anxiety for the future. But time, the physician of circumstance, gradually healed it. Capital and industry,

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flowing into new channels, began to form fresh accumulations; and their revived activity was destined to find, not many years later, a powerful stimulus, wholly unforeseen, in the rise of railway enterprise.

Meanwhile, these fifteen years of peace were marked by a great fecundity in literature, accompanied by a diffusion of popular knowledge which enlarged the circle of lettered influence. This opening of what had hitherto been almost a sealed book to the masses was assisted by the application of steam, not only to locomotion, but to printing; and attention was diverted from foreign to domestic questions by a succession of vigorous writers. The collective tendency of the intellectual ferment was to strengthen in the public mind a vague desire for Parliamentary reform, and a disposition to seek in constitutional changes a panacea for the cure of every popular discomfort.

The remedial efficacy of reform had been preached in his telling language by William Cobbett; and in 1826 the 'Two-penny Register' was the staple literature of the labouring classes. Deeper and more sober thinkers had arrived at the same conclusion. An enlargement of the representative system was indirectly suggested, as the first condition of more scientific legislation, by Jeremy Bentham, and the school of political economists who followed him under the guidance of Ricardo and James Mill. So far as it went, the influence of such imaginative writers as Godwin and my father was also conducive to the growth of ideas which strengthened the desire for Parliamentary reform, and encouraged popular faith in the benefits to be expected from it.

Nevertheless, the demand for a Reform Bill might have been repeated year after year by speculative publicists and interested demagogues, without eliciting any active support from the great body of the English people, had it not received a fortuitous impetus from the domestic affairs of a foreign country.

The cry of Reform raised in 1831 was not the expression

of a want *definitely* felt, nor the result of an enthusiasm previously shared by any considerable portion of the community. From the end of 1803 to the beginning of 1830 not a single petition in its favour had been presented to Parliament from any part of the country, although throughout that period there were abundant petitions upon other subjects. The Whigs, to whom the question furnished a theoretical exercise-ground for the training of their Parliamentary troops, had tacitly abandoned it, after a few sham fights, when they associated themselves with Mr. Canning. During the earlier years of the Duke of Wellington's Administration, the continued hope of office still acted as a practical check upon their theoretical creed; and Lord Althorp then declared in the House of Commons that the people of England had become perfectly indifferent to the question, and he had no intention of ever again bringing it forward.¹

The circumstances which in 1830 suddenly converted a relinquished watchword into a passionate demand are among the most striking illustrations of the influence of French events upon English politics. The 'great and stupendous question of Parliamentary reform,' as Pitt called it—the question which that all-powerful minister had declared to be 'nearest to his heart'—was indefinitely shelved by the French Revolution of 1793, and unexpectedly invested with irresistible activity by the French Revolution of 1830.

Not long before that event many things had contributed to put the country out of humour with the Wellington Administration, but none so much as the erroneous impressions of the Duke's foreign policy. Lord Aberdeen, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and his chief, were regarded, both at home and abroad, as the friends of the Holy Alliance; and, though Mr. Canning was dead, his bold and spirited foreign policy still lived in the approving recollections of his countrymen. What they supposed him to have suffered from the Duke's

¹ *Mirror of Parliament*, 1832.

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dislike of him, increased the resentment with which they regarded the presumed desertion by the Duke's Cabinet of Donna Maria di Gloria and the constitutional cause in Portugal.

In France, ever since his accession to the throne, Charles X. had been endeavouring to stultify the Charter of Louis XVIII. That charter represented the only liberties retained by a people who, for the sake of unlimited liberty, had soaked their country in blood, and irrevocably destroyed all its historical institutions. In the press, in the chambers, in the salons of the Chaussée d'Antin, in the clubs, and even in the shops of the Faubourg St.-Honoré, the Battle of the Charter was carried on by the French with all the wit and eloquence of a nation which was still one of the wittiest and most eloquent in the world.

This struggle attracted to the national party in France the sympathy of every Liberal in Europe. But by the people of our own country, whose constitutional liberties no sovereign had ever successfully opposed, it was watched with peculiar interest; not only because the cause in dispute was that of Parliamentary institutions menaced by arbitrary government, but because the English middle classes perceived that the fall of the Polignac Ministry would be the triumph of the middle classes in France, and thus, as it were, a vicarious victory gained by the interests of which they themselves were the representatives in England.

But when Prince Polignac was ambassador to the Court of St. James's, his relations with the Duke of Wellington's Government had been particularly cordial, and it was popularly supposed that he had been recommended by the Duke to Charles X. as the minister most capable of enforcing the policy of the 'Ordonnances.' English Liberals professed to fear that a *coup d'état* in France would be the signal for another in England; and from that moment the Liberal parties in both countries were as one. Their leaders corresponded with, and encouraged, each other.

The English Cabinet had discontented the Protestants, without satisfying the Catholics. It had alienated or disappointed many of its supporters without conciliating any of its opponents. Canningites, Radicals, Independent Liberals, Moderate Reformers, country squires whose old English love of liberty was revolted by the high-handed proceedings of the Ministère des Ordonnances, rich manufacturers whose new English love of power was stimulated by the gallant struggle of their order in France—all looked upon the cause of the opposition across the Channel as their own.

The Whigs saw, and seized with great ability, the opportunity to make themselves the mouthpiece of an all but universal sentiment. They nicknamed the Polignac Ministry 'The Wellington Administration in France;' and they skilfully concentrated all their powers of literary and social ridicule upon the 'reactionary' Cabinet which had removed Catholic disabilities, retrenched the public expenditure, improved the commercial legislation, reformed the criminal procedure, and created the metropolitan police, of the country.

In the autumn of this year the French monarchy fell with a crash which resounded throughout Europe; and the thousand discontents and sufferings, which had been till now inarticulate, simultaneously found passionate utterance in the cry for Parliamentary reform.

My father for the last two years, in contributions, chiefly anonymous, to the political press, had been actively urging the opinions he shared with the majority of his countrymen on reform and the foreign policy of Canning; and he was now bent on securing an opportunity of more openly supporting them in Parliament.

During the same year, his second brother, Henry, had come forward for the representation of Hertford in the Liberal interest. But finding, early in the course of his canvass, that he had no chance of being returned, and that by going to the poll he would only divide the Liberal vote, he withdrew from

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the contest, and immediately afterwards went abroad. During his absence, some offensive comments on these circumstances were made at an election dinner by Lord Glengall; and my father, on seeing the speech in the county newspaper, wrote and requested an explanation on behalf of his brother. A retraction was first promised, and then declined; upon which my uncle hastened back to England, and demanded from Lord Glengall satisfaction in the manner then customary amongst gentlemen. As, however, the imputation had been shown to be without any foundation, Lord Glengall was advised by the friend he consulted to withdraw it as publicly as it had been made.

Though this passing skirmish had no other result, it was indirectly prejudicial to the efforts my father was making to enter Parliament.

My grandmother was not a female politician. In the electoral contests of her county she did not concern herself. On this question, however, her sentiments were strong, and differed from those of her sons. This in itself was no great matter. But Henry's unsuccessful canvass of Hertford (a canvass begun without previous reference to her wishes) brought to her notice in her own immediate neighbourhood his unreserved advocacy of principles which startled and alarmed her. Nor was this all. The reports to which his abandonment of his canvass had given rise were extremely disagreeable to her, and she had been greatly annoyed by the dispute with Lord Glengall. All these circumstances increased the disinclination she had previously felt to assist the electioneering efforts of my father.

The Reform agitation was increasing daily; and he had received overtures from Penryn, which, however, he declined; not seeing much prospect of success in that direction. Shortly afterwards he was warmly pressed to stand for Southwark. The only person he consulted was Dr. Bowring, who urged him to open his canvass at once, and promised him his hearty support with the electors. On July 11 he wrote to Godwin:—

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My dear Mr. Godwin,—You might reasonably believe me lost, so long is it since I had the pleasure of seeing you, had I not the excuse of those besetting avocations among which the still small voice of academic inquiry is little likely to be heard. In pursuance of the 'selfish system,' as it is commonly interpreted, I have been advocating my cause among some worthy gentlemen who have the power of choosing a member of the 'National Council;' and ever since, and indeed some time before, the death of the late King, I have been so engaged in this matter as to prevent my calling on you. I go into the country, and start in the course of the week for the place I am so anxious to represent. I trust I have your good wishes on this point, as on all others interesting to you; you are sure of mine. You will see me on my return. Believe me, my dear Sir,

Very faithfully yours,

Sunday, July 11, 1830.

E. L. BULWER.

Godwin replied :—

July 14, 1830.

My dear Sir,—I need not tell you that I am much gratified that, when you have the concerns of the 'nation' on your hands, you can think of so humble an individual as myself. I write these lines at random, not knowing when they will reach you, but taking for granted you will receive them some time before the meeting of the next Parliament.

You say that you 'trust you have my good wishes in your present pursuit.' You have my good wishes, certainly, in everything that can conduce to your real welfare; but whether that is the true description of the thing you now announce is somewhat doubtful.

That, if you succeed, it will form a new bar against our familiar intercourse, I am willing to put out of the question. I told you, in our long conference, that I wished I had had the gratification of knowing you five years sooner. I might then have been of use to you—or, it may be, that what I should have intended for benefit, might have turned out for injury. But now your projects are formed you know what you elect, and what you desire, without a monitor, and I have only the precarious hold of you which depends on whether I can contribute to your pleasure.

But, waiving this, to go into Parliament is a serious thing. It must materially affect the colour of all your future life. If you succeed, you can never, in the same sense, be your own man again, and I have scarcely any materials to judge whether it will prove a

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good or an ill thing. I scarcely know anything about your political creed ; I know less of what it is, being in Parliament, that you propose to effect. He that does nothing there does worse than nothing. It is like marrying a wife, or going into the Church, or being called to the Bar ; it is for life. He that takes any one of these steps upon a mere cold calculation of profit and loss is so far degraded.

Excuse this presumption. If I am disposed to play the part of Minerva under the figure of Mentor, I know you are not disposed to enact the character of Telemachus. Your design is to launch your bark yourself, and to guide it by your own discretion. I have therefore only to wish you smooth seas, favouring gales, and a prosperous voyage. Hoping, therefore, that we shall meet again hereafter, I remain, dear Sir, very faithfully yours,

W. GODWIN.

P.S.—I think in what I have written above I have expressed myself too coldly. I know that you have abilities of no ordinary magnitude. You have that enthusiasm without which great things can never be achieved. I ought therefore to anticipate that if you succeed in the first step the final result will be glorious.

Southwark was one of the many boroughs for which Lord John Russell had been put in nomination as a popular tribute to his services in the cause of Reform. It was understood that he would not represent the borough if elected. My father's letters, however, mention as his reason for retiring from the contest that, as a name so eminent had not yet been withdrawn, he was convinced that his canvass would be hopeless, as well as costly. He therefore closed it with the issue of an address, which elicited from Godwin the following characteristic letter.

William Godwin to Edward Bulwer.

September 10, 1830.

My dear Sir,—I remember a recorded speech of Lord Chatham, at the appointment of the Rockingham Administration in 1765, in which he says, 'Confidence is a plant of slow growth in aged bosoms.' Allow me to apply that maxim to myself.

I have known you but a short time. I knew you as the author

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of 'Pelham,' a man of eminent talents, and devoted, as it seemed to me, to the habits of high life. I heard from your lips occasionally high sentiments of philosophy and philanthropy. I was to determine as I could which of these two features formed the basis of your character.

I now avow myself your convert. Your advertisement in this morning's paper is a pledge for your future character ; you have passed the Rubicon ; you must go forward, or you must go back for ever disgraced. I know your abilities ; and I therefore augur a career of rectitude and honour.

With respect to the acquaintance I shall have with you, I can dispense with that. If in these portentous times you engage yourself with your powers of mind for the real interests of mankind, that is everything. I am but the dust of the balance.

And yet—shall I own ?—the slowness you manifested in cultivating my acquaintance was one of the circumstances that weighed with me to your disadvantage. But I am nothing. Run the race you chalk out for yourself in this paper of yours, and I am more than satisfied.

Allow me, however, to add here something in allusion to our last conversation. It must be of the highest importance to an eminent character which side he embraces in the great question of self-love and benevolence. I tolerate, and talk and think with much good humour towards, the man who embraces the wrong side here, as I tolerate a Calvinist or a Jew ; but in the public cause he labours with a millstone about his neck—no, not exactly that ; but he is like a swimmer who has the use only of his left hand. Inexpressibly must he be disadvantaged in the career of virtue who adheres to a creed which tells him, if there be meaning in words, that there is no such thing as virtue.

I am desirous to have the advantage of your judgment and advice upon a particular point, but that can wait.

To this letter my father replied from Bognor :—

Edward Buhner to William Godwin.

Bognor, Sussex : September 17, 1830.

My dear Sir,—I am greatly obliged and pleased by your letter, and I am unexpectedly rejoiced that my address to the people of Southwark should produce one effect— an increase of your good

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opinion. You surprise and grieve me, however, by thinking so ill of my judgment as to imagine me slow in seeking your acquaintance. The fact is that you a little misconceive my character. I am in ordinary life very reserved, and so domiciliated a person, that to court anyone's good opinion as I have done yours is an event in my usual quietude of habit.

With respect to the utilitarian, not 'self-love,' system of morals, all I can say is, that I am convinced that, if I commit a blunder, it is in words not things. I understand by the system that benevolence may be made a passion; that it is the rule and square of all morality; that virtue loses not one atom of its value, or one charm from its loveliness; if I err, I repeat it is in words only. But my doctrine is not very bigotedly embraced, and your essay has in two points let in a little scepticism through a rent in my devotion.

My advice, or rather opinion, such as it may be, is always most heartily at your service, and you will flatter and gratify me by any desire for it.

I am living here very quietly; and what doing, think you? Writing poetry. After that, it may be superfluous to tell you that Bognor is much resorted to by insane people.

Ever and most truly yours,

E. LYTTON BULWER.

He at the same time wrote to Dr. Bowring:—

Bognor: September 17, 1830.

Dear Bowring,—You perceive by the 'Times' that I have for the present withdrawn from Southwark. The fact is that the appearance of any man not a public character, possessing Liberal opinions, only seems to me to split and distract the independent interest. A man of great political reputation might concentrate and engross it; but I have the first steps to climb. I am very glad, however, that I examined the field, for it has not only led to a foundation which may be worth building on hereafter, but has given me those recollections so peculiarly pleasurable, namely, recollections of personal kindness. Among these I shall carefully hoard the remembrance of your trouble and good-nature on my behalf.

Believe me, very truly yours,

E. L. BULWER.

Shortly afterwards, my father and mother went into Norfolk, on a visit to my eldest uncle, William Bulwer, at Heydon.

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In the meanwhile, revolution in France had been followed by revolution in Belgium; and my uncle Henry had been entrusted by Lord Aberdeen with a secret mission to that country for the purpose of watching (and confidentially reporting, from a point of view practically inaccessible to our official representatives at Brussels) the progress and prospects of the Belgian revolution.

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When the Provisional Government was formed by the leaders of the successful national movement in Belgium, it despatched Monsieur Van de Weyer to this country with instructions to solicit English intervention on its behalf; and in the month of November 1830 he came to England, bringing with him a letter of introduction from my uncle to my father, who was then at Heydon. A letter written by him from thence to Dr. Bowring, in explanation of his inability to meet Monsieur Van de Weyer in town, bears witness to the restless condition of the country.

In the previous year, 1829, serious disturbances had broken out in the manufacturing districts. At Macclesfield, Huddersfield, Coventry, Nuneaton, Bedworth, Barnsley, and many other important seats of industry, strikes had occurred on a then unprecedented scale, and riots which compelled the authorities to call out the troops for the suppression of what was described as 'a reign of terror.' In these commotions the houses of unpopular manufacturers had been attacked, pillaged, and fired by the mob. In the present year, 1830, the disturbance of the labouring population spread to the agricultural counties.

There had been no fall in wages, no diminution in the demand for labour, no rise in the rate of interest on money, to account for disorders, which were officially ascribed to a political, and probably foreign, conspiracy.¹ The discontent was

¹ Mr. Roebuck, in his history of the Whig Administration of 1830, also adopts this explanation, and observes — 'Looking back to those times, our

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more probably the product of an excitement that generated vague wild hopes of changes which would for ever 'scatter plenty o'er a smiling land.'

Mr. Bulwer to Dr. Bowring.

Heydon Hall, Aylsham, Norfolk : November 12, 1830.

My dear Bowring,—I have received a letter from my brother at Brussels, mentioning a Monsieur Van de Weyer,¹ to whom he had given a letter introducing him to me. Unfortunately I am at some considerable distance from London, and not likely for some weeks to visit 'the great City.' But as my brother mentions you in his letter, and says that you will give me some explanation of M. Van de Weyer's business, I trouble you with a line, merely to say, that if anything occurs to you in which, at this distance from town, I can be useful, I shall be very happy, and you can convey to M. Van de Weyer my regret at being from home.

I suppose you are enjoying yourself in the surrounding hubbub of London, 'riding on the whirlwind, and directing the storm.' For me, at this distance from the roar of events, I am at a loss to know whether our thanks for considerable excitement are due to patriots or to pickpockets : at all events, it were well if they would drop the suspicious cry of 'No police,' and the disgraceful habit of throwing stones at old gentlemen on horseback.

As for the tricolour, 'tis a pity that sentiments really free cannot be acquired as easily as the colour of a ribbon may be assumed. The march of conflagration has extended hitherwards. Last night we were treated with the sight of a burning haystack. We understand that this new periodical is to be carried on every other night with considerable spirit. Adieu, my dear Bowring.

Yours, with great truth,

E. L. BULWER.

wonder is indeed excited by finding party spirit attributing these proceedings of an ignorant peasantry to their discontent at the continuance of the Tory Administration in office, and the conduct of Parliament respecting the Civil List. These poor creatures had probably never heard the words "Civil List," and certainly never understood their meaning if they did hear them.—Roe-buck's *History of the Whig Administration of 1830*, p. 336.

¹ My father says of him : 'Van de Weyer had precisely those qualities which ensure success and rarely achieve fame.'

These agricultural disturbances were not allayed by the folly of some of the local magistrates, who encouraged the labourers to believe that the general rate of wages might be raised in accordance with their demands. The agitation continued; and a more detailed description of the form it assumed in Norfolk is given by my mother in the following letter, written also from Heydon, a month later, to Mrs. Vanderstegen:—

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Mrs. Bulwer to Mrs. Vanderstegen.

Heydon: December 5, 1830.

I am truly grieved to hear such bad accounts of Berkshire, but I hope that you and yours individually have not suffered any loss or fright, and that the bad reports are altogether much exaggerated.

This part of the country, like every other, has been in a terrible state of disturbance. Meetings of five or six hundred desperadoes in every village. About ten days ago there was a meeting of this sort at a place called Reephram, which all the noblemen and gentlemen in the county went to try and put down, by telling the people that their wrongs should be redressed, their wages raised, and employment given to them. Upon which the mob shouted, 'It is very well to try and talk us over, but we will have blood for our suppers!' They then began pelting the magistrates and gentlemen with large stones. Edward lost his hat, and came home with his head tied up in a handkerchief, which gave rise to a report that his brother was much hurt; but this, like most other reports, was totally false.

The other day, as we were returning from Lord Orford's, on our way to Sir Jacob Astley's, we heard that Melton (his place) was burnt to the ground, but on our arrival we found this was false. During the week he was there everything was tolerably quiet, but since then there has been a terrible riot, and Sir Jacob was obliged to send for a troop of cavalry from Norwich, who have been there ever since.

If London were but in half the disturbed state that every county in England is, the country might be fairly pronounced in a state of actual revolution. The burnings are dreadful, but every house in this part of the world is in a state of defence, and all the farmers, shopkeepers, servants, &c. &c., sworn in special constables.

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All the popular fury is now directed against the clergy on account of the highness of the tithes, which they obstinately persevere in not lowering, although the landlords have lowered their rents, and the farmers have raised their wages.

