

PART I.]

[PRICE 1s.

# MORNING STUDIES

AND

## EVENING PASTIMES:

MEMOIRS AND VERBAL PORTRAITS, MISCELLANEOUS