Yours, &c.,

R. LYTTON BULWER.

Thus, amidst general discontent and disturbance, the year 1830 came to an end, without bringing to my father any fulfilment of his increasing wish for a seat in Parliament.

But in the following year there was a general election which will long be memorable in the history of this country. That election was preceded by a scene in both Houses of Parliament so dramatic that, even at this distance of time from the fears and hopes which experience has proved to be exaggerated, it is impossible to read the bald record in the unemotional pages of 'Hansard' without catching some of the excitement exhibited by those who took part in it.

All over the country this excitement was now intense. Reform unions and associations were everywhere organised. The Liberal press surpassed itself in the language of personal menace, detraction, and vituperation. The noblest characters, the most exemplary lives, the finest intellects, and the greatest public services, failed to shelter from its aspersions those who had the courage to express opinions adverse to the popular demand.

The mob became the executor of the denunciations pronounced by the press. In London it was contented with smashing the windows of the Duke of Wellington, Mr. Baring, and other anti-Reformers. But in Ireland the Reformers, in their enthusiasm for that kind of liberty, always popular, which consists of savage assaults upon the characters, properties, and lives of political opponents, were not slow to act upon the advice given them by the 'Times,' 'to plaster the enemies of the people with mud, and duck them in horse-ponds.' In England some persons were killed, and several

severely wounded, in the attempt to vote for anti-Reform candidates. In Scotland a murderous assault was made upon the Lord Provost of Edinburgh, and the dying Sir Walter Scott was hooted by the Liberal ruffians of Jedburgh.'

Every man and woman, nay every boy and girl, in England, who wanted something, confidently expected to get it from the Reform Bill. 'All young ladies,' said Sydney Smith, 'expect that, as soon as this bill is carried, they will be instantly married; schoolboys believe that gerunds and supines will be abolished, and that currant tarts must ultimately come down in price; the corporal and sergeant are sure of double pay; bad poets expect a demand for their epics; and fools will be disappointed, as they always are.'

An amusing instance of the intoxicating effects of this popular credulity is described in the following letter:—

Mrs. Bulwer to Miss Greene.

Broadstairs: June 26, 1831.

The infatuation of the common people all over the country about this Reform Bill is astonishing. They seem to look on it as a sort of patent steam-engine miracle-worker. The other evening, a ragged fellow who was crying out the King's speech, announced it with the following appendages: 'Good news for the poor! Great and glorious speech of His Most Gracious Majesty William the Fourth! The Reform Bill will pass. Then you'll have your beef and mutton for a penny a pound. And then you'll all be as fine as peacocks for a mere trifle. To say nothing of ale at a penny a quart. In which you may drink His Majesty's health, and His Majesty's Ministers' health, and the glorious Reform Bill's health, all without a ruining of yourselves!'

I opened the window the better to hear this piece of oratory, when my beloved little Blenheim set up a furious barking at the man, and I could not make him be quiet. 'Lor' bless his sweet pretty face,' said the street Cicero, 'he won't do no hurt. He be like them there Tories as makes a big blusterin' row, thinking to

' 'I care for you,' he said, 'no more than for the hissing of geese.'—*Alison, Hist. vol. iv. chap. xxiii.*

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frighten the People. 'Cause why? 'Cause they be mortal afeared of the People themselves. But Lor' love ye, when we gets this here Reform Bill through the Hupper Ouse, maybe we'll have a reform among the dogs likewise, and they'll *all* be like that pretty red and white black-eyed cretur.'

All the common people are now persuaded that the Reform Bill will feed and clothe them for nothing. Poor geese!

In this general election Scotland returned a majority of two-thirds against the Bill. In Ireland the hostility to the existing constitution had become so universal, that the Bill, which promised the destruction of it, received from that part of the United Kingdom the passionate support of Protestants and Catholics combined. A significant historical comment on the Catholic Relief Bill. Throughout England the constituencies, rural as well as urban, were almost unanimously in favour of the Bill, and of eighty-two members elected by the counties only six were anti-Reformers.

My father had now another opportunity of finding his way into Parliament. He had received from St. Albans promises of support which rendered his election for that borough both certain and inexpensive. But St. Albans was in Hertfordshire, not far distant from Knebworth; and he felt very doubtful whether it would not be disagreeable to his mother to see another of her sons soliciting as a Reform candidate the suffrages of a borough so near her own abode. He therefore wrote to her on March 8, 1831:—

'Will you allow me now, though I do it with great reluctance, to call your attention to a matter of considerable importance to me? It is this. I am naturally and reasonably anxious to enter Parliament. I have seen men of my own standing at Cambridge—men not more distinguished than myself—put forward by their relations and friends, and by them returned to Parliament. No such pains having been exerted on my behalf, I have, alone and unaided, tried every place where there was any chance of success. I have never been im-

prudent, even in my experiments. Finding the chances against me at Penryn, I did not stand. Finding that the expenses would be heavy at Southwark, I declined that place also. I may so far lay claim to common sense and discretion even in pursuing what I have most at heart. Not having allowed myself to be misled by misrepresentation or my own rashness, if I stand for any place it will only be with the fullest and fairest probability of success at a moderate expense.

‘Now I grieve to say—lest you should dislike it—that the only place deserving this character is St. Albans. This is the only town in which I could at once obtain a triumphant support, and in which, from the respectability of my supporters, I could be sure about my expenses. If I do not accept this offer, there is no other place where I can come in, and consequently all hope of entering Parliament must be abandoned.

‘If you object, owing to the vicinity to Knebworth, I will engage that you shall have no trouble from that cause, and I think you may trust, from my discretion, that the harassment you had about Hertford will not be repeated in my case. Still, if on this or any other ground relating solely to yourself, you do object, I will at once give up the idea.’

She did object, but partly on grounds relating more to him than to herself. ‘These,’ he said in reply, ‘would not hold in my case. I had ascertained all that, before I wrote to you. But it is enough that the measure is unpleasant to your feelings. I relinquish it at once, and with the greatest cheerfulness. Any vexation I may have felt for a moment in relinquishing it is more than a thousand times compensated to me by the pleasure I feel in acting according to your wishes. My rash is really better. The worst of it is that the disorder is so capricious. A little more exercise, or a little more harassment, than usual makes it break out with redoubled violence. There is no danger in such a complaint,

not the least cause for alarm or anxiety. Only, perpetual pain and fever is no trifle if it becomes incurable.'

The prospect resigned at St. Albans was soon renewed elsewhere, and at the end of April he says in a letter to his mother: 'I write in *very great* haste, to beg a *very great* favour. I am just about to leave town for St. Ives. My election is certain. Will you in this case help me out with the expenses by lending me any sum you conveniently can, from 500*l.* to 1,000*l.*? I will fully and faithfully repay it in less than a year.'

The loan was at once accorded, but not without an expression of his mother's misgivings about his style of living and the increased expenditure he seemed to be courting by this eagerness to get into Parliament. To this he replied: 'Your very kind loan is fortunately not required. When I wrote I was worried by the shortness of the time. But I am none the less cordially obliged to you, and I perfectly understand your scruples. I set off now in two or three hours by the mail. You are mistaken, my dearest mother, in thinking that I have overlived my income. That I have paid for a house, that I have furnished it, and that I have also paid for a year's seat in Parliament, without being in debt, except to yourself, for what you have so kindly lent me, are clear proofs, which may satisfy you that I have not outlived my income. On the contrary, I have saved from my income and invested the savings. Of course in the word income I include what I annually receive from my books, which are to me what rental is to others. Your kindness has now enabled me to make writing no longer the heavy toil it has been, and I shall do what, in your generosity, you meant me to do—slacken work, and attend more to my health. God bless you, dearest mother! P.S.—With regard to Mr. —, I see no reason, so far as regards my brother or myself, why you should not express any sentiments you entertain. My return is now beyond the reach of injury, and Henry's will be so

before such a circumstance could travel to Coventry. But I see great reason why, for your own sake, you should not actively oppose the reform. The people are so unanimous and so violent on the measure, right or wrong, that I do not hesitate to say that persons who oppose it will be marked out in case of any disturbance. I might give many other reasons; but I think this sufficient for anyone in your position, who regards life and property in very critical times; and I would not, were I you, allow Mr. —, or anyone else, to make the smallest use of your name.'

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IV.

Æt. 28

On May 1, 1831, my mother wrote to Mrs. Vanderstegen :—
'Mr. Bulwer is gone to St. Ives, for which place he stands. They say he is sure of coming in; but I never believe anything to be sure about an election till it is over. His brother Henry is also getting on well at Coventry.' And on the following day she reopened her letter to add to it this post-script: 'Monday, May 2.—I have just got Mr. Bulwer's first frank. He is returned for St. Ives.'

On April 30, my father had already written to his mother :—

My dearest Mother,—I write to you forthwith. I am returned to Parliament this day and hour. Post waits. This is my first frank.

Yours most affectionately,

E. B. L.

CHAPTER V.

BENJAMIN DISRAELI. 1829-31. Æt. 26-8.

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MY father's parliamentary career, and the details of his editorship of the 'New Monthly Magazine,' as well as the greater number of his more intimate personal acquaintances in political and literary society, belong to a part of his life which lies beyond the limits of the present volumes. Of the memorable events, however, which had their commencement in the period I am now dealing with, one still remains to be told—his friendship with the illustrious statesman whose name stands at the head of this chapter.

The spring of 1829 is the earliest date to which I can trace an acquaintance that must have grown out of a previous exchange of letters upon literary subjects with the elder Disraeli; whose works had greatly charmed my father when at college.

What may have been the origin of his correspondence with Isaac Disraeli I cannot say. It was probably initiated by himself, under the influence of those feelings which so often impel enthusiastic young readers to address living writers whose books have made a strong impression on their minds. I have no record of my father's share in this correspondence. But from the replies to his letters I gather that among the earliest subjects of it were the character of Cardinal Mazarin and the works of Thomas Fuller.

Some years later, Mr. Disraeli's eyesight, long overtaxed, failed him prematurely; and partial blindness prevented his

completing an extensive survey of English literature, for which all his previous works and studies had been a long preparation.

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Of this broken project 'The Amenities of Literature' was a fragment: and, in sending to my father an early copy of that work, he wrote—'I thank you for your friendly sympathy. I remain in darkness, and I regret to say that my philosophy does not equal my misfortune. These volumes are broken bits from the beginnings of my long projected literary history. I grieve to have fallen from my horse in the ardour of the pursuit.'

In one of his manuscript notes my father has jotted down what he conceived to be the characteristic merits in the writings of the elder Disraeli. 'He was a fine type of the habitual student. His reading was very extensive in his own departments; and he made it popular by a certain charm of style which (to my taste) has much classical sweetness, and often a pleasantry that amounts to humour. I visited him often at Bradenham, when his son and I were young men.'

Of Isaac Disraeli's opinion of my father's powers at this period of his youthful authorship there is a slight indication in what he wrote of 'Paul Clifford' shortly after it appeared. 'You have stamped with a new character the novel and the romance, by opening fresh and untasted springs; and I am confident that, with your fertility of invention, you may vary, without exhausting, the nature and the art you command.'

The first lines addressed by my father to the younger Disraeli were a formal acknowledgment of the receipt of some books. This acknowledgment was answered by a grateful note, and a gift of Turkish tobacco: the only pipe-tobacco my father ever smoked. The note and the gift called forth a second letter to the donor.

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Edward Bulwer to Benjamin Disraeli.

Brookes's Club: February 19, 1829.

Sir,—I beg you to accept my best thanks for your very obliging note, and for the delicate and flattering attention you have been pleased to pay me in the gift which accompanied it.

Things of that sort have a great value to the author: and the value is—his power of burning them.

I am very sorry that any cause, much more one arising from ill health, should diminish the probability of my thanking you personally, and of expressing, in the same way, my great admiration of the only works attributed to you which I have ever read, viz., 'Vivian Grey' and 'Captain Popanilla.'

As these cannot come under the head of 'juvenile indiscretions,' I know not to what other works you allude. But I shall be happy in any way to repay your attention to me.

Allow me to make you many apologies for my seeming delay in replying to your letter. The fact is that I have only just received it, having only just come to town.

As one of the public, let me hope that your health, or your leisure, will very soon allow you to fulfil the brilliant, and almost unrivalled promise of the works I have ventured to consider yours. And believe me,

Sir, with respect, obediently yours,

E. LYTTON BULWER.

Four months later, my father wrote again from Woodcot.

¹ Mr. Disraeli was a stern judge of his early writings, and already, at the date of my father's letter, he *did* reckon *Vivian Grey* among his 'juvenile indiscretions,' and would not allow it to be reprinted. When he included it among his works in 1853, because others persisted in printing what he desired to suppress, he prefixed to it an 'advertisement,' in which he says, with a critical felicity enhanced by the charm that he himself is the subject of it, 'Books written by boys, which pretend to give a picture of manners and to deal in knowledge of human nature, must necessarily be founded on affectation. They can be, at the best, but the results of imagination, acting upon knowledge not acquired by experience. Of such circumstances exaggeration is a necessary consequence, and false taste accompanies exaggeration. Nor is it necessary to remark that a total want of art must be observed in their pages; for that is a failing incident to all first efforts. Such productions should be exempt from criticism, and should be looked upon as a kind of literary *lusus*.'

*The Same to the Same.*CHAP.
V.

Woodcot: July 26, 1829.

Æt. 26-8

Dear Sir,—I cannot express to you how much I was shocked by the melancholy account you give me of your health.

I have heard a high character of Dr. Vance's medical skill. Did you ever consult him? I earnestly trust that you may find speedy and effectual benefit from whomsoever you employ; and should you return to Buckinghamshire in the course of next month, I shall be extremely glad to welcome you here.

On the 24th of August my lease of Woodcot expires. I mention this lest *you* should have the trouble of calling in vain, and *I* the mortification of missing you.

My address in town is 86 Hertford Street, and if I do not see you at Woodcot I shall hope to receive you there.

It is one consolatory property of genius to find among strangers that interest which worth finds among friends: and with sincere anxiety for your health, and best (and I will add, most sanguine) wishes for its restoration,

Believe me, dear Sir, faithfully yours,

E. LYTTON BULWER.

'The Young Duke' was written in the following year, 1830: and the fact that it was submitted in manuscript to my father for his opinion and advice, is a proof of the cordial relations then established between the two writers of fiction. Those relations were founded in great part on the genuine interest they took in each other's work and success.

Mr. Disraeli's opinion of my father's friendship is shown in his selection of his brother-novelist for his critic. My father's trust is shown in the candour of his criticism.

The Same to the Same.

36 Hertford Street, Thursday night, April 10, 1830.

My dear Disraeli,—I have read through your manuscript with great attention, and it has afforded me a very uncommon gratification.

I could fill my letter with praises of its wit, the terseness and

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philosophy of its style, and the remarkable felicity with which you make the coldest insipidities of real life entertaining and racy. One would think you had been learning at Laputa how to extract sunbeams from cucumbers.

In the *genius* of your work I see not a flaw—nothing to point out to your attention. In the *judgment* of it I think you are less invariably happy.

You do not seem to me to do justice to your own powers when you are so indulgent to flippancies. I do think you should look with a harsh, and even hypercritical, eye upon all those antithetical neatnesses of style which make the great feature of your composition.

Whenever they attain a witticism or a new truth (which is nine times out of ten) don't alter a syllable. But whenever you see that form of words which aims at a point and does not acquire it, be remorseless.

I would have you write a book, not only to succeed, but to have that form of success which will hereafter be agreeable to yourself.

Decriers and enemies you must have. But don't give them an unnecessary handle, and don't unnecessarily increase their number.

The flippancies I allude to are an ornate and showy effeminacy, which I think you should lop off on the same principle as Lord Ellenborough should cut off his hair. In a mere fashionable novel aiming at no higher merit, and to a mere dandy aiming at nothing more solid, the flippancies and the hair might be left: and left gracefully. But I do not think the one suits a man who is capable of great things, nor the other a man who occupies great places.

At all events, if you do not think twice, and act alike upon this point, I fear you are likely to be attacked and vituperated to a degree which fame can scarcely recompense; and which, hereafter, may cause you serious inconvenience.

Recollect that you have written a book ('Vivian Grey') of wonderful promise, but which got you enemies. You have; therefore, to meet, in *this* book, a very severe ordeal, both of expectation and malice. You have attained in the book more than the excellences of 'Vivian Grey:' but I do not think you have enough avoided the faults.

If you feel, however, that what I have said does not hold good in the second and third volumes, never regard my frank impertinence

as worth attention. For the first volume, after all, signifies very little as compared with the end of the book.

But, should you suspect that I am the least right in this volume—and that this volume is a fair specimen of the others—put yourself, some morning, in a bad humour with Antithesis and Voltaire, and go carefully, pen in hand, over the manuscript.

I speak to you thus candidly,—first, because, unlike most advisers, I shall not think one whit the worse of you if you don't follow my advice—and, secondly, because (judging of you by myself) I think you will like even censure so long as it is *available*.

After all, your book is certain to take. And your criticisms exercised on yourself will not, perhaps, make it take *more*. They will only give it a right to take on higher and more permanent ground.

You have written a very fine, and a very original, thing. And all but a very sincere well-wisher would be perfectly satisfied with the display,

As a *trifle*—but not to be overlooked—I would give matured attention to the Duke's dress. I confess I think the blonde edgings too bold.

These are things (strange as it may seem) that make enemies, and scarcely make friends.

May Dacre is beautiful.

The egotisms I do not object to. They are always charming, and often exceedingly touching. Moreover, the interest of the story never flags; and you have agreeably belied my prediction of extravagance.

Pray excuse all this candour, and hold it for what it really is—a sign of my cordial and sincere interest in your success.

Wishing you also an entire and speedy restoration to health,

Believe me, my dear Disraeli, very truly yours,

E. LYTTON BULWER.

These suggestions, though they affected only the occasional excess of antithesis in which the contrasted ideas were too forced or too flippant, appear to have greatly discouraged the author of 'The Young Duke;' and, in his reply, he talked of casting aside his work altogether.

Hence the next letter.

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The Same to the Same.

36 Hertford Street : April 14, 1830.

My dear Disraeli,—You quite misconceive me, if you suppose for a moment that I wish you even to *dream* of suppressing your new book.

All I ask of you is to consider whether you will correct it.

I assure you I think it a very fine and brilliant book. But it has stuff in it worthy of severe polish ; and occasional faults which render such polish more of use than it would be to a work of colder and—I do not say a more solid, but—a duller genius.

The faults I mean are only in such phrases as, ‘ He looked like a Messiah, and took wine,’ ‘ He looked up, not to the sky, but the ceiling,’ &c.

After all, I am more fastidious than others in these points, because I have the experience, and therefore the *warning*, of my own sins.

I should be particularly gratified by a sight of the other volumes, which are of more importance to success than the first. I did not like to ask you to let me see them, after my frankness. But, if you are not discouraged by it, pray give me a pleasure—and an honour—which I shall value very highly indeed.

I go out of town to-morrow for two weeks, but shall certainly be back for the first.

Many thanks for your kindness and trouble about Parliament. I have the satisfaction of telling you that I yesterday brought to a conclusion an affair of that sort, though it is not to be consummated till next session.

You may be sure of having, for the sake of your idle friends, one of the earliest copies of ‘ Paul Clifford,’ with a copy of ‘ Falkland.’

Believe me, my dear Disraeli,

With great regard and interest,

Yours sincerely,

E. LYTTON BULWER.

And, in a line of slightly later date, he adds, ‘ Believe me, I was particularly flattered by your wish for a copy of “ Paul Clifford.” I hope I shall meet you to-morrow at my brother’s ;

and he will assure you of the fidelity with which I delivered your message.'

CHAP.
V.

ÆT. 26-8

About this time, and in consequence of his ill-health, Mr. Disraeli again went abroad. He passed through Spain and Greece, on his way to the East; and there, for several months, he lingered among those scenes which inspired the 'Wondrous Tale of Alroy.'

That remarkable production, bearing, both in its ideas and its details, the stamp of an uncommon genius, has always seemed to me much underrated. Perhaps it is that, in all productions inspired by the Spirit of the East, the stamp of genius is like the seal of Solomon, which reveals nothing to those who have never felt the wizardry of Oriental spells: and whilst, in its conception, the 'Tale of Alroy' is uncongenial to the taste of a middle-class insular public such as ours, its execution transgresses the sobriety of imagination and expression desiderated by our literary connoisseurs.

The manner, however, in which the traveller brought his mind to bear upon what he saw and heard is one of the marvels of his career.

No other English statesman or author has shown, in his speeches or his works, so clear a conception of the permanent conditions of Eastern life and thought, or so profound a penetration into the moral recesses of Eastern character.

The portrait of the young Emir in 'Tancred' is a monument of familiar knowledge and sagacious insight: yet the time passed by its author in the East seems wholly insufficient to explain his wonderful understanding of populations which have not two ideas in common with our own.

Danton said that a man cannot carry his country away with him on the sole of his foot. But most Englishmen carry with them, in the balls of their eyes and the convolutions of their brain, so much of their own island that, after years of external contact with Orientals, they remain unconscious that

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the formulas of Western thought and the habits of Western feeling are quite inapplicable to the Eastern world.

From Constantinople Mr. Disraeli wrote to my father, at the end of this year, a letter full of character. It shows that to him the phraseology of 'Lothair' was not unnatural.

Benjamin Disraeli to Edward Bulwer.

Constantinople: December 27, 1830.

My dear Bulwer,—In spite of the extraordinary times and engrossing topics on which we have fallen, I flatter myself that you will be glad to hear of my existence, and know that it is in a state not quite so forlorn as when I last had the pleasure of enjoying your society.

Since then I have travelled through Spain, Greece, and Albania, and I am now a resident in this famous city.

I cannot easily express how much I was delighted with the first country. I no longer wonder at the immortality of Cervantes; and I perpetually detected, in the picturesque and *al fresco* life of his countrymen, the sources of his inspiration. The Alhambra, and other Saracenic remains, the innumerable Murillos, and, above all, their *olla podridas*, delighted me in turn.

I arrived at Malta time enough to name the favourite horse for the races 'Paul Clifford;' and I have since learnt, by a letter at this place, that he won the plate.

While at the little military hot-house, I heard that Albania was in a flaming insurrection; and, always having had a taste for campaigning, I hurried off with a couple of friends to offer our services to the Grand Vizier.

We found the insurrection, by the time of our arrival, nearly crushed. And so we turned our military trip into a visit of congratulation at head-quarters.

I must reserve for our meeting any account of our visit. I certainly passed at Yanina ten of the most extraordinary days of my life; and often wished that you had been my companion.

Of all the places I have yet visited, Athens most completely realised all I could have wished. The place requires no associations to render it one of the most delightful in the globe. I am not surprised that the fine taste of the dwellers in this delicate

land should have selected the olive for their chosen tree, and the violet for their favourite flower.

I confess to you that my Turkish prejudices are very much confirmed by my residence in Turkey. The life of this people greatly accords with my taste, which is naturally somewhat indolent and melancholy. And I do not think it would disgust you.

To repose on voluptuous ottomans, and smoke superb pipes, daily to indulge in the luxuries of a bath which requires half-a-dozen attendants for its perfection; to court the air in a carved caique, by shores which are a perpetual scene; and to find no exertion greater than a canter on a barb; this is, I think, a far more sensible life than all the bustle of clubs, all the boring of drawing-rooms, and all the coarse vulgarity of our political controversies.

And all this, I assure you, is, without any colouring or exaggeration, the life which may be here commanded. A life accompanied by a thousand sources of calm enjoyment, and a thousand modes of mellowed pleasure, which it would weary you to relate, and which I leave to your own lively imagination.

I can say nothing about our meeting, but pray that it may be sooner than I can expect. I send you a tobacco bag, that you may sometimes remember me. If you have leisure to write me a line, anything directed to Messrs. Hunter & Ross, Malta, will be forwarded to whatever part of the Levant I may reside in.

I mend slowly, but mend. The seasons have greatly favoured me. Continual heat. And even here, where the winter is proverbially cold, there is a summer sky. Remember me most kindly to your brother, and

Believe me, ever, my dear Bulwer,

Your most faithful

BENJ. DISRAELI.

P.S.—I have just got through a pile of Galignanis. What a confusion! and what an excellent pantomime! 'LORD MAYOR'S DAY, OR HARLEQUIN BROUGHAM!'

Oh, for the days of Aristophanes, or Foote, or even Scaremouch! D——n the Licenser!

D.

Mr. Disraeli returned to England improved in health, towards the end of the following year: and this was my father's next letter to him.

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Edward Bulwer to Benjamin Disraeli.

Hertford Street : November 8, 1831.

My dear Disraeli,—If I am not among the very first, let me at least not be the last, to congratulate you on your safe return. I only heard of it yesterday from our common ally, of the Burlington Street Delphos.

'Mr. Disraeli, sir, is come to town—young Mr. Disraeli! Won't he give us a nice light article about his travels?'

Of that hereafter. But, while at present neglecting the hint of our worthy publisher, I do not forget it.¹

I don't know if you ever got a long letter I sent you to Constantinople, acknowledging the safe receipt of your slippers,² your tobacco-bag, and your epistle. A thousand thanks for all three.

Mrs. Bulwer has, this day, 'presented me with a son,' as 'the polite' express it. So I have a good reason for being brief in my communications to you. But pray write and let me know how you are.

Yours, &c.

E. L. B.

P.S.—Congratulations on the success of the 'Young Duke,' whom I had the pleasure of seeing before his *début*.

The Same to the Same.

(Undated.)

My dear Disraeli,—I seize the only scrap of paper I can find to tell you how delighted I am by your kindly opinion of 'Paul Clifford.'

I am less charmed, as you will imagine, by your news of the 'Young Duke.' Such communications, however, are merely in the way of business. I was overwhelmed by them in the matter of 'Pelham.' 'Its obscenity was only equalled by its dulness, &c. &c.' I feel quite sure he will do well, and shame these printer's devils and their masters.

Adieu, my dear fellow. Take care of yourself, and believe me

Always and sincerely yours,

E. L. B.

¹ My father, as already mentioned, was now editing the *New Monthly Magazine*.

² The slippers were a gift to my mother.

Mr. Disraeli acceded to the wish that he should become a contributor to the 'New Monthly Magazine,' and my father writes to him: 'Mr. Colburn has sent me nine guineas for your little paper on Egypt, and the present paper of "Harlequin:" this being at the rate of twenty guineas a sheet, his highest pay. Fie on these money matters! They shall have nothing to do with the new Parallelogram World.'

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The 'Harlequin' paper was a clever little *jeu d'esprit*, entitled 'THE SPEAKING HARLEQUIN: OR, TWO LOSSES IN THREE ACTS.' It deserves to be reclaimed from oblivion. 'The Wondrous Tale of Alroy,' and 'Ixion in Heaven' (the latter unsurpassed in wit by anything Disraeli ever wrote) were also published in the 'New Monthly Magazine' during my father's editorship.

At this period, Mr. Disraeli's many troubles from feeble health and straitened circumstances were embittered by one of those disappointments of the heart which are always vehement in strong natures.

'It seemed to me,' he wrote, 'that the barriers of my life were all simultaneously failing. Friendship with the rest. But *you*, too, have suffered; and will therefore sympathise with one of too irritable a temperament, whose philosophy generally arrives too late.

Our friendship, my dear Bulwer, has already stood many a test. If I analyse the causes of its strength, I would ascribe them, in some degree at least, to a warm heart on my part and a generous nature upon yours.

Then let this friendship never dissolve. For my heart shall never grow cold to you, and be yours always indulgent to

Your affectionate Friend,

B. D.

The friendship never did dissolve: because, upon both sides, it was based on a well-grounded confidence in the fine and sterling qualities to which it owed its origin.

But time and circumstance gradually diminished their

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intercourse without abating their esteem. They had strong opinions and sympathies in common, and appeared, for a time, to be travelling the same road. Both were throwing off in works of imagination the thoughts and feelings suggested by a keen observation of the world around them. Both had set their hearts on getting into Parliament, that they might play their part in the one grand arena of politics. Both were fighting an unbefriended battle, and owed nothing in their literary life to the support of a clique, or in public life to the favour of a party. Both were successful in the double career they adopted. But the highest success of one was in politics, and that of the other was in literature.

Here was the difference which, in spite of the parallel in their lives, led them, as time went on, into divergent paths. It may be discerned in the earliest writings of Disraeli that his master ambition was to become a power in the State. With all his love of letters, the desire to take his place among the rulers of the world so vastly predominated that his ultimate end in literature was to use it as a ladder to political life. His native indolence, his narrow means, his pecuniary difficulties, his isolated position, his repeated checks—all were impotent to resist the indomitable will and persevering genius which carried him at length, amidst unusual acclaim, to the summit of his aspirations.

With my father, the passion for letters preponderated. And, whereas literature was but an appendage to the political career of Disraeli, politics were only the appendage to the literary labours of his friend.

Thus, when long years afterwards they came together as colleagues in the same Cabinet, it was the reunion of persons who had been following distinctly separate vocations, and had contracted dissimilar habits of mind. The cordiality and the sentiment remained: and in their political principles they had more in common with each other than either of them

had with the mass of those around them. But the central life that made the moving spring within them was not the same.

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V.

ET. 26-8

I do not think that my father's intercourse with this remarkable man had any perceptible influence upon the growth of his own genius. What he owed in this way to others was a subject on which he was very outspoken. But I cannot remember having ever heard from him the smallest indication that he traced any part of his ideas to his intimacy with an individuality which, in politics, was by far the most original of his time.

It was the reverse with Lord Beaconsfield; who told me, not long before his death, that my father's conversation had always conveyed to him new and productive ideas, and that he reckoned him among the two or three persons whose minds had exercised a distinct effect upon the development of his own.

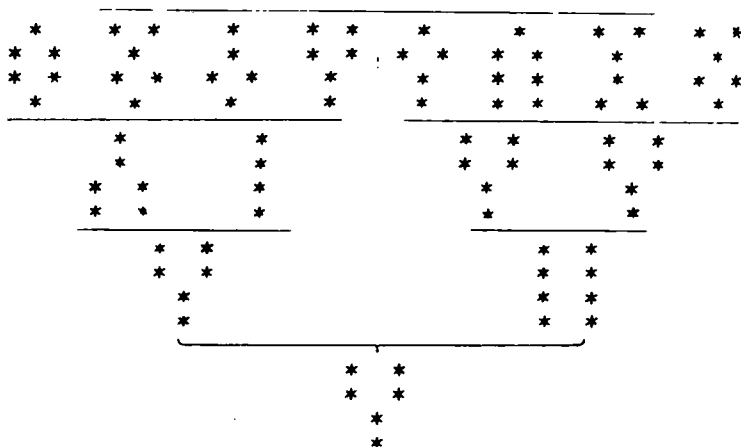
Throughout the greater part of Disraeli's early career, his true character was very imperfectly perceived, and the real solidity of his intellect greatly underrated. My father's early recognition of his rare gifts was never for a moment obscured by the ridicule with which mediocre men, for many years, were accustomed to speak of the political pretensions of the future Premier, as if he were merely a spouting charlatan. But neither did his opinion of the quality and order of his friend's genius equal the public estimation of them at the close of that unique career which my father did not live to see.

What he did not see, however, he foresaw. His well-known interest in studies of an occult and mystical description, which will fill a chapter in the story of his later life, led him for many years to find amusement in the process of divination called 'Geomancy.' And at Wildbad, in 1860, he cast and interpreted the subjoined Geomantic Figure of the character and career of Benjamin Disraeli.

GEOMANTIC FIGURE.

B. DISRAELI.

WILDBAD : SEPTEMBER 3, 1860.

*Judex.*

A singularly fortunate figure. A strongly marked influence towards the acquisition of coveted objects.

He would gain largely by marriage in the pecuniary sense, which makes a crisis in his life. He would have a peaceful hearth, to his own taste, and leaving him free for ambitious objects.

In honours, he has not only luck, but a felicity far beyond the most favourable prospects that could be reasonably anticipated from his past career, his present position, or his personal endowments.

He will leave a higher name than I should say his intellect quite warrants, or than would now be conjectured. He will certainly have *very high* honours. Whether official or in rank, high as compared with his birth or actual achievements.

He has a temperament that finds pleasure in what belongs to social life. He has not the reserve common to literary men.

He has considerable veneration, and will keep well with Church and State. Not merely from policy, but from sentiment and instinct.

His illnesses will be few and quick. But his last illness may be lingering. He is likely to live to old age,—the close of his career much honoured.

He will be, to the last, largely before the public. Much feared by his opponents, but greatly beloved, not only by those immediately about him, but by large numbers of persons to whom he is personally unknown. He will die, whether in or out of office, in an exceptionally high position, greatly lamented, and surrounded to the end by all the magnificent planetary influences of a propitious Jupiter.

No figure I have drawn more surprises me than this. It is so completely opposed to what I myself should have augured, not only from the rest of his career, but from my knowledge of the man.

He will bequeath a repute out of all proportion to the opinion now entertained of his intellect even by those who think most highly of it.

Greater honours far than he has yet acquired are in store for him. His enemies, though active, are not persevering. His official friends, though not ardent, will yet minister to his success.

E. L. B.

Though specious in theory, nothing can be falser in fact than the common saying that all the world is wiser than any man in it, if by this it be meant that the voice of the multitude is nearer the truth than the judgment of a sage. The popular estimate of eminent men is, in the majority of cases, the extravagant offspring of hearsay, which gathers force by repetition. When once the cry is taken up, the cuckoo-note, as it passes from mouth to mouth, assumes a sort of collective magnitude. Exaggeration is its necessary aliment. In the hasty correction of an erroneous belief one extreme is succeeded by another, and perhaps we may rightly ascribe to this cause the fact that my father's opinion was in a mean between the earliest and the latest popular estimate of his friend's character; so that he, who asserted the genius of Disraeli when it was depreciated,

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was surprised at the glories revealed by his Geomantic Figure.

But whatever may be the truth in this particular, the singularity is the same—that the geomantic conclusions were not suggested by my father's views, but in glaring opposition to them.

The event, which verified his divination, contradicted his judgment.

CHAPTER VI.

(Supplementary.)

' GREVILLE.' 1829. Æt. 26.

' THE DISOWNED ' was published in the winter of 1828, and ' Devereux ' in the summer of 1829. Between these two dates my father began the composition of another novel of modern life; and the plot of it appears to have been completely worked out in his own mind, for its synopsis is appended to the manuscript.

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VI.
Æt. 26

It is evident that he had spent a good deal of thought upon a work which was designed to be what he called it, ' A Satire upon Fine Life.' I can feel little doubt that he abandoned it, not because the satire appeared to him ineffectual, but because he perceived that it was growing too personal. He drew his picture from living types in a limited sphere, and feared that the characters would not pass for the unappropriated creations of fiction.

Nothing can be more delightful, nothing more stimulating to literary production, than congenial society small in size but comprehensive in character. Each of its members brings to the common stock some happy speciality. Wit strikes fire from wit in the amicable collision of minds; ideas mingle together and become fruitful; and all without rivalry, effort, or pretension.

But the charm of such a society entirely depends upon the intimacy of its members: an intimacy incompatible with the

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conditions of that semi-exclusive social world which great people call 'general,' and small people call 'fine.'

Its cheerless assemblies, that bring together, in a chaos of physical discomfort and intellectual barrenness, persons of unsettled position struggling for notice, and of commanding position struggling for influence, were fitfully frequented by my father in his youth. But in after years he only re-entered them as an occasional visitant.

His impatience of their intrinsic inanity was undisguised: and a passage from one of his juvenile pieces called 'HADES, OR HIGH LIFE BELOW STAIRS,' which dates from 1824, is evidence of how early they wearied him.

In this piece, the author, transported by a vision to the Infernal Regions, is conducted through them by a Quaker-like Spirit, whom he at first mistakes for 'a Scotch lawyer, or a political economist,' and who obligingly explains to him the political constitution of the place.

Just then, a coxcombical sort of demon, delicately clothed, with a mean look, but a supercilious air, sauntered by, carrying in his hand a card on which was written, 'The Countess of Belial at home.' My curiosity was excited. 'Do they give parties in Hell?' I asked.

'Certainly,' said my Mentor. 'The giving of, and going to, parties is one of the chief punishments here. One half of Hell is compelled to give them. The other half of Hell is compelled to go to them. The localities in which these punishments are inflicted are invariably the hottest corners in Hell; and by some sort of infernal infatuation all the sufferers are impelled forward into the most burning berth of the torture chambers appropriated to this kind of torment. They can't help it. There is no escape for them.'

He was equally familiar with those little literary tea-gardens which are the resort of second-rate aspirants. The contempt he entertained for them was great: nor was any position more repugnant to him than that of a literary lion. Already the feeling was fully formed when he wrote his youthful satire upon 'Almack's':—

' O Genius, thou should'st only dwell
 On lonely mount, in secret cell,
 Or, if amid the world awhile
 Thy strange and wandering steps are found,
 Not thine the voice and vacant smile
 Which suit the meaner race around.
 In truth thou wert not made to sip
 At Lydia White's thy wonted tea,
 With hoarded jest, and laughing lip,
 The Touchstone of the Coterie.'

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 VI.

ÆT 26

'Greville' was the ironical representation of all these pre-
 tentious insipidities; and, at the point where he broke it off,
 my father must have become conscious that his models would
 probably recognise and resent their unflattering portraits.

To escape the temptation to satirise his contemporaries,
 he turned his thoughts altogether from the living generation,
 and fixed them on a bygone time. So 'Greville' was dis-
 carded, and 'Devereux' begun.

The representative names in the novel would not be more
 significant to us if the originals of the satire were all identi-
 fied. They were in their essence ephemeral beings. The
 interest of the story lies in its exhibition of certain phases of
 human nature, and the accurate description of what Disraeli
 speaking of his own sketches of the same times in the 'Young
 Duke') has called 'the fleeting manners of a somewhat frivo-
 nous age,' when George IV. was King.

The one instance in which the interest is heightened by
 substituting the real for the fictitious name is in that of the
 hero. For the character of Clare Greville, as described in the
 fifth chapter of the unfinished tale, is a nearly exact portrait
 of my father himself; modified only here and there by some
 traits borrowed from the character of his friend Frederick
 Villiers. As, for instance, when he says: 'There was not
 much probability that Greville would ever come prominently
 forward in public life. His system was thoroughly saturated
 with indifference. He wanted nothing but ambition to become

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a great man ; but he was likely always to want that, and always, therefore, to remain what he was.'

This passage and some others in the description of Greville's intellectual temperament were transcripts from the idiosyncrasy of his friend. The rest was as truly a literal transcript of his own.

But besides its autobiographical interest, the novel is not without value as a contemporary sketch of London life at a time which, though still recent, is already antiquated.

It contains descriptions of the streets, the parks, the clubs, the amusements, and the small talk of London, as they were fifty years ago : when Mr. Nash was the fashionable architect, when dandies still flourished, when Crockford's and Almack's were in all their glory, and the Bond Street Lounger was not yet extinct.

And, even if it be regarded only as a sample of my father's first period of authorship, this fragment has, I think, some points of interest unaffected by the considerations which should deter a great artist from the exhibition of his unfinished sketches during his life. For all such considerations are inapplicable after his death ; when the qualities we admire in his finest efforts will render interesting, and often instructive, those specimens of his immature workmanship which illustrate the progress of the artist's powers.

We like to see genius in its growth, and to compare the early promise with the ultimate result. Some, no doubt, may despise such unfinished and defective remains ; but they are under no obligation to read them.

GREVILLE:

A SATIRE UPON FINE LIFE.

CHAPTER THE FIRST.

EVERYONE knows that England is the most charming country in the world, especially for those who like to be amused. In that 'moral air' the people are so wise that mirth would be altogether out of character. It is only in their parliaments that they stoop to levity. They there concentrate the witticisms of a whole nation in one individual, and they call that individual Sir Joseph York. In a social state they exclude the impertinence of *bon mots*, and exult in a stupendous monotony of *ennui*.

Everyone also is perfectly aware that the most delightful place in this brilliant country is called Hyde Park. A country retreat where a vast number of women drive about in carriages to admire the beauties of nature, while the most intellectual young men in the world make short speeches on the weather and long odds upon horses. Truly great minds being attentive to the smallest trifles. It is not, indeed, only the native charms of the place which attract thither so perpetual a crowd. The people of that country overflow with affection to their acquaintances, and can scarcely live a day without seeing them. They flock, therefore, to Hyde Park to enjoy that benevolent felicity. Nothing can be a greater proof of the national kindness of feeling. For, despite the attractions of this sublunary Eden, people profess to be very much bored there. The wonderfully wise are easily sated. The most learned man I ever knew—a German—went of his own accord into the other world because, having learnt, he said, everything worth learning, he had nothing further to do in this: and the English, having fully enjoyed at home the dignity of boring themselves, go out for the refreshment of boring others.

There are one or two peculiarities in this Park which are not unworthy of philosophical speculation. The English women, being proverbially the modestest ladies in the world, have, in the most conspicuous part of the Arcadian scene, erected in honour of Arthur, Duke of Wellington, proverbially the modestest man so far as ladies are concerned, an enormous statue, entirely naked. There is a story in history about the Roman ladies generously clubbing together all

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their jewels for some patriotic purpose ; the English ladies, fonder of jewels but equally generous, in a fit of enthusiasm and gratitude clubbed together all their bronze. Hence this statue.

The deer in this Park generally die of eating leather and oranges, and you would think by their colour and consistency that the trees also died of the same complaint.

It was in this charming scene, where time is always well spent and would never flag were not people, as I have said, so prodigiously wise as to think everyone and everything else a little dull in comparison—it was in this scene early one morning in April, viz., about the time common people are going to supper, that two young men were riding together and delighting each other with sentiments like those of Voltaire's memorable Ass—

très nobles et délicats,
Très peu connus des ânes d'ici bas—

which lines, being paraphrased, mean (the reason is better than the rhymes)—

Sentiments having such delicate wit in
Each turn as are known but to asses of Britain.

The elder of these gentlemen was about thirty-five years of age. He was mounted on a bay horse which to a 'particular friend' he would have warranted sound, but of which to a horse-dealer his love of truth might have induced him to confess to somewhat a different character. Nevertheless, the horse was showy and comely, and could go four times round the Park without exhibiting any very visible fatigue. The dress of this cavalier was a black frock coat, a striped baptiste neckcloth of green and grey, and brown trousers. This description is more accurate than grand, but there is no sublimity in English colours. In France one's coat is of the hues of the dust of ruins, and one's extremities exhibit the tender tints of a frog dying for love. The eyes of the cavalier were large, round, staring, and black ; they were thought exceedingly fine by himself, and also by three nursery-maids whom he courted severally twice a week in the Regent's Park.

Captain Desborough, such was his name, was admired by all his friends as *un homme à bonnes fortunes* ; few Englishmen are so exalted in their amorous aspirations. For the rest, Captain Desborough was well born, well padded, and well received ; he had no fortune, but he had a very large acquaintance—he lived entirely on the latter, and nobody lived more comfortably than Captain Desborough.

The other cavalier, the Captain's companion, was seemingly about twenty-one years old, tall, thin, fair, and exceedingly well-dressed. You might easily observe that he was new to London. He looked with a respectful envy upon crack dandies (those very low people), he admired girls more than married women, he took care to *tell* his companion that he was going to Almack's on Wednesday, and he thought Captain Desborough a very fine person.

This young man's name was James Milner Clavering. He had just obtained possession of a new baronetcy and a large estate; and, God willing, he was well calculated by nature and ambition to become in a few years as respectable and as poor as the Captain, his model and his friend. He had some fine qualities, he was good-natured, generous, a bold rider, and a bit of a fool. Few people possess traits of character more certain to ensure popularity.

Slowly did these gentlemen ride; Sir James Clavering glancing into every carriage, and Captain Desborough looking straight before him. The former because he thought it well-bred to recognise as many people as possible, the latter because he thought it well-bred to see nobody.

'So,' said Captain Desborough, 'so you have a letter of introduction to Greville, have you? Gad, I don't envy you; he is the most impertinent person in town.'

'Hem—ha—indeed. I understood he was very clever and very much the mode.'

'The mode! why he is thought a gentlemanlike fellow, and the women quote his sayings, which I think very bad; but as for being clever——' Captain Desborough paused significantly.

'He is silly, then, is he?'

'Why I don't say that exactly, but you know how Jack Fooksly cheated him at *écarté*. Now a man who is cheated by Jack Fooksly can't be very clever.'

'But he knew he was cheated, I believe.'

'Worse and worse. You remember what he said to Jack; it was d—d impertinent—I wonder Jack didn't call him out.'

'No, what *did* he say?'

'“Mr. Fooksly,” said he, paying him the money, “he who best batters our foibles is the best bred of men. I shall always speak of you as the most accomplished courtier of my acquaintance.”'

'“Thank you,” says Jack. “What do you mean?” “Why, you know my foible is a contempt for what we call gentlemen, and you

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have given it the most exquisite gratification by showing me for how paltry a piece of paper a gentleman will turn rogue."'

'Deuced severe,' said Sir James.

'Severe, but not clever; anyone can be rude. Why I told Jobson the horse-dealer this very day that he was a d—d rascal. Nobody calls *that* clever, but it was just as sharp, I think, as Mr. Greville's little speech.'

'Quite. What sort of a looking fellow is Greville?—Handsome?'

'Not at all, he has red hair; but it is a fine thing to get a name. They say he is an Antinous.'

'And is he impertinent to all people?'

'I suppose so. He was horridly impertinent to the Duke of Lushington; and if a man is impertinent to *him*, it is not likely he will be civil to anyone else.'

'Very true.'

'And though so devilishly affected, he is very fond of low company.'

'Low company! you amaze me.'

'Yes, he wrote word to Lady Finelow that he was very sorry he could not meet His Royal Highness the Duke of — at her house, for he was particularly engaged to his intimate friend, Mr. Hopkins, in Bloomsbury Square.'

'Hopkins—Bloomsbury Square! How excessively odd. Well, I thought Clare Greville quite a different person.'

'And this Mr. Hopkins is a linendraper's son.'

'Horrible,' cried Sir James Milner Clavering in virtuous indignation, 'and Clare Greville of so old a family too!'

'Is he of an old family?—not related to *the* Grevilles, I think.'

'No, but a branch of the same stock, equally old. His estates in Somersetshire, adjoining mine, have been in the family since the Conquest.'

'Well, it won't be Greville's fault if they go to another generation.'

'What, he is very extravagant?'

'Extravagant! He gave two thousand pounds for a paltry statue the other day.'

'God bless me! he is fond of the arts then?'

'The memoirs of Harriet Wilson show that even women of her class were out by the dandies and wits of that time if seen in the Park with any man not known to be well-born.'

'Not particularly, I believe. He says he doesn't know much about pictures, and I am sure he knows nothing about *music* or *horses*. No, it was mere wanton extravagance, and yet he is cursed stingy too in some things. He would not raffle for my bay filly, though it was only five guineas a ticket.'

'You don't say so! By-the-by, when does the raffle come on? You recollect I have two tickets.'

'To be sure, to be sure, my dear fellow, and I hope with all my heart that you may get her. She will carry your weight famously. I am a little too heavy for her. She is a sweet creature, leaps as if she had a spring-board in her hoofs. Ha! is that Lady Milsom? You can see. I am so horribly shortsighted. Just look, Clavering, there's a good fellow.'

Sir James, though rather affronted to be thought able to see, obeyed the request; and, he having declared that the lady walking by herself with no other attendant than a footman *was* Lady Milsom, the two gentlemen drew up to the railings of the Park, gave their horses to Sir James's groom, and joined the lady whom they were both glowing with pride to know, and whom one could not see, and the other was ashamed to see. How true are the maxims of national pride! What a wonderful vein of manly simplicity does run through the English character!

'Ah, Sir James Clavering, how are you, and you, Mr. Desborough? Well, I am quite glad to see you, for I know neither of you talk on politics, and really I have heard of nothing else for the last three months.'

'Tis a great bore, that House of Commons,' said Captain Desborough. (Some savage nations think fools are inspired.)

'But what is not a bore?' said the lady.

'Except Lady Milsom,' said Sir James, colouring and thinking it fine to compliment.

'Do you really think so? No, I don't wish to be eccentric, and I am sure I am as dull as the rest of the world. At least, now and then.'

'The rest of the world will contradict you,' said Sir James, and he bowed this time, as well as coloured.

The lady did not pay all that attention to this speech which she ought to have done—she looked in an opposite direction.

'Is that Clare Greville?' said she.

'Upon my word I don't know,' said the Captain, 'I am really so nearsighted.'

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'Are you? Well, I pity you. Greville says it is the worst taste in the world to be nearsighted.'

'I should like to know what business Mr. Greville has to say anything at all about it,' quoth the bold captain.

'Oh no treason! here he comes, he shall tell you his reasons for thinking so.'

'Excuse me, Lady Milsom, it is a d—d bore to hear a fellow talk such nonsense as Greville does. Good morning; you will be at Mrs. Holroyd's to-night?'

'Don't know, possibly.'

'Which is Mr. Greville?' said Clavering.

'There, but you can't see him, he has just turned back with the crowd. I wonder what brings him into the Park.'

'Why, does he not often come here every day like anyone else?'

'Like anyone else! How little you know of Mr. Greville; it is quite enough that everyone else does a thing to make him forswear it for ever.'

'He must be a very eccentric person.'

It will be perceived that Sir James Clavering testified a particular acuteness in drawing logical deductions from certain data. I wish I could say as much for Mr. Uphoma,¹ the gentleman who writes histories of the Ottoman Empire.

'Yes, he is eccentric, but delightful to those he likes.'

'Indeed, I understood he was shockingly disagreeable, very rude, and very impertinent. For my part I wonder he has not got shot yet!'

'Oh, but he is not often rude *in that way*, and when he is, it is generally to people who know that he is no bad shot himself, so I hear at least.'

'Good heavens!' cried Sir James Milner Clavering, who had the merciless nerves of a man of twenty-one, 'you don't mean to say that gentlemen will let themselves be bullied by any fellow merely because he is a good shot?'

'Bless me, Sir James, how energetic you are! No, I should hope not, but I have heard that a Mr. Fitzgerald, generally termed "the fighting," stalked into a certain celebrated clubroom and insulted all the members without receiving an answer, much less a challenge from one of them. But in the first place Greville

¹ Sic in MS.

is not at all a bully ; he is the most courteous and ceremonious person alive.’

‘ Well, I am quite puzzled ; everyone else says he is so insolent.’

‘ Yes, but he is ceremoniously insolent. Enough of him now. I must wish you good-bye too. I am going to Roehampton ; you come to me to-morrow evening.’

‘ Certainly,’ and Sir James Clavering escorted the lady to her carriage.

All ladies and gentlemen drop pearls and diamonds out of their mouths ; common people, on the contrary, drop toads and lizards.

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VI.

Æt. 26

CHAPTER VII.

(Supplementary.)

GREVILLE CONTINUED. 1829. ÆT. 26.

CHAPTER THE SECOND.

London, thou comprehensive word,
Thy independence let me share.

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So sings Mr. Lutterel. Certainly London is the only place in the world for independence, and Londoners are the only independent people. They do exactly what they like, and they never care three straws what their neighbours say of them.

Sir James Milner Clavering, therefore, having a very bad headache and being excessively desirous of going to bed, dressed himself at half-past twelve and went to Mrs. Holroyd's ball, lest if he did not go people should say he could not get there.

The hostess was a woman of the world, and in the world she had three daughters and eight hundred friends. In the old classical times a man generally asked his friend to marry his daughter; in the present times it is the women who ask it. There is some difference in the result: in the former age the friend generally accepted the offer, in the present he generally refuses it.

Mrs. Holroyd had eight hundred friends, and Sir James Milner Clavering made the eight hundredth and one. He was forthwith introduced to the daughters, and he danced a quadrille with the eldest. The young lady's name was Amelia.

'You must be enchanted with London,' said Miss Amelia, 'there is always so much going on. Shall you go into the army?'

'Why, I really don't know yet. I have thoughts of belonging to the Blues.'

'Oh, delightful! they are the most charming set of people, live quite like brothers. Adolphus, my brother, was going into that regi-

ment, but papa thought it too expensive, and he has now gone into the *forty something*. But it is for you to go on, Cavalier Seul.'

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VII.

Sir James having accomplished his saltatory task, the conversation was resumed.¹

Æt. 26

'Were you in the Park to-day, Sir James?'

'Yes, it was very full and very hot.'

'Oh yes, *charmingly so*! How pretty Lady Agnes Percivale looked on horseback. Is it true that she is going to be married?'

'I don't know, I am sure—to whom?'

'Oh, Mr. Clare Greville. A great match for him, though he is immensely rich, I hear—thirty thousand a year.'

'Pardon me, Greville can scarcely have six thousand a year, and I doubt whether he has that. I am sure he has no more, for his estates adjoin mine, and I know every acre of them.'

'But he has money in the funds.'

'Yes, he had twenty thousand pounds when he came of age; my father was trustee to old Greville's will.'

'Well, you surprise me—*chaine anglaise*—I heard he was so rich; but for my part I always disliked him; he never dances, you know, and he was so rude to Mamma. She declares she will cut him; and so she would if it was not for Lady Milsom and Lady Lynchmere, who make such a fuss about him. Besides, you know, one dare not cut him, for he says it is so vulgar to cut anyone.'

'People seem all to dislike him, and yet always to quote him,' quoth Sir James.

'Exactly so. Will you go into the refreshment-room? He was to have been here to-night. Mamma will be miserable if he does not come. She has told everybody he will, but of course for that very reason he'll stay away. A strawberry ice, if you please. Thank you.'

The dance was over; Sir James Milner Clavering sought the doorway, planted his back to the wall, and fell into conversation with Captain Desborough.

'That is rather a neat waistcoat of Lovell's,' said Sir James, who was of an age when a man's waistcoats are more observed than his words. 'Who is that very pretty girl he is talking with?'

'Lady Agnes Percivale. Shall I introduce you? She is a particular flirt of mine, and a deuced nice girl, full of talk.'

'Thank you, I wish you *would* introduce me. She is going to be married to Greville, I hear.'

¹ In those days the quadrille steps were danced.

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‘Pooh, I should think not. She is sure to marry a duke, but people do tell such lies about marriage. Why they said she was in love with *me*, but that I could not endure the thought of the noose.’

‘Ha, ha, but will you present me now?’

‘Certainly.’

The two gentlemen lounged up to Lady Agnes, who, unlike beauties *à la mode*, was really handsome; and who, being handsome, had also the good fortune to be exceedingly clever. What her other qualities were I will keep at present unrevealed.

A very different person from Miss Amelia Holroyd did Sir James Clavering find Lady Agnes Percivale.

Nothing is more *mauvais ton* than the conversation of a silly young lady who talks of *mamma* and wants to be thought fine; it is particularly so when, like Miss Amelia Holroyd’s, it is put down upon paper, stripped of all the tones and smiles with which it is orally delivered. Lady Agnes’s conversation was better than Miss Holroyd’s, because she was sensible instead of silly, and did not wish to be thought finer than she was.

While Lady Agnes was conversing with Clavering a tall woman, brilliant with beauty and diamonds, joined them. Clavering looked and looked, and thought he had never seen anything so striking as this lady’s countenance and air. She was of a remarkable and masculine height; her features of the majestic order and dazzling fairness of Saxon beauty, her hair of the richest gold, bright, luxuriant, and dressed *à la Calypse*; her eyes were blue and large, her teeth of the most brilliant whiteness, her rounded arms shone through her *séduisantes*; her hands and feet were, if not small, as small as the proportions of her figure would admit of; and her carriage was so full of grace, quiet, and *undramatic* dignity, that she was quite the *beau-ideal* of a princess whom a young poet would wish to be page to. This lady was just at that time of life when ladies in my eyes are most dangerous, viz. about thirty-nine in reality, and about twenty-seven by courtesy.

‘My aunt, Lady Bellenden,’ said Lady Agnes slightly. ‘Sir James Clavering.’

The introduction was effected, and conversation proceeded as fluently as before. At last Lady Agnes and her aunt took their departure. Clavering escorted them to their carriage and returned to the supper-room a little smitten, he could scarcely tell with which of the two, and particularly enamoured of a very fine lobster-salad.

Meanwhile, within the sacred walls of their carriage, Lady Agnes and the Saxon beauty held 'converse high.'

'I think,' said the latter, delicately yawning, 'Sir James Clavering seems a very nice person.'

By-the-by, there are two cant words exceedingly in use now: one is 'nice,' and the other 'agreeable.' The former means a person one may safely dance with, the latter a person one may without much peril venture to ask to dinner.

'A very nice person,' answered Lady Agnes, 'but a little stupid.'

'And rich too, I believe,' rejoined Lady Bellenden, not noticing the saving clause of her niece.

'Very likely,' said Lady Agnes.

There was a pause.

'Was Mr. Greville at Mrs. Holroyd's?' asked Lady Bellenden.

'No—that is, I did not see him.'

There was another pause.

The carriage stopped at the house of Lady Agnes: the door was opened: and, as Lady Bellenden pressed the hand and kissed the forehead of the young beauty, she said in a low whisper, 'There are some more dangerous than Sir James Clavering. Beware!'

The words were nothing, but Lady Bellenden's voice was deep and agitated. Lady Agnes snatched away her hand very hastily, and disappeared.

'Where to, my lady?' said the footman.

Lady Bellenden made no answer.

The man paused and repeated the question.

'To H—— House—no—*home*!'

'Home!' cried the footman, and to that sacred scene of English enjoyments, that theme of glory to Britain and songs for Miss Tree, was whirled Lady Bellenden.

As she entered the hall of her house—other novelists would say of her princely mansion, but I think houses in London so wretchedly bad that I cannot, except in poetry, indulge in such magnificent phraseology—as she entered her hall she met Lord Bellenden, who was just walking to his cabriolet, with that sort of vacillating stiffness which belongs to a very stately man when he is very comfortably drunk.

Lord and Lady Bellenden were great Tories; and they set up for being remarkably domestic, in opposition to those rascally Whigs who are always jesting at anything like morality and good feeling.

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Accordingly, as she had only seen him once for the last three days, Lady Bellenden now stopped and accosted her husband.

'Ah, my dear lord! this is an unexpected pleasure. Are you going to H—— House, or shall I see you in my boudoir?'

'I am going to—to—Crockford's,' said the husband, speaking as clearly as he was able, 'but I shall see you to—to—morrow at breakfast; don't let me keep you in—in—this d—d thorough draught. Good-night. Why don't you drive to the pavement—you—you—Philpot—Sir!—good-night—Lady Bellenden—take care of yourself.'

With these words this amiable pair parted, and Lady Bellenden sought her dressing-room. There, dismissing her woman, she threw herself back in a large fauteuil, and, covering her face with her hands, seemed lost in reflection.

'Can—he—can he,' she muttered, 'love her—her—no. No—impossible.' And, after murmuring these few words, she remained for a long time sunk in profound dejection. When she rose from her reverie the cheeks, no longer concealed, were perfectly pale, and large tears rolled fast and burningly down them. Those are just the tears which it is so delicious to kiss away.

While Lady Bellenden was thus enjoying herself in the bosom of that domestic retirement so exclusively granted by Heaven to the inhabitants of this country, Sir James Clavering, having finished his lobster-salad, was driving Captain Desborough to the —— Hell.

There, as he particularly hated gambling, the amiable baronet lost four hundred pounds with the greatest satisfaction in the world. He went home at six o'clock in excellent humour, and discharged, or threatened to discharge, his valet for having had the impertinence to fall asleep while his master was being so well entertained.

CHAPTER VIII.

(Supplementary.)

GREVILLE CONTINUED. 1829. ÆT. 26.

CHAPTER THE THIRD.

THERE is one great comfort attendant on going to bed at six : one need not get up till two. By this means one glides over the morning without any very considerable difficulty.

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Sir James Milner Clavering rose, then, at two, yawned, put his feet into a pair of yellow slippers, dressed, drank his chocolate, and coquetted with a cold chicken and the 'Morning Post.'

His heart swelled with pride when he saw in that immortalising journal his name in the list of attendants at one party, and it sank with regret when he saw not his name in the list of attendants at another.

The mind of Sir James Milner Clavering was not very enlightened or very enlarged, but it was not like that of the celebrated Mr. Courtenay—a sheet of white paper. He was capable of reflection, especially on his own affairs : and, stretching out his right leg which, as the trouser had not yet rolled its graceful waves over the severer empire of the drawers, he saw in its fair proportions, he observed with a pensive sigh that it had grown considerably more attenuated than it was six months ago. Under the influence of that observation, he indulged himself in the following soliloquy :

'It is all very pleasant work, this London life, for a short time. But the morning part of it is a little dull. My headache, too, is worse to-day than it was yesterday—very odd that. Chorlton—Chorlton—a bottle of soda-water ! I must say, one gets deuced bad breakfasts in town, and I have quite lost my appetite. How devilish thin my leg does look ! It is lucky enough that one can wear nothing but trousers. By-the-by, I must go to Burghost about those things he

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sent home. Chorlton, have they sent the books from the Library yet ?'

'Yes, sir, here they are.'

'That's right, give them to me.'

Sir James tossed over three new novels, two upon English life and one upon Irish History.

'Dull stuff this !' resumed the soliloquist. 'I wonder why novels are called light reading. What's this ? "The Disowned"—all metaphysics, and virtue, and stuff ; and this, all throat-cutting, carbonadoing, and wild Irish, without a glossary. Not sorry I have no property in Ireland. By Jove, that puts me in mind of Rackem's letter ; it must be answered to-day. I wonder whether Greville *would* like to have that slip of land. It adjoins his park pales. It would be but civil to offer it to him, but, Gad, I quite dread calling on him. It is not pleasant to subject oneself to an impertinent reception. Shall I call to-day ? No, faith, Desborough is coming here presently, and I may as well drive him out in the cab. Devilish good fellow that Desborough, but I can't say much for his mare. Don't wonder Greville would not raffle for it. Certainly I am the best-natured fellow in the world. By Jove, a knock at the door. Desborough, I suppose. Chorlton, my grey trousers.'

The meditations of the morning were now abruptly terminated by the entrance of the worthy Captain.

'How d'ye do, Clavering ? You look pale this morning, my good fellow. Not used to nightwork as yet. All in good time. What reading ? anything new ? Ah ! never read anything myself. One has too much to do in town—take down half-a-dozen novels when I go to the moors—so much wet weather there. By-the-by, you have no property in Scotland, I think ?'

'None, but I think of hiring some moors.'

'Capital plan ! for Heaven's sake do. Nothing like it. I'll go with you myself, that you may not be bored. Now I think of it, Lord Bellenden has a place in the Highlands to let, Glen something ; you may shoot over seventy miles a day.'

'God forbid !' cried Clavering.

'Bah ! nothing when you are used to it. Come, are you nearly ready ? I want you to walk with me as far as Waterloo Place.'

'Stop a moment, my dear fellow, don't hurry me,—there, that's done. Now I am at your service. Where do you dine to-day ?'

'Oh, wherever you like.'

'At the Clarendon then with me.'

' Ah ! it's a shame to sponge on you every day, but you're such a d—d rich fellow.'

' Not if I lose four hundred pounds a night.'

' Don't talk of it. Shocking, wasn't it ?'

Engaged in this luminous conversation the friends quitted the house, and slowly sauntered towards Waterloo Place.

Clavering lived in New Norfolk Street, and the walk, therefore, was no bad preparative for the Scottish moors. They passed through Brook Street, street of dowagers and hotels, and by dint of perseverance gained the straits of Bond Street.

' Look,' said Desborough softly, ' look on the opposite side of the way ; there is Greville.'

The excellent baronet had long felt an ardent curiosity to see the personage so called. He turned his eyes eagerly to the spot indicated by his friend, and he saw a man walking by himself and very slowly. The man's gait was very peculiar. He walked with his hands behind him, looked down on the ground, stooped a good deal, but not as if it were an habitual position, and seemed to be talking to himself. Sir James Milner Clavering felt quite disappointed ; he had heard wonders of Greville's impertinence, affectation, and eccentricity ; and he had sufficient penetration to discover that Greville was dreaded in proportion to the abuse he received, and listened to in proportion as he differed from other people. Sir James had expected to see a person beautifully though rather showily dressed, with an upright air, an indolent mien, a lofty eye, an unimpeachable neckcloth, and a lip that, like Mr. T. J.'s, said, ' Who are you ? ' to everyone.

Nothing could be more different from the living Greville than this *beau-ideal* of him. He was dressed not only plainly but badly. His mien and his walk were utterly divested of anything like pride and pretension. He did not carry his chin in the air, like Colonel F. : nor did he inter his right hand in his coat-pocket, like Lord B., nor did he walk with a glass at his eye, like Mr. C. : nor did he think it good taste to make his trousers enter into a flirtation with a handwhip, as Sir R. is pleased touchingly to do : nor did he walk, like Mr. V., with his eyes fixed on one spot, like cannon on a fort, as if he saw nobody on either side of him : nor did he walk, like Viscount C., with a perpetual fountain of smiles bubbling up over his mouth, emanations from the vast reservoir of lead within the brain. In short, he walked very carelessly and very easily, just as if he had been walking in his own gardens or his own library ;

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and if there was any affectation in the abstraction and quiet of his air and movements, it was the affectation of not thinking a whit about other people, instead of thinking what a prodigious impression he ought to make upon them.

Certainly there might be something artificial in this, and people in general said there was. We shall see hereafter whether they were right or not.

Nevertheless, despite of the carelessness of his dress and the simplicity of his manner, there was something irresistibly striking and *distingué* about Clare Greville. There was even, according to Mr. Brummell's opinion, too much of the remarkable in his appearance, for few passed him without pausing to look again—a circumstance which the ingenious speculator upon manners and inventor of starch used to consider a sign of great criminality in the garb or gait of the person thus regarded.

'Well, Clavering, what think you of Mr. Greville?' said the Captain.

'Why, I am greatly surprised. He is not at all the sort of person I expected to see; he looks more like a busy member of Parliament than the man I imagined him to be.'

'Just so. I am sure I don't know what he gives himself such airs for.'

Clavering did not answer. The pair arrived in Waterloo Place without any further conversation. They entered that great street which we erected because we won a great battle. It is a pity we did not make both the blessings of the street and the benefits of the peace more substantial when we were about it.

What odd shapes patriotism takes! Some place it in long rows of bricks and mortar ranged upon ground measured by Mr. Nash: some place it in drinking bad wine at the 'Crown and Anchor': some in thinking Buckingham Palace a great building: some in thinking Sir Thomas Lethbridge a great man. Mr. Hume places it in refusing to pay two guineas a year in order to have his letters at breakfast: George III. placed it in encoring 'God save the King': Lord — in procuring votes for building the ugliest churches in the world, and Lord Durham in possessing the worst collection of pictures in Europe.

Our friends looked on the United Service Club and the shell of the new Athenæum. They talked of Mr. Nash and his friendship for Mr. Edwards—touching record of affection! They talked of the great dome which Mr. Nash meant to be invisible, and the wings which

he meant to be handsome. They animadverted on the stone which he spoilt, and the ground-rent he improved. Alas, it is all that he did improve! And they lamented, with tears in their eyes, that a man so amiable and fond of his friends should be addicted to make mistakes in the feet, so providentially fortunate to the receipt of the hands.

They stopped at Mr. Graham's, the upholsterer. It is the pleasantest place in the world for a man who likes furniture. Captain Desborough had just bought a house, without money, and he was going to furnish it suitably.

'Tis a common trick that, with men who have a large acquaintance. They take a house, they furnish it, they sell it to a young friend just come to town. It is the prettiest thing in the world, complete *cap à pie*, not a screw forgot, save the screw of a tradesman. If they marry a fortune, perhaps they ultimately pay. If they don't, there have been cases where they have retired to the Bench. After a short retirement in that abode of virtuous misfortune they prove, like Mr. J—s, that they have been horsedealers, or, like Lady L., that they have been housebuilders, and they return to the world, like Lady L., the more brilliant than ever from their confinement.

Our friends walked over the warehouse of Mr. Graham, and talked about curtains, and buhl, and cornices, and glass. I myself could talk on these subjects for ever. And Mr. Graham having promised that all should be ready in three weeks for the Captain's reception (in three weeks the Captain expected a young cousin, a lord 'up from grass'), the gentlemen walked out again.

They paused at the Athenæum. The Captain was not a learned man, neither was Sir James. What of that? The Captain's grandfather had sailed round the world, and Sir James was going to start for his county. Such claims to notice, literary bodies rarely neglect.

It is a charming place that Athenæum. The people are so well informed; 'tis a pity that they don't know each other. And so very entertaining, 'tis a pity they never converse.

Our friends read the 'Morning Journal' and the old 'Times,' and they wondered how there came to be two opinions on matters which each of the journalists declared to be so exceptionally clear. They then yawned, and drank two bottles of soda-water, walked out of the Club, and returned to Sir James Clavering's abode. There they entered the amiable Baronet's cabriolet, and drove to the Park.

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In that exquisite scene they talked again over the same matters they had talked over before.

'Tis with wise talkers as with country stage-players: the same three ideas which did duty in one scene for Highlanders, do duty for Turks in the next. Nevertheless it is astonishing what a vast quantity of work three ideas properly managed can effect. Their possessors often remind me of the good bishop in the tower who walked up and down his cell (four feet by five) till he had measured the whole circumference of the earth.

CHAPTER IX.

(Supplementary.)

GREVILLE CONTINUED. 1829. Æt. 26.

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

ALL the misery and all the guilt that have marred the natural order of this beautiful world have had but one cause—*Ennui*.

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IX.

Æt. 26

That he might not be bored at Macedon, Alexander cut the throats of the Persians. Bored by a few hundred patricians and their wives at Rome, Cæsar was driven to amuse himself by destroying two millions elsewhere. Rather too great a sacrifice to the spleen of a worn-out debauchee. The irruptions of the Goths, the expeditions of the Crusaders, the *Auto-da-fés* of the Inquisition, were all so many shifts *pour se désennuyer*. People don't commit such violent excesses when they are well-informed as when they are ignorant, because ignorance is more easily bored than knowledge. Nevertheless, Wisdom herself yawns now and then. At these moments let her beware, she is very near Vice! Oh! could we escape being bored, we should have no reason to despair of perfectibility.

Sir James Milner Clavering was exceedingly subject to the vapours. A good dinner and the agreeable converse of Captain Desborough enlivened him considerably; and, if he had gone home and read 'Yes and No' (I speak from experience), he might have completed the evening with something like a cheerful satisfaction. However, the amusement of that night was otherwise ordained, and he accompanied his friend to the house of Lady Milsom.

That lady was young and pretty; she was also inclined to be blue, and piqued herself on making her *salon* a resort for all the *beaux esprits*. Not that I mean to say one ever met any really clever people there. No! all her *beaux esprits* were persons of repnte who had villas at Twickenham or galleries of pictures. They

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did not possess a great deal of knowledge, but they possessed a great many books beautifully bound. Some of them had paraphrased Goethe; others had translated Petrarch; some wrote nice little—*very* little—historical sketches; others shone forth in the dignity of a tour and a quarto. Some talked in tropes, and were called eloquent; others in puns, and were styled witty. But all of them were lions of the drawing-room; their teeth, if not drawn, were exceedingly white; and their claws, if not cut, were concealed in kid gloves.

Lady Milsom looked enchantingly handsome, and talked with the prettiest smile imaginable about the ‘nice book upon Locke’ which Lord King was going to publish. Sir James Clavering joined her and her party. Having been at Oxford and at Eton, the amiable young man was considered more versed in the elegancies of literature than in its profundities. In compliment to him the conversation turned upon poetry. It was universally agreed that nothing in verse was so odious as smoothness; the great characteristic of a true poet was to be as rugged as possible. Nothing could be clearer than this; for as no one now could assert that Pope was a poet, so to be unlike Pope was instantly to become a poet.

Lord Dithyramboiolos expressed great indignation at that ‘venomous versifier’ who had libelled so atrociously the really great bards of his day. He expatiated on the injustice of time, which had favoured the satirist and swallowed those wonderful men.

‘What would we not give,’ he cried, ‘for the labours of those divine poets, of whom the insipid rhymer, little conscious of the praises he was bestowing, has said—

Their muses on their racks

Scream like the winding of ten thousand jacks!

Ah! if we had such poets now, they would no longer complain of the injustice of contemporary criticism.’

The enthusiasm of the speaker circled among the audience: and Mr. Polypous, who had published a poem, though nobody knew it, in what he was pleased to term the Spenserian stanza, declared in a prophetic rapture that, if poetry made but one more stride, he did not doubt but that he should live to see the day when verses exquisitely floating on the waves of the soul would defy the efforts of Mr. Thelwall himself to breathe them on the ear. Poetry would indeed be poetry directly it became impossible to read it. This sublime opinion produced a visible effect, and Mr. Polypous forthwith wrote an ‘Ode to Mary’ in Lady Milsom’s album, as a foretaste of the bliss in store for the future lovers of harmony.

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Lord Milsom, who was a man without any soul, observed that he thought that, as *none* of the verses could be scanned, it was rather too bold an innovation to make *all at once* upon popular prejudice. Mr. Polypous, however, justly and learnedly defended himself. He asserted that his style was no innovation, it was a revival of the style of older poets. The immortal Lydgate himself had boasted that

His verse was wrong,
As being some too short and some too long.

Thereupon Lord Milsom was silenced, and Mr. Polypous was congratulated by the best judges on his successful rivalry with the immortal Lydgate.

The best of Sir James Milner Clavering was that, if he was not very brilliant, he did not wish to be thought so. Accordingly, he moved away from this learned coterie as soon as he was able. He turned and saw in a corner of the room, apart from the rest of the world, Lady Bellenden seated next to a gentleman, with whom she appeared earnestly conversing. Clavering paused, looked twice, and in the gentleman he recognised Greville.

The survey of that autocrat of manners with which he now indulged himself disappointed him, on the whole, less than the first view of the morning. Yet still he could not but confess that the attractions of the person before him fell far short of the partiality of general report.

In age Clare Greville was about five-and-twenty, but he looked considerably younger. In person he was inclined to be tall, and seemed strongly yet not heavily built. His features were finely but severely formed, and suited well with the bold, firm, classic contour of his countenance. But they lost the pleasing effect they should have derived from their symmetry, by an expression which his friends called thought and his enemies pride, and which probably was neither one nor the other. It was certainly not the latter; never was there a man less proud than Clare Greville. Added to this not prepossessing expression of face, his complexion wanted richness, and the extreme shortness of his hair, which was straight and of a reddish colour, joined to the absence of those appendages once so cherished by the cheeks of our present Majesty—Heaven bless him!—and still considered no despicable ornament to masculine attraction, took away from that luxuriance of manhood characteristic of the prime of life; utterly depriving him of all claim to the poetic part of beauty, or the admiration of Mr. Truefit. Still, to one who

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had looked with a curious eye upon the remains of ancient art there was something impressive and even noble in the bend of his head, the shape of the profile, the undulating grace of every gesture and position, and the extreme yet commanding simplicity which was the chief characteristic of his face, form, and air.

Contrary to the negligence of costume which had so displeased Clavering in the morning, the dress of Mr. Greville was now, if not better, at least not worse than that of any other pretender to the fine art of appearing to the best advantage: and it seemed fitting to his peculiar character of person as well as mind to avoid rather than incur the littleness and affectation of disdaining the small means which are so frequently the stepping-stones to a great end.

Whatever might be the commune between Lady Bellenden and Mr. Greville, it seemed to receive no welcome addition from the company of Lady Milsom and three or four attendant satellites. Sweeping up to the confabulists with some wonderful treasure which would have made the heart of the accomplished and excellent Mrs. Pettigrew a house of joy, these persons now turned the monopoly of the conversation into a traffic of general advantage. There are other *companies* where such changes are not so easily effected—would they were!

Clavering joined the group. At the time he did so, conversation had glided from the commonplace of letters into that of custom.

‘You are going to Lord ——’s races, Mr. Greville?’ said Lady Milsom.

‘Do any gentlemen not of the Royal family ever go to races twice?’ said Greville gravely.¹

‘Dear, how droll!’ said Mrs. Holroyd. ‘Why everybody goes to races.’

‘Indeed! I live so much out of the world that your intelligence astonishes me. I thought it used to be considered *mauvais ton* to make one of a mob.’

‘Ha, ha!’ laughed Lady Milsom, who, more sensible than her guests, knew that Greville never said anything which seemed silly without flattering himself that he couched beneath it something which he thought rational.

‘So you think races *mauvais ton*. Explain why.’

‘With great pleasure. Remember, I am merely speaking of the conventional laws of good taste. There is one abstract law better

¹ ‘Do gentlemen hunt twice?’—Lord Chesterfield.

than all, viz. one's own pleasure. The most real good taste is for a man to consult his own pleasure, so long as he thinks it reasonable, without caring whether it be *bon ton* or not. But since you won't allow that, I speak only with reference to the laws you do allow—to those charming little affectations which you have bound up together as the code of the *élite*, or, as common people say, the exclusives. Now what is so low as a crowd? Directly you make one of a mob you literally lose your identity, you are merely a part of the multitude, you have the same feelings as Giles the butcher and Hobbes the cobbler. There is no difference between a mob at Epsom and a mob at St. Giles's; the same vulgar feelings agitate each—mirth, anxiety, uproar, riot. You might as well make a noise at the ducking of a pickpocket as at the victory of Mameluke. I will give you a proof of the levelling nature of a crowd. You know what a stiff person is our friend Lord Armadilleros; you know there are not three persons in England who dare introduce their sons to him. Well, at Ascot last year, Lord Armadilleros was accidentally next to Mr. Bob, usually termed The White; both had bet on the same horse—both were stretching to see if it won. It did win, and the event opened the hearts and mouths of both worthies, and Lord Armadilleros and Mr. White Bob turned round and grinned amicably in each other's faces like a couple of Dresden jars. It did my heart good to see them.'

'But, my dear Mr. Greville,' said Mrs. Holroyd, 'that may be all very shocking, and very true, for people who care about races and so forth, but for my part I only go to see the people, not the horses.'

'Oh, my dear Mrs. Holroyd, for God's sake don't say so! I can't believe you actuated by a motive so excessively *encanaillé*. What! you swayed by the most vulgar of all desires—the desire of sight-seeing—the same desire which carries Mrs. Simkins to Sadler's Wells, and the little Simkiniculi to Bartholomew Fair? What! you, the fastidious, the refined, the oracular Mrs. Holroyd, undergo a long journey—(how far is it to Epsom and Ascot?)—for the sole purpose of gaping—pardon the word—at a string of carriages? My dear Mrs. Holroyd, the next time my little cousins come to town, do oblige me, and yourself, by taking them to the Lord Mayor's procession. You can see finer carriages there without the trouble of going out of town for it.'

'Really, Mr. Greville,' gasped forth Mrs. Holroyd—she could no more.

'No,' resumed Greville, 'I cannot believe it. I think better of

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Mrs. Holroyd than she reports of herself. For persons who bet, for persons who run horses, there is some excuse. Our birth, our *usage du meilleur monde*, do not exempt us from liking to make, or being sorry to lose, a little money now and then. The patrician amusement of the gambling throws a sort of halo over the levelling tendency of the crowd; and races are only not the lowest of assemblies to people who go there with the intention of cheating—that is the ambition of our younger brothers,—or the predestiny of being cheated—alas, that is the nobler fate of our eldest.’

‘But, my dear Mr. Greville,’ said Lady Milsom, ‘if crowds are so indecorous, you must object even to routs, and anathematise balls.’

‘Exactly so; your large parties it is scarcely possible for anyone endowed with the least delicacy of feeling to attend. But they are one degree better than races, they are so perfectly insipid. A sublime passiveness, a waveless, breezeless stagnation of mind is the especial characteristic of the well-bred. Hence, routs are not irredeemable, and balls not absolutely criminal. Nevertheless, for my own part, an unhappy and morbid sensitiveness of nerves rarely suffers me to attend those parties of pain. My dear Mrs. Holroyd, you see now why I was unable to attend yours last night.’

Mrs. Holroyd longed to say something impertinent. Her intentions were better than her abilities, and she contented herself with a scornful laugh.

‘I was exceedingly amused,’ said Greville, ‘by hearing that a Lord somebody, a person of very bad family (his father having been a clever man who obtained a peerage by genius: nothing, you know, is so disgraceful as that), had said that it was a little presumptuous in me to set up laws for the world when *he* had never met me anywhere. I set up laws for the world—I, a poor recluse, a hermit, who only make excuses for not sharing the pomps and the pleasures of my kind—I set up laws! That is pleasant, is it not? And where should Lord somebody meet me? I don’t often go to Almack’s, and never to the Bear Garden.’

‘But, Mr. Greville,’ said Lady Bellenden, ‘you do not remember that things bad in themselves are made good by custom. It is surely bad taste to fly against opinion. If you are in the world, you must live as people do in the world.’

‘Charming Lady Bellenden, you speak with your usual wisdom. Your maxims correspond exactly with my own. I quarrel with you, not for wishing to live like other people, but for wishing not

to live like other people, and, after considerable trouble, failing in the attempt. I, whom you blame as eccentric, am the only commonplace person among you. My life, I allow it, is like the lives of persons who live at Lambeth, or who breathe empyreal air in the regions of Bloomsbury.'

'Nay, now you speak ironically; answer me seriously. By the world I mean one's own world, the people one lives with, whether one lives in one quarter or another, with this set or that. I suppose people who live in Bloomsbury like to do as *their* friends do. We who live elsewhere must do the same. You smile. Answer me, seriously mind, at least with what is seriousness in you.'

'Well then, seriously. I think the great source of that extreme vulgarity spread over what is termed "good society"—which all of us who have witnessed it confess, and which all who have not witnessed it admire—I think one great source of it in this country may be found in the very observation you have just made, "We must live like other people!" The eternal root of *mauvais ton* is IMITATION. Fondly, my dear Lady Bellenden, did I once hope that this imitation was the characteristic solely of the small unknown. With them I allow it is unpleasantly prominent; and, with the exception of my friend Mr. Hopkins in Bloomsbury—a charming person, Mrs. Holroyd, and the most consummate gentleman of my acquaintance—I must introduce you to him one of these days, but it's a great favour, remember—with the exception of Mr. Hopkins and his family, I know few people out of the *mode* who are much better bred than the people in it. But this perpetual imitation, this evergreen terror of Mrs. Grundy, is found to grow as much in one square as another, as much in Lady Milsom's drawing-room as in the back-parlour of Lady Milsom's couturier. Nobody, not the bright particular star in your world, dear Lady Bellenden, makes that great difference between one nobleman and another that is made among you. With them a Lord is a Lord. What can he be more? But you make a hundred nice grades and shades, and one of the lower grade is always striving to get into an upper one. How does he strive to do it? By imitation. One copies another, he in his turn copies a third, the third copies the fourth, and the world, *your* world, becomes nothing more than a great game at follow the leader. It is not difficult, my dear Mrs. Holroyd, to see why this makes all of you so vulgar. I use a *vulgar* word, but no other conveys what I mean. If you are always imitating, you can never be at your ease. Without ease no manner can be well-bred; that is a

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small part of the evil. Imitation produces a worse evil than want of ease. That evil is a want of independence. You are never "secure in your existence." You have recourse to a thousand little mean arts in order to be as much as possible like Mr. that, or Lady this. All these little mean arts are easily discovered. You become ridiculous; and, what is worse, you are unconscious of it. There is a child's play called school (by-the-by all English schools are child's play). One urchin assumes the schoolmaster, another the usher, the rest are the boys. My dear Mrs. Holroyd, this is the game your little great world are always playing. You sit on high stools of complacency as the schoolmaster and the ushers: but, while you think to overawe the rest, they have pinned your own foolscaps to your back, and the most amusing part of the spectacle is the solemn state of unsuspecting ridicule in which you are enthroned.'

'You don't keep your promise of answering me seriously,' said Lady Bellenden.

'Pardon me, I have kept it. But confess at all events that I have answered you truly. I will let you into another secret of your state. You know as well as I do that, if there be one word more eschewed by persons of refinement, by Society in short, than another, it is "fashion" or "fashionable." No phrase rouses all one's nerves into so preternatural a state of horror as "a man of fashion," "people of fashion," "quite the fashion," "all the fashion." Even while I quote these phrases I read in your eyes the pain I occasion—"And my frame trembles while my tongue relates." Why is this? You think it is because of the common mouths from which such verbal atrocities issue. Not at all. It is the thing itself which is so *mauvais*; it is not the word, but the thing which the word conjures, that vibrates so thrillingly along your system. It is the FASHION itself—the fashion which, under other names or epithets, you worship—the fashion itself which is vulgar. The idea of courting some people and being rude to others, the idea of confining yourself perforce to a set that bores you, the idea of being made by your acquaintance, or your dinners, or your diamonds,—this is the idea from which you all recoil directly it is presented to you from a vulgar mouth in a vulgar word.'

'Upon my word, Mr. Greville, you are excruciatingly severe,' said Mrs. Holroyd. 'I suppose you think the Duke of — has bad taste.'

'Ah, let us avoid personalities, my dear Mrs. Holroyd. It is so easy to attack persons, some think it so easy to praise them.'

'No,' said Lady Bellenden, 'I know that Mr. Greville does think the Duke of —— has the true tastes of a grand seigneur, and he especially admires him for giving to the parade of his retinue so great a personal simplicity.'

'True, Lady Bellenden, yet see how easily you spoil things, how easily you turn good taste into bad, by your eternal imitation. The Duke of —— never obtrudes his rank on you; and Lord —— puts his under lock and key. To display one's coronet ostentatiously is very justly thought condemnatory; Lord —— accordingly puts his in some part of his carriage where it is invisible. One ought to be ashamed of nothing one has, not even one's rank. It is as *mauvais ton* for one man to seem ashamed of being an earl, as for another to seem ashamed of being a linendraper. But you are all incorrigible, it is impossible to mend you.'

'Why?' said Lady Bellenden, laughing.

'Because a numerous aristocracy is always ill-bred. It must be so; and every new peerage adds a river to the ocean of your vulgarities. You cannot be cured as a body, but some individuals may be ameliorated.'

'How?'

'By thinking more of your own rank than about that of other people. This seems a very easy recipe; one can scarcely esteem it a difficult task to learn self-conceit. Yet with you it is difficult, so far as rank is concerned.'

'Is it your self-conceit that makes you so well-bred?' said Lady Milsom, laughing.

'Upon my honour I believe it is,' answered Greville, rising. 'But you know I am not one of your world. I am to retire to my Hermitage.'

'Adieu, *mon ours*,' said Lady Bellenden.

'Pardon me, dearest Lady Bellenden, it is you, the world, the fine world, who are the bears: and the thing common people call Fashion is the monkey which rides you.'

CHAPTER X.

(Supplementary.)

GREVILLE CONTINUED. 1829. ÆT. 26.

CHAPTER THE FIFTH.

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GREVILLE'S carriage stopped at the door of a house in the upper part of Piccadilly; a large house for London, which is only a city of cottages. It was Greville's home. Through a hall where the light shone on rows of statues and vases of flowers, Greville passed to his favourite apartment. It was the most spacious room in the house, for there was what may be termed '*a largeness*' in all Greville's tastes and habits. He had very few prettinesses of mind: he was not fond of small villas, or cabinet pictures, or books of sonnets, or very little women, or gardens of half an acre. His inclinations were quite opposed to the inclinations of those numerous good people who think smallness the greatest ingredient of elegance.

The furniture of the room corresponded with its extent; it was large, rich, costly, and for the most part what is termed ancient furniture. There was a great profusion of ornaments scattered around, but it was chiefly of a simple or a massive description; groups in bronze, gigantic candelabras of ormoulu, cabinets of ebony, tables of marble supporting immense vases rather than diminutive treasures of the gorgeous Sèvres or the ruder Dresden, gave the character to the apartment. On one side, the room opened to a small *salle à manger*, on the other to a library of great value to sensible men, and of indifferent price to the eyes of antiquarians.

If Greville had few prettinesses of mind, he had at least two *effeminacies*, if we may use such a word, of taste. He was exceedingly fond of perfumes, and scarcely less so of light. The rooms he inhabited were always at night as much lit up as would have sufficed for an ordinary number of friends, and were as invariably redolent

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of rare flowers, or the spirits of undying odours. These luxuries seldom failed to produce in him what others fly to battle, to hells, to love, to the bowl—as Lord Byron used to call Carbonell's green bottles—to find in a greater degree, viz. intoxication: for excitement is but drunkenness with a finer name. And though both these tastes are considered in modern times effeminate, yet they might perhaps be pardoned to a man rarely intoxicated by vanity, never by wine, and reduced therefore to some sort of substitute, which he found not in smoking, nor in snuff.

On entering his room Greville threw himself on a sofa, wheeled round a small table, took up a book, and appeared to busy himself in reading. But his thoughts were away from his task; and, like Sir James Milner Clavering, he indulged himself in soliloquy.

'Was not Parmenides right,' thought he, 'when that wise man of Elis said there are only two kinds of philosophy; one founded on reason, the other on opinion? Alas! there are few disciples of the former, and all London is a school for the latter. 'Tis rare fooling, this life. Would I could get out of it! But whither can I fly? Ay, there's the rub; I share the same fate as those whom I satirise. Everywhere monotony stretches around me like a wall. Fly where I will, I meet the same mimicry of all that is dull without being grand, and pert without being easy. We are like the criminals of the Roman Empire, of whom the historian so eloquently asks, "Where can they escape? There is no country beyond; the whole world is Roman!" Of all fortunes I envy most that of Bonnet, the French adventurer. He left his country, travelled, and became a king over savages. There was, indeed, a leap from this vast morass of sociality, this Salisbury Plain of civilisation; in which the only relief is a few elevations, ancient, barren, and stony, which seem always tottering, and which never fall. But what matter our mere ordinary, daily changes? What boots it to change from London to Paris, from Paris to Rome, from Rome to Vienna? The gigantic empire of custom, a custom varying only in minutiae—the same sublime, immovable BORE, in its great features—arrests, chills, petrifies us wherever we go. Shall I grow accustomed to this heavy air at last? or shall I turn desperate and sail round the world with Captain Parry? Had I but one feeling to ally itself to the desire of variety, the North Pole should receive me. But there is a wonderful *vis inertiae* in money, youth, independence, and indolence all united; which requires some strong impulse, such as vanity or ambition, to urge it into motion. Would I were either vain or ambitious! I look

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on the world, laugh at it, and stir not a jot for it, from it, or against it. Be it so. Perhaps this is real wisdom: let us see what the sage says to the contrary,' and Greville shifted his posture and rivetted his attention to his book.

Meanwhile, let us enter his heart and dissect his character.

An only son and an orphan, Clare Greville was very early thrown upon the world. He had profited deeply by his experience; few men knew human nature better; he had travelled much, he had observed much, he had read much, and he had thought much. At the age of twenty-five his mind was that of a man of fifty. He was himself accustomed to say, though with more point than wisdom, that he was twenty years too old for his own happiness. Before he was seventeen he had travelled over the greater part of England and Scotland alone and on foot; and perhaps it was in those wanderings that he had acquired his keenness of remark and the singular independence of his character. Many and strange were the adventures which, from his occasional confidences of the past, he appeared to have gone through. He had herded with strolling players, and kept tent with the Egyptians. Some story there was of his being once taken with a set of gentlemen of the road, and saved from durance only by an accidental recognition; but this was in all probability a vague and groundless fabrication, and had no other basis than the somewhat too vivid gusto with which he was wont to portray the habits of those personages, and the suspiciously accurate knowledge he seemed to possess of their customs and their haunts.

Putting aside exaggeration, it was clear that he had seen closely, and examined minutely, the manners and lives of the very lowest order of men; and that the fastidiousness for which he was noted in the more courtly grades of society had not prevented his researches in those nooks and corners of human kind from which even the mildest refinement is supposed so painfully to shrink.

Perhaps, in other and better scenes, adventures which came more readily home to his heart, and shed a more ineradicable dye over his nature, had occurred to him: for rarely, in those combining so many advantages as Clare Greville, does experience bring indifference to the world's object, and satire on the world's prizes, without being coupled with sorrow—and with that sorrow which is born of the affections. The reader will remember the sentence in Rousseau—it is one of those beautiful truths which express volumes in a phrase—'*une grande passion malheureuse est un grand moyen de sagesse.*'

Greville had appeared in the world of London at the ordinary age, viz. about two-and-twenty; but with what advantages, so far as experience is concerned, over his cotemporaries! He possessed a strong and inexhaustible fund of keen, solid, unvitiated sense; and this showed him society at once, and in its true colours. Unlike most *débutants*, he saw, without preparative or ordeal, that the materials of the great kaleidoscope were but tatters of rag and atoms of glass: and, not having been nurtured in prejudice till it grew like truth, it was quite enough for him to see the meanness, the trouble, the bustle, the heat, the coarseness of *la vie du monde anglais*, *cette vie qui se passe sur l'escalier*, in order to despise them.

He never dreamt for a moment of copying what he disdained. He rested solely on his own independence: and, while everybody, seeing him differ from themselves, cried out that he was the most artificial of human beings, the real fact was that he was the only natural person among them. It was indeed out of the order of things for Clare Greville not to be natural. If he had little vanity and less ambition, he had a store of lofty self-conceit; and he would no more have taken the trouble to put himself out of the way in order to flatter foibles or mimic defects, than others would have followed their own opinion in opposition to that of Lady — or the Duke of —. He stood in the world—the fine world, I mean—perfectly detached, alone, and self-supported. Ordinary bribes and common intimidations had no effect whatsoever upon him. He cared not three straws if he was asked to one house or excluded from another. On the contrary, he very frankly confessed that he found few houses so pleasant as his own, and that he considered it rather a favour to leave it for any other. Perfectly independent by birth and fortune, he was equally so by character. Nobody in the world could have obliged Clare Greville, nobody could oppress him.

It was said that he was rude or civil, according to art and premeditated design. Nothing could be more untrue. He was a great deal too natural for any premeditation upon matters he thought so utterly insignificant as those which seemed to society so important. He was a person who felt contempt strongly; it was one of the passions with him, the more so perhaps that he felt not hatred, and was utterly impregnable to revenge. When he felt contempt he was at little pains to conceal it. Hence his reputation for impertinence, the only reputation he enjoyed which he really deserved. But it was observed that he was never insolent to his inferiors, never to the bashful, never to *unpretending* insignificance, never to

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real merit. It was chiefly to fine people, and demi-fine people, that he reserved all the stings of his satire and the *brusquerie* of his impertinence. It was not true, as Lady Milsom said, that he was only ceremoniously insolent; he was sometimes, though rarely unceremoniously so, to people of the species I have described.

All Lady Mushrooms who talked of 'patronising' other Lady Mushrooms and ridiculed Bloomsbury Square; all political impostors who affected principles which they never felt and theories which they never practised, who got rid of all truths by saying that truth varies, and of all consistency by saying men should vary with it; all promising young men who prated on the Constitution and took extracts from Delolme; all dandies who pinned faith only to the apostles of White's, hope only to the promise of a patroness, and charity only to the vices that flourish on the right side of Oxford Street; Honourable Misters and Mistresses who talked of *the* Duke and who made it a point to live in Mayfair; all and each of these had to Clare Greville a sort of instinctive aversion. And, like all instincts, the aversion was equitable and prudent.

I need not say, then, that Greville was by no means a popular man: but the reasons which made him unpopular made him also universally courted. Invitations besieged his door, cards covered his table. You would have thought people adored, they were so eager to see, him. He went out capriciously; for he went out just when it pleased him, and that was not very often. This circumstance made him tenfold more *recherché*, because it prevented his being too *generally* the rage. His eccentricities of opinion made you remember him, and you met him so rarely that you were not tired of the eccentricity. The people who liked him best were those like Lady Bellenden or Lady Milsom. Too high for fear, it was refreshing to those whom everybody courted to be blamed now and then: and nobody in the Temple of Fashion ridicules the superstitious so much as the priests do.

If he had many enemies, Clare Greville was not without a few friends. He was not habitually intimate with anyone. You rarely saw him walking or riding in company with another. But there were some, perhaps, who loved him the more for not being perpetually with him: and, in the hackneyed phrase, those persons would have gone through fire and water for his sake.

This devoted attachment which he was able to inspire might have many sources; persons, like authors, who have the fewest admirers, are often the most ardently admired. But the principal

source of the attachment was probably the extraordinary confidence and unlimited trust which anyone once admitted to his friendship felt that he might repose in him. There were many men of whom you would sooner have asked a trifling favour—the loan of a horse, or the use of a carriage. There were none to whom you would so fearlessly have proffered a great request—you were certain that interest could not warp, that opinion could not deter him, that fear could not intimidate him. You were certain, too, of the iron resolution, partaking of obstinacy, which made a part of his character. The whole world could not have torn him, nor allured him, nor laughed him, from your side. Besides this you might feel sure that however great the benefit he conferred on you, it would not sit for ever upon his memory. He thought as little of favours conferred as of injuries received, and as he was unsusceptible of revenge, so he was unexacting of gratitude.

All this perhaps arose from his want of vanity. He had both the virtues and the failings which belong to that want. He would never have been so galling had he been vain. Vain people have the feelings so keen, that sympathy makes them alive to the feelings of others. Vain people are nearly always courteous: and, when they are not, it is because vanity makes them bashful. But it never makes them rude. Clare Greville almost unconsciously hurt the feelings (feelings indeed!) of the servile, the silly, the arrogant persons he sneered at, because it would have been impossible for *them* to have hurt *his* feelings. He had no sympathy with them, and this want of sympathy made him *obtuse* to their pangs, as malice would have made some satirists *rejoice* in them.

But it must not be supposed that Greville was merely a rude man, or that his conversation always wore the tone of satire. Perhaps, despite of all his originality—originality, that great spell which can make anyone the mode—he would soon have been left to the unmolested enjoyment of his house in Piccadilly if he had only carried a sting, and never been prodigal of honey. No one could pay compliments so beautifully, or make praise so thrilling. A word, a look, a movement, he could impregnate with a wooing and most winning eloquence. People, again, said all this was systematic artifice. Not at all. Greville was almost as open to admiration as to contempt; and he expressed the former with a deeper earnestness than he ever did the latter. It was a necessary consequence of his great loneliness of mind and concentrated and lofty self-esteem, not to be jealous of others. I question whether Greville ever felt envy

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in his life ; he certainly never expressed it. That carping, biting, querulous, mumbling spleen which arises, not from the faults, but the merits, of others, never jaundiced the more generous sarcasm of his censure. On the other hand, there was nothing timid, or qualifying, or niggardly, in his praise ; he was perfectly insensible of the Eastern policy of killing one's brothers to secure oneself.

I am not sure whether he could be said to have genius. He had little sentiment and a great deal of hardness in his temperament : this is not the ordinary texture of men of genius. His chief mental qualities were penetration, coolness, and great moral courage. He would never, perhaps, have shone as a man of letters, though he was well-informed, possessed some wit, and had an exquisite taste. He would have wanted the enthusiasm, the gusto, the *chaleur* required to write well. He could never have written verse, nor any species of composition where eloquence and luxuriance, painting or richness, are required. If he could have written anything tolerably, it would have been history. But he would have made an admirable soldier and a still better statesman. And his frame of mind would have exactly suited him to that train of speaking most effective among the wiser part of the English Senate ; simple, bold, ready, biting yet courteous, utterly free from flowers, never superfluous, and always possessing more sense than sound.

There was not much probability, however, that Greville would ever prominently come forward in public life. His system was thoroughly saturated with indifference. He wanted nothing but ambition to become a great man : but he was likely always to want that, and always therefore to remain what he was. Unfortunately, too, there was less hope of Greville than there would have been of any other man of his age. His mind was so old—I do not mean the word favourably—that you could scarcely expect it to change much. You could scarcely say of a man who seemed to be so well acquainted with the world, and in his own person to have experienced, buried, and survived such a variety of emotions, ‘He is young yet ; it is not the time of life for ambition.’ You might as well have made the same speech of your grandfather.

Nevertheless as he was tolerably rich, well-born, and esteemed clever, his natural sphere seemed to be public life, and his friends always talked of what ‘Clare Greville would do by-and-by.’ And Clare Greville was very much obliged to them, and strove unaffectedly to rouse within himself some sort of emulation to deserve the prediction. ‘But my mind,’ said he quaintly, ‘my mind is like a

slothful person : it stretches itself, it turns round : perhaps you think it is going to rise ; not at all, it has settled itself the more comfortably to sleep.'

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Another reason against the chances of future distinction for Greville was his universality of mind. No one object could be said to have for him a much stronger attraction than another : a proof, perhaps, of his deficiency in genius. Even in his knowledge, which was on all literary matters great, extensive, and well-arranged, there was no topic on which he was much better informed than another. This may be the sign of an accomplished, but it is seldom the prognostic of a great, man. To be great one must limit one's aspirings to one point, and bring all the rays of the mind to a single focus. To the empire of Ambition may be applied the same advice, given by Augustus,* respecting the empire of Rome : *You support its strength by limiting its boundaries.*

* Tacitus, *Annal.* l. 9.

CHAPTER XI.

(Supplementary.)

GREVILLE CONTINUED. 1829. Æt. 26.

CHAPTER THE SIXTH.

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By Heaven, it is amazing to me what a quantity of truths there are in the world, scattered about in little pieces! For my part, I spend my life picking them up, and I intend when I grow old to ask a certain author, who is a great hand at making books out of other people's thoughts, to cement them all together.

Wherever you see dignity be sure there is money requisite for the support of it.

That is a shrewd truth, and a witty one too, and there are more of the same sort in the place where it came from! * Sir James Milner Clavering aspired to the dignity of being not a great man, but a great gentleman—in a word, to the *succès de société*. Accordingly, leaving Lady Milsom's, he went to the house of Lady Dareville, who was the best écarté player in town. She had particularly asked our excellent young friend to her house, and she now particularly asked him to play at écarté with her.

There was a great deal of dignity in this situation, and it was proportionably expensive. Clavering lost rather more than he had done the night before. Captain Desborough, who came just in time to witness his loss, looked exceedingly angry with him.

It is a heartbreaking sight to see the money one thought oneself certain of, flowing perfidiously into the hands of another.

'My dear Clavering,' quoth the Captain, as Clavering drove him home, 'for Heaven's sake never play with Lady Dareville again. She is notorious. You are really too unsuspicious. I ought to be always by your side. Never play again but when I am with you.'

* *Popular Fallacies*, p. 217—one of the most *amusing* books in the English language. I say nothing about its wisdom, for I want it to be read by people who care more about amusement than wisdom.

'Faith,' thought Clavering, 'you are not always my guardian angel in those matters.'

'Lady Dareville is notorious, I repeat,' continued Desborough in a passion, 'and I believe she keeps spies upon all the hotels in town in order to hear of every man who comes up with a fortune to spend, and the spirit to spend it.'

'Very possible,' said Clavering, yawning.

'I am really now,' said the Captain, 'quite ashamed to request you to lend me a trifle only for one month, which I *did* intend to have asked you for. You are the only fellow in the world I would borrow from, positively the only one, but you have lost so much that——'

'Not at all, my dear Desborough; I shall be delighted to oblige you in any way. Say what you want, and you shall have it to-morrow. My losses are mere bagatelles, I assure you.'

'Well, you are the best-natured fellow in the world. I merely wanted three hundred pounds, and only for one month; but this house of mine costs me so much that I——'

'Not another word. I will send you the draft to-morrow, and never talk of payment till it is quite convenient to you.'

'I am deucedly obliged to you, Clavering,' answered the Captain. 'By-the-by, you must come and see my house. It will be the neatest thing in town when it is finished; invisible doors in all the walls, and such chairs, my dear fellow—you merely touch a spring, and they become sofas in an instant. Famous house for a bachelor.'

'Famous indeed,' said Clavering, who would have given the world for one of the said chairs at that moment, and who could scarcely speak for yawning.

'And looking-glass wherever you turn. But you must see my dressing-room. The wardrobe cost me 800*l*. Have you seen my toilet? It is not in bad taste, is it?'

'Capital taste, indeed.'

'I like having one's dressing things neat and comfortable; and a decent toilet, especially if the work of the basin and ewers correspond (I intend to have my hip-bath of silver), is really a very gentlemanlike thing; and it is especially good taste if one is not bad-looking, you know, Clavering.'

'If one is not bad-looking, as you say,' answered the Baronet.

'But here we are. Good night, my dear Clavering! devilish obliged to you.'

'Hip-bath of silver—grand fellow that Desborough!' thought

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Clavering, driving home. 'And the conceit of the dog; not bad-looking, indeed! What have his looks to do with his hip-bath?'

Our amiable young friend, it is clear, had not discovered the truth of which he himself was an example, viz. 'Wherever you see dignity be sure there is money requisite to support it.'

Captain Desborough could not be that very great person, Captain Desborough, for nothing. But if the Baronet did not discover one truth, he stumbled unwittingly on another, viz. the wonderful difference it makes in your views of a man's character when that cursed money comes in the way.

Captain Desborough was an unimpeachable oracle to Sir James Clavering till Sir James Clavering saw that Captain Desborough had a design on his pocket. But when oracles desire you to address yourself to them in bank notes, you are in a fair way of quarrelling with their inspiration—one reason, by the way, why I look harshly on the divinity of a doctor's prescription.

The next day at breakfast, Sir James Clavering, revolving over the events of the past night, recurred to Greville.

'I envy his impudence,' thought Sir James, 'but after all he is entertaining, and did not seem ill-natured to anyone but that Mrs. Holroyd, who is no very charming person. I have a great mind to call on him to-day, and by Jove I will too! Chorlton, the "Court Guide." Oh, Piccadilly. Send for the cab, Chorlton.'

Fraught with his noble resolution Clavering completed his dress, entered his cabriolet, and drove to Piccadilly. 'After all,' thought he, 'I will merely leave the letter and my card, 'twill save the bore of introducing myself personally.'

While, however, his cabriolet was at the door, and he was speaking to the porter, Greville himself came out. The two gentlemen looked, bowed; and Greville, approaching, glanced at the card in the porter's hand. No sooner did he catch the name than he came forward with great cordiality, and pressed Clavering so warmly to enter the house, that this excellent person, disentangling himself from his cabriolet, accepted the invitation.

'My dear Sir James,' said Greville when they were alone, 'I cannot tell you how glad I am that you allow me to make your acquaintance. Your father I have often heard spoken of in the highest terms by mine, and it will not be my fault if their friendship is not hereditary.'

Clavering replied suitably, and Greville continued—

'I saw you last night at Lady Milsom's, but I was not then

aware of your name. You have not, I think, been long in town.'

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'It is my first year.'

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'Ah, you are a happy person then. Balls give you pleasure. You can dance, you can dine out, you can even ride in the Park, and not feel a desire to commit suicide during those ravishing employments.'

'No,' answered Clavering, who heard all fine people complain of being *blasé*, just the same as all fine poets complain of being blighted, and who did not wish to be eccentric—'No, I can't say I am very fond of dancing or anything else one does here. *Mais que faire ?*'

'Exactly so! that is the eternal question to which there is no answer. Death is a great secret, but life is a greater. I am as much bored as you are: and, like you, I can only say when I am particularly *ennuyé*, '*Mais que faire ?*' and so one goes on for ever. How do you like Lady Milsom ?'

'Very much; she is "a very nice person."'

'You could not have expressed her character better. She is a very nice person, and is well-bred *insensibly*. Her theories are bad; her practice contradicts them, and is perfect.'

'You don't admire English manners much; I believe you like the French better ?'

'Nay, not much. The French begin to study better things than manners, though manners are very well worth study. But there is this difference between the deterioration of French manners and the continued badness of the English. The French are growing a free people, the English are growing a servile one: and the old Bull leaven makes them rude, though it does not prevent their cringing. The basest little thing I know anywhere is a fine English lady who follows the fashion which she cannot set, and fawns on the people she longs to bite. She is a nettle to her inferiors, and a sunflower to her betters !'

'Good heavens, what a libel !'

'True, on my honour. Recollect Mrs. Holroyd and Lady Finelow for instance.'

'Yes, but remember Lady Milsom, Lady Bellenden, Lady Agnes Percivale, a hundred people I could name to you.'

'Ah, but they are not fine ladies, they are really great persons, *dames du Faubourg*. Much too high to be fine, they don't make the mass, you understand. It is only of the mass I speak. But

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what shall you do this morning? I am going to see Lady Agnes Percivale. Do you know her? if so, will you call with me?'

'Nothing I should like better. Shall I drive you there?'

'Why I would rather walk if you have no objection,' said Greville. And Clavering, dismissing his cabriolet, and secretly charmed to find Greville such a much better fellow than he had imagined, agreed to the proposal.

I have said that Clavering was a very well-dressed person. 'Tis the first *belle passion* one has, that love of dress. Ah, how years, and sorrow, and life in the country, and the House of Commons, and sometimes a wife, moulder it away!

Nothing can again restore the hour
Of glory in one's *glass* and splendour in one's flower!

Now, by a sort of sympathy, Clavering had a great respect for persons who dressed well, and a great desire for their good opinion. You could see these sentiments in his walk, that ineffable walk young Englishmen who are half proud, half ashamed of themselves, always assume.

Of course, White's Club was a place of very great consequence in his eyes. His name had just been put down, and he hoped in the course of a reasonable time to be comfortably planted in that human tulip-bed. His eyes were fixed upon the window of the said club, and had already recognised the neckcloths of one or two of his friends, when Greville, rousing him from the reverie into which so interesting a sight had plunged him, said carelessly, 'Are you not very tired, Sir James?'

'Why, I am rather,' answered Clavering, imagining that Greville might wish to rest in one of the clubs in the street, possibly in the very house of the British Albigeois, i.e. the gentlemen of White's.

'So am I,' returned Greville, 'and nothing can be luckier, here is a fareless coach. Certainly there is a goddess, a Trivia, that watches over wearied travellers!'

So saying, to the inconceivable dismay, astonishment, horror, and maddening agony of Sir James Clavering, Mr. Greville arrested a hackney-coach that was lazily lumbering up the hill of St. James's Street; ordered it to the pavement; and, in the full view of the window of White's, in the full view of the owners of the well-remembered neckcloths Sir James Clavering had noted, in the full view too of the large eyes of Captain Desborough—eyes which looked at that exact moment larger than ever—Greville,

drawing himself gracefully aside, gave the *pas* of the hackney-coach step to his new acquaintance.

One wild, hurried, despairing look around did Sir James Milner Clavering cast; and then, darting into the coach, he sank into a corner and could have wished to have sunken into the earth. 'Had it been at night, or even at twilight,' he murmured inly, 'I would not have cared a straw; but at noon, in the full press of St. James's Street, exactly opposite White's! Oh, I shall die.'¹

Very leisurely did Greville enter the coach, and very leisurely did the coachman remount his box.

Time is measured by feeling. O'er Clavering's

soul

Winters of memory seemed to roll.

There never was a better tempered person than Clavering; and besides, he had a great, though unconfessed, reverence for Mr. Greville; nevertheless it was in a peevish and fretful voice that he said—

'Pah, how this d—d thing smells! and where the deuce do you intend it to take us?'

'To Lady Agnes Percivale's,' answered Greville.

'To Lady Agnes Percivale's? In a hackney-coach—at this hour too!' gasped Sir James Clavering.

'Ah, my dear fellow, if you think it a bad time to call, we can take a drive up and down Bond Street first. Shall I tell the coachman so?'

'My God, no! Let us drive on as fast as possible.'

'Right, we may go to Bond Street afterwards; I agree with you that it would be better to go first to Lady Agnes.'

Clavering made no reply. There was a rising at his throat, which took away his breath.

[¹ To the descendants of Sir James Clavering, who now drive about London *sans gêne* in hansom cabs, the mental anguish here attributed to their progenitor must seem like the exaggeration of a libellous satire on that right-minded man. But the sensations inflicted on him by the artful Greville would seem to have been felt no less strongly, in similar circumstances, by his illustrious contemporary, Sydney Smith, who says of himself, 'I well remember, when Mrs. Sydney and I were young, in London, with no other equipage than my umbrella, when we went out to dinner in a hackney-coach (a vehicle, by-the-bye, now become almost matter of history), when the rattling step was let down, and the proud, powdered red plushes grinned, and her gown was fringed with straw, how the iron entered into my soul.'—*Life and Correspondence of the Rev. Sydney Smith, by his daughter, Lady Holland*, chap. ix. p. 147.]

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Greville saw, and compassionated, the misery he had occasioned to the ingenuous young man. His heart melted, and he resolved to relieve it.

'One's own carriage,' said he, lifting up his legs and depositing them carefully on the opposite seat—'one's own carriage certainly is pleasanter than a hackney-coach; it is a thousand pities one cannot carry it in one's pocket, and so have it always at hand. But a hackney-coach is better than walking when walking is fatigue.'

'Humph!' muttered Clavering.

'I have heard,' continued Greville—'I have heard the Duchess of —— say that she remembered, just before the Peace, that it was thought utterly unpardonable for any man who styled himself "armiger," and had the *entrée* of respectable houses, to go about in coaches of this popular description. The destruction of so ill-bred a notion, a notion that implies such doubt of oneself, and fear for other people, was, the Duchess informed me, happily effected among the male *gens du monde* by the foreign Princes in their visit to England. By the Emperor Alexander in especial. That personage not only made all convenient use of these stationary equipages himself, but was accustomed to take with him one or two of those English grands seigneurs whom we now acknowledge to be the most thoroughly and truly fine gentlemen of the day.'

'Indeed!' said Sir James earnestly, and insensibly assuming a less shirking and latent position in the coach.

'Alexander possibly had Peter the Great in his mind,' continued Greville, 'but I will say one thing for his countrymen, that there is not in the discovered regions of the earth a person more thoroughly versed in the theories of real good breeding, and the refined subtlety of true *bon ton*, than a polished and travelled Russian. He is haughty, it is true, but he never shows it. No one more gracefully exhibits parade, no one more gracefully dispenses with it. Etiquette in all its grades he is certain to know, but it sits on him easier than a coat ever sits on an Englishman. He drops naturally into the customs of a country, but he never mimics its affectations. He is certain of being the *mode*, and certain of never "following the leaders of it." He is quite willing to pay respect to the rank of others, but he is always mindful of his own: not the "do you know whom I am, sir?" reminiscence of an Englishman, which arises from the irritating idea that you slight his claims, but the proper and dignified persuasion of self-consequence which

never offends others, solely because it never supposes an affront to itself. Then, if he is ignorant of books, which he generally is, how profoundly versed is he in men! With what a polish he conceals his ignorance of the first, and with what an ease he displays his knowledge of the latter. How scrupulously honourable, too, he is about money, a thing about which, I grieve and blush to say, an English gentleman is often villainously criminal. My Russian has only one fault, as a gentleman I mean (not as a man, for *there* he has several), viz. he is too miscellaneous and too public in his amours—*Voilà tout!*

'It was a rare time for the old ladies when the Russian army were in Paris!' said Clavering.

'Wonderfully so. Half the feminine antiquities of the city used to be absent every evening, and the other half went to seek them—Heaven knows where! But here we are.'

The coach stopped at the house of Lord Godalming, the father of Lady Agnes Percivale. There, to Clavering's infinite delight, Greville

Dismissed the thing on its accursed way.

Lord Godalming was a quiet, courteous, popular person who collected pictures, loved good living, read a few books, was a moderate Whig, a resigned widower, and an excellent, upright, honourable, melancholy man. In his house presided a lady distantly related to him, Mrs. Chichester. She was very useful as a chaperon *and friend* to Lady Agnes, who, Lady Bellenden excepted, was his only surviving daughter.

Lord Godalming was exceedingly fond of both his children, especially of his youngest, who was nearly twenty years younger than Lady Bellenden, and was at heart as proud as he ought to have been that his unmarried daughter was the beauty of town, and his married one the leader of *ton*.

When Greville and his new friend entered the drawing-room, they found three or four visitors had preceded them. Among them was the incomparable Mrs. Holroyd. She honoured Greville, for she was terribly afraid of him, with her most gracious smile. But her words she reserved for Sir James Clavering.

'How do you do?' she said, shaking the amiable youth by the hand, with all a nine-daughtered matron's cordiality. 'How do you do? Delighted to see you. Did you ride here on your beautiful charger?'

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'Hem—no,' answered Clavering, hastening to change the subject, 'but I suppose Miss Holroyd is riding, as usual; she threatens to be quite an Amazon.'

'Oh, yes, poor thing, she is very fond of riding. 'Tis a charming exercise. You prefer your cabriolet. By-the-by, I suppose you came in that, and I wish to show Lady Agnes your bay horse; it is such a beauty.'

'Ah, *my dear Mrs. Holroyd*,' said the merciless Greville, 'don't trouble yourself to go to the window. One must travel through pain to find pleasure, and we came to see *you* in a hackney-coach.'

'A hackney-coach!' said Mrs. Holroyd, turning to Sir James Clavering, whose pure and eloquent blood spoke in his cheek. 'No, really!'

'Really, my dear madam,' answered Greville, playing with his cane. 'Really, you have no conception what a charming erratic motion is that of a hackney-coach. 'Tis a favourite method of progression with Sir James Clavering.'

'Oh, indeed!' said Mrs. Holroyd. 'Well, there is something *very manly* in it.'

What there is manly in a hackney-coach, Heaven only knows. But to make oneself uncomfortable is to be manly in this country. I rather think, too, a little mixture of uncleanness is thought essential to merit that epithet. I have heard many persons say it is effeminate to use the bath too often.

'Mr. Greville,' said Lady Milsom, 'always travels in a stage-coach, does he not?'

'Never, Lady Milsom, if I can help it, because I shouldn't wish voluntarily to expose myself to rude contact. 'Tis not the coach I object to, but the people in the coach.'

'Well,' said Lady Milsom, 'I envy men the power to travel about in those coaches. They must see so much of life.'

'Tis a very disagreeable sort of life, I assure you, Lady Milsom. I know nothing that would sooner make a man a misanthrope than travelling from London to the Land's End in a stage-coach. You have no idea of the mingled hatred and contempt you would feel for your fellow-travellers before you completed your journey.'

'What, are they rude?'

'Rude! Oh, your John Bull never pays money for anything without thinking he buys the right to affront all his neighbours. Rude! by the spirit of Howard they are positively inhuman. If a

woman were found dying by the roadside, I am fully convinced that it would not happen once in ten times that an inside passenger would surrender his seat to her. And whenever you do meet civility, it is, as a witty young friend of mine very justly observed, always in the shape of an old lady who offers you apples and mutton sandwiches.'

'Well,' said Lady Milsom, laughing, 'but the intention even in that civility is good.'

'Yes, but it is never offered to people who are ill-dressed. The old lady would never give her apples and sandwiches to a person who was starving.'

Here Lady Bellenden entered.

We must take an early opportunity of describing that lady more minutely than we have yet done. Whenever she entered the room all conversation sustained a sort of revulsion. She never failed to produce what is termed theatrically 'an effect.' She was beyond all comparison the most striking and brilliant person in London. She often wanted good taste, but she never failed to dazzle. And besides, she was a woman of genius, real impassioned, vivid genius. She received the salutations of the party as a homage, and seating herself at a little distance from the group, beckoned Greville to her.

'Come hither, Greville,' said she.

I have said Lady Bellenden wanted good taste, and she showed it by omitting the Mr. to Greville's name.

'Come hither,' said she languidly.

Greville obeyed.

Lady Bellenden spoke in a low tone, and the only person present within hearing of the conversation between herself and Greville was Lady Agnes.

'I have been reading,' said she, 'that most beautiful work of Madame de Stael on the "Influence of the Passions." Tell me what you think of it.'

'It is beautiful,' said Greville, 'and I never read that chapter on love in especial without being affected to a degree which no other writing of sentiment can excite within me. It spoke to my heart more than even the "Reveries" of Rousseau, or the fourth canto of "Childe Harold." I feel as if I could have loved that woman had she been twice as ugly as I hear she was.'

'No, you could not have loved her,' said Lady Bellenden. 'I knew her well. You could not have loved her. Her sentiment was

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deeply felt, it is true, but it was purely selfish. I repeat you could not have loved her. But oh! how vividly she has portrayed love—love, that mysterious, miserable, overwhelming passion! Hers is not the little paltry sentiment doled out in weights and scruples—an enclosure of tame thoughts in a pale of commonplaces—it is the real, ardent, all-engrossing love which pervades the whole system: never to be curbed, never to be rooted out, elevating the soul beyond human conception, or plunging it below human degradation. It is the very extravagance, nay, I may say the very profaneness, of her thoughts which render them so irresistible in their truth. “If,” (you remember that singular and daring passage?) “if,” she says, “there are in the universe two beings united by a perfect sentiment of love, and also by a bond of marriage, every day on their knees let them bless their Creator. Let them look down in pity on the universe and its greatness, let them view with astonishment, let them cherish with anxiety and with awe, a happiness which so many accidents must have conspired to bestow, a happiness which raises them to a height so immeasurably beyond the rest of mankind. Yes, let them view their lot with a certain trembling apprehension, perhaps, that their fate may not be too far superior to ours; they have already received all the happiness which we expect in another life. *Perhaps for them there is no immortality!*”

Low was the tone with which these words were uttered. But it trembled with deep and passionate agitation. Greville did not answer. His brow was dark and clouded. He raised his eyes, they encountered those of Agnes Percivale, which were bent timidly upon him. The colour rushed violently to her cheek as she met his eyes and withdrew her own. Lady Bellenden saw the blush, and her own cheeks grew as white as death. There was a short but embarrassed pause, and Greville was the first to break it.

‘Yet,’ said he, ‘if you were to search all the works of Madame de Stael for a sentence you wished persons to ridicule, you could scarcely select one more likely to be laughed at by dull persons affecting to be lively, than that which you have just repeated.’

‘Yes,’ said Lady Bellenden, putting out her beautiful lip, ‘but there is not a surer sign of a fool than to make a butt of romance.’

‘True,’ answered Greville, ‘there are plenty of little wits who, like their namesake in Bartholomew Fair, think themselves wonder-

fully clever if they can make “ Leander a dyer’s son about Puddle Wharf, and Hero a wench of the Bankside ! ” ’

CHAP.
XI.

‘ This from you,’ said Lady Bellenden sarcastically, ‘ you who seem always to despise sentiment ! ’

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‘ Sentiment, dear Lady Bellenden, but not passion. Passion is much too serious a thing for disdain ! ’

‘ But if you saw it in a woman, you would despise her for it. Oh men, men, you are terrible monopolisers ! ’

CHAPTER XII.

*(Supplementary.)*GREVILLE CONTINUED. 1829. *Æt.* 26.

CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

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WHAT singular and contradictory combinations make the stratum of each individual mind !

Lady Bellenden was a woman whose passions seemed to despise the world, and whose actions were those of one who adored it. No one was more capable of that rare, noble, devoted love which we dream of between the age of sixteen and twenty-one. To her lover she would have sacrificed the world and herself. And yet in all other emotions she was one of the most worldly and the most selfish of human beings.

She was wedded to pomp and glitter, and yet she despised the persons for whom the pomp and the glitter were intended. By a confusion of mind she loved parade in the abstract, without being gratified by the effect it produced. If she had been cast in a desert island, she would have sought the mirror of a smooth stream to behold herself. She would have tamed all the peacocks in the island, and taught them to walk before her with their tails spread. She could not be termed a vain woman, and yet I know of no other epithet wherewith to express her character. Everyone applied that epithet to her, and she certainly lived and moved as if no other being deserved it half so well. She was haughty, violent, exacting. She would, I repeat, have sacrificed everything for her lover, but she would have teased him to death and then poisoned herself on his grave.

All was unquiet and brilliant in her mind, half diamonds, half tinsel. Her thoughts were always acting a sort of melodrama. She was internally and essentially theatrical. Yet throughout all the artificial and showy properties of her temperament there ran a vein

of the softest tenderness; the least thing, a letter written in child-hand, a strain of music, a kind word, a kind look, dissolved her into tears. Poetry and music seemed to make a part of her nature, so powerfully did she feel them, so utterly did they subdue her. Her imagination was her tyrant, it reigned over every part of her system.

Perhaps in that source was the mystery of her character to be traced. It was her imagination, not vanity, that made her so addicted to show. She loved to surround herself with all things that the world covets. Not because they were the insignia of station and of wealth, but because they were faint mimicries of the gorgeous ideas in her own fancy. Hence, the eccentricity as well as the splendour of her tastes.

Her house was more like the poet's dream of an Eastern palace than the mansion of an English noble. Her dress partook of the same *ideality*. Her very carriages were different from other persons'. Thus poorer and less imaginative leaders of the *monde* always sneered at Lady Bellenden's taste, while they confessed her magnificence. Even her walk was that which you might fancy a Corinna or a Calypso would have assumed—regal, but the regality more of a goddess or a crowned poetess, than of an earthly queen. She was systematically lavish and profuse; a Republic, says Franklin, may be maintained out of the waste of a Monarchy. You might have made the glory of a dozen Peerages out of the waste of Lady Bellenden's wardrobe and *bijouterie*.

The same show, luxury, and pomp pervaded her intellectual acquirements. She was superficially, but brilliantly, informed. She was eloquent, and if she pleased it, she might have been witty. But she thought wit beneath her.

How came she to love Greville, so little like her? She never would have loved him for himself. It was the meretricious and unreal part of him that attracted her imagination. She loved him for his fame, the fear he was held in, the mystery of his early life, the daring with which he opposed himself to popular opinion, the singularity of his independence, his very *insouciance* to herself whom all others affected to worship. Besides this, his style of countenance, half classical, half romantic, won her admiration far more than features much handsomer, but more ordinarily handsome, would have done.

Her love, then, for Greville was seated in her imagination! Yes, and it was *therefore* that it was immoveable and ineradicable. Her heart was a very shallow and light soil. The least

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seed thrown there sprung up, it is true, but it withered the next morning. But her imagination was a rock: an old cedar-stump once rooted there would stand for ever, and defy wind and storm. In short, imagination was, with her, what very ardent, deep, and powerful feeling is in others.¹

'Your Ladyship never looked so beautiful,' said Lady Bellenden's woman, as her mistress stood opposite to her Psyche, radiant with gems, and glowing in all the voluptuous richness of her stately and matured beauty.

'Does this hat really become me, then?' said Lady Bellenden more warmly than she usually spoke on such matters.

'Oh, wonderfully, my lady, wonderfully!' answered the abigail, and Lady Bellenden once more surveyed with haughty complacency the mirror which never, in truth, had reflected a more glorious image.

'Can the cold grace,' thought she as she gazed, 'and the childish features of Agnes really have for Greville a charm superior to that which I can command? No, impossible. But I have as yet tried upon him no spell but that of general effect. To-night let me try the witchery of individual flattery.'

Possessed with this thought, Lady Bellenden descended to the reception-rooms. And there—in this world Romance and Common-place are ever jarring one against another—she perceived seated alone in a semi-slumber the person of his Lordship.

It has been said that marriages are made in heaven. Very possibly, but heaven exports the raw materials from earth. The workmanship may be admirable, but the stuff might be better.

'Well, my dear Lord, this is kind. I almost feared you would not give up your clubs to me, even for one night.'

'Ah—hem—ah, Lady Bellenden is it?' said his Lordship, yawning; 'cursed late these people make it, don't they? No, Julia, I thought it would be but a proper compliment to you to attend your *soirée*. I think in this country—hem, ha—the domestic virtues are not so much cultivated as they used to be, and really, "decencies are moralities," as that great man, who was it? said—hem, ha! We, dear Lady Bellenden, will set a better example.'

'You are right, Bellenden,' said the beauty, seating herself gracefully—Lady Bellenden would never have been seen out of an

¹ I have reason to believe that the character here ascribed to Lady Bellenden was compounded from qualities observed by the author in two actual persons. But in some few of its features it bears a resemblance, not unpleasant, to his autobiographical portrait of Lady Caroline Lamb.

attitude even by a grey cat—' and then who should adhere to ceremonies if we do not? Nothing is worse taste than that affectation of over ease and want of etiquette now growing so common. You recollect, my dear Lord, the anecdote in the life of Lord Herbert of Cherbury?'

'Ahem, no, my dear Julia, what was it? Great man, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, very great man. Don't you think that picture of *me* hangs too much in the shade?'

'We will change it to-morrow, Bellenden. Why, the anecdote is this. An ambassador to Philip the Second of Spain neglected some business of great importance in Italy because he could not agree with the French ambassador about some trifling punctilio. "How?" said the King to him, "have you left a business of importance for a ceremony?" "A ceremony," retorted the ambassador, "what is your Majesty's self but a ceremony?"'

'Very good, very good indeed. You have an excellent memory. "What is your Majesty's self but a ceremony?" an excellent answer, faith, and full of morality! But—thank Heaven there is the first knock! I wonder who it is. I hope G. A. will come soon. Must get up a rubber. D—d bad player, that fellow, Wilson. Can't see what people see in him. Ah, Agnes, how do you do?' as his Lordship's sister-in-law entered with Lord Godalming. 'Upon my honour you look superb. And Lord Godalming, my good friend, rejoiced to see you so well. Quite rid of the gout, eh? Will you make up a rubber?'

'With pleasure; who are to be the others?' said Lord Godalming. And the two noblemen paired off to another corner of the room, amicably conversing about odd tricks.

Meanwhile, as Lady Agnes seated herself on the ottoman, Lady Bellenden said, 'And how has my pretty Agnes past the day? Tell me, as a secret of the toilette; for your occupation, whatever it be, has made you handsomer than ever!'

'Ah, Julia,' said Lady Agnes, laughing, 'when will you leave off flattery, or why were you not born a man, and a candidate at a contested election? What hearts would you not win, and what fascinations likely to win them would you spare?'

'I, Agnes, oh imagine *me* at an election—I who care less for golden opinions than any other person in London! You laugh, nay is it not true?'

'Why this party then?' said Agnes, 'which I know you will say to-morrow tired you to death? Why is your house the handsomest and the most crowded house in town?'

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'Simply because light, show, crowds, and talk give me a sort of intoxication. It is not pretty, you know, as poor Lady L—— used to say, with her graceful manner and coarseness of phrase, for us women to drink: and we are not happy enough to be always content with sobriety.'

As she spoke Lady Bellenden sighed.

'Yet,' said Lady Agnes, 'you who affect the *précieuse*, and know what wise men of old said, tell me if we are not afraid that we never shall be happy if we exceed that sobriety, as you call it. The sages tell us to keep the mind calm, and you would always be putting it into a fever.'

'But the sages were mistaken, my pretty preacher. Or they never lived in London and found that calm was the parent of *ennui*. One may easily keep the mind in *too* exact a method. You remember that the gentleman in the "Spectator" who lived according to his mathematical chair was forced to confess himself "in a sick and languishing condition."'

Here Lady Bellenden was interrupted by the arrival of some of her friends.

These friends were followed by more, the party thickened, the rooms grew warmer, and in a short time motion and comfort became alike impossible, and everyone was convinced that it was the most delightful party of the season.

'How I love these *réunions choisies*, so peculiar to us,' said Greville to Lady Milsom, as they stood together by one of the doors. 'How different from the heartless frivolity, the insipid dissipation, of France!'

'And pray, most patriotic of idlers, what brings you hither?'

'Lady Milsom,' answered Greville, 'I blush my gratitude, and appreciate the value of the sacrifice, but I must confess I am not——'

'Vain enough to monopolise all the attraction. May not Lady Bellenden share it with me? See, she comes to assert her claim!'

'My dear Lady Milsom,' said Lady Bellenden, gliding through the throng which allowed her to divide its ranks and then closed again, 'firm as the Phrygian phalanx'—'My dear Lady Milsom,' said Lady Bellenden, with that magic tone, and wooing smile, and overflowing tenderness of endearment, which it must be allowed are peculiar to 'good society,' and which make indifference look so exceedingly like imperishable friendship—'How glad I am to see you! But no chair? Heavens! how tired you must be; come into

he next room. Mr. Greville, escort us! We will find seats and
form a coterie.'

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XII.

So saying Lady Bellenden moved onward.

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Where is the Phrygian phalanx gone?

The press again divided, and the two ladies and their escort arrived
safely in another apartment.

CHAPTER XIII.

(Supplementary.)'GREVILLE' BROKEN OFF. 1829. *Æt.* 26.

CHAPTER THE EIGHTH.

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HERE Lady Bellenden, touching a spring concealed in the hangings of the wall, opened the entrance to a very small room fitted up in an Egyptian fashion.

Such surprises were characteristic of the owner of the house, and Lady Milsom's lip quivered with a sneer, intended only for Greville, as she declared her delight at Lady Bellenden's beautiful taste.

[It appears to have been the author's intention to describe in this place the commencement of a conversation between Greville and the two ladies. For, after the paragraph printed above, he inserted in brackets, and as it would seem by way of a memorandum to himself, the words '(Conversation on the war)': and what follows suggests the impression that it must be a development of some theme started by Greville before the unwritten conversation was interrupted by the entrance of other guests.

It was my father's frequent practice to reserve such details for completion until after he had more or less worked up the main points in his story.]

It was not to be expected that this retreat would be left perfectly unmolested by every individual among the hundreds who were expiring with heat and weariness.

Accordingly, Lady Bellenden and her two associates were soon joined by three or four of the most favoured guests of the hostess.

Among these was Mr. Verulam, a gentleman well known for eccentricity and a certain rude acuteness of observation which was particularly agreeable to his friends. He was a short, stout person, with a keen grey eye, a rosy cheek, a mouth curved upwards, and a chin not condemned to single blessedness, but 'carrying double,' like a farmer's pillion. He was rich, well-born, and an excellent man of business. He was a radical in politics, and was familiar with all classes. He was generally esteemed good-natured, clever, 'refreshing,' unrefined; and Lady Bellenden above all other persons valued him, because he was different from the incorporated insipidities whom she was in the habit of meeting.

'You are just in time to confute Mr. Greville,' said Lady Bellenden when Verulam appeared; 'he declares that we are disimproving daily, and you hold, you know, quite a different opinion.'

'Pardon me,' said Greville gaily, 'I don't say that the many (I use the old cant antithesis) are deteriorating; I hold, on the contrary, that men are improving, and gentlemen disimproving—a sign of the times which Mr. Verulam will possibly hail with rapture!'

'Not true, Greville, not true,' said Mr. Verulam emphatically, and shaking his head with a solemn air. 'Gentlemen and ladies too, ay, and English gentlemen and ladies into the bargain, are a million times better than they were fifteen years ago—before the peace for instance. Ah, Mr. Greville, you are young, you are young, but could you have seen the things I saw during the late war.'

'Why, what did you see?'

[Here the manuscript of 'Greville' comes to an untimely end. But proof exists that the conception of the tale had been fully elaborated in the mind of its author before he flung it aside.

Not only the main incidents and characters had been planned, down to the last scene of the *dénouement*, but even the distribution of the scenes, and the proportions to be observed in the conduct of the narrative, were all arranged and noted.

A synopsis of them, which I subjoin, was faintly pencilled on the torn cover of the finished chapters. The pencil marks are almost effaced, and it is with difficulty that I have deciphered

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them. But they are not without interest as illustrations of my father's habitual method of composition. They show the importance he attached to dramatic proportion in the management of his plots, and the precision with which he fixed their successive stages in his mind before attempting to transfer them to paper.

As regards the plot of 'Greville' itself, these pencilled memoranda indicate the intended development of an interest deeper and more human than any which could be elicited from a mere succession of pictures of society in its most superficial aspects: and they explain the pains bestowed on the sketching in of Lady Bellenden's character, by revealing the tragic importance of the part she was designed to play in the progress of the drama.

The 'Boy,' the 'Showman,' and the 'Woman,' mentioned in the Synopsis, are characters which do not appear in the opening scenes; and I must leave to the reader's imagination, or his curiosity, their unelucidated relations to the other *dramatis personæ*.]

BOOK SECOND, p. 140 (*effaced*).

Introductory Chapter. Call this book a Satire on Fine Life.

With Greville—(*effaced*).

(*Torn*). With Greville into low scenes. Interview with the Boy. Greville engages him.

(*Torn*). Breakfast. Satire on that amusement. Scene with Lady Bellenden.

(*Torn*). 20. Lady Agnes for the first time thinks Greville attached to her. Lady Bellenden sees her that evening. Impressive scene with her.

Chapter 3. Opera.

„ 4. Captain Desborough's house.

„ 5. Greville's second interview with the Boy.

„ 6. Engages Lady Bellenden, etc., to his dinner. Conversation on fashionable novels. Lord Besburgh best bred man in England.

Chapter 7.	Lady Bellenden.	
„ 8.	Greville's Supper. Very witty and brilliant. Lady Agnes. Lord Bellenden present. Reappearance of the Boy. Lady Bellenden's swoon.	CHAP. XIII. Æt. 26

VOLUME II.

Introductory Chapter.

Chapter 1. Return to the Boy and Showman.

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„ 4. Scene returns to Lady Bellenden. Morning. Her chocolate. Opium. Meditations.

„ 5.

„ 6.

„ 7.

„ 8.

„ 9.

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BOOK III.

Chapter 1. Greville goes to his country seat, description thereof.

„ 2. Lady Agnes. Mysterious appearance of Woman.

„ 3. Fête at Greville's. His civility to Mrs. Holroyd, etc. His love to Agnes. More felt than ever. Scene in the grounds. Mysteriously broken off.

„ 4. Agnes conversing with Lady Bellenden. They see the Woman. Lady Bellenden's fright.

„ 5. The warning to Agnes. Her terror. Greville finds her. The misunderstanding.

„ 6. Greville's pique. Resolution to go abroad. Lady Bellenden's advances to him. Her despair.

VOLUME III.

CONTINUATION OF BOOK IV.

Chapter 1. Scene goes back to Greville's escape, etc.

„ —. Recovery of the Child.

BOOK V.

Chapter 1. Greville breaks it to Lady Bellenden. Parents, etc. Lady B.'s feelings. Concealment of them.

<u>BOOK</u> <u>VIII.</u> <u>1830-32</u>	Chapter 2)	The Woman comes to him, and tells him of the arts
	„ 3)	she employed about Agnes and the reason. She
		will leave England for ever, now that her son is
		reinstated.
	„ 4.	Greville and Agnes.
	„ 5.	Lady B.'s visit to Greville.
	„ 6.	Lady Bellenden's reflections, etc. Her visit to Agnes,
		who is fast asleep with Greville's portrait on her
		bosom.
	„ 7.	Lady Bellenden's death.
	„ 8.	and last. Greville's marriage, etc.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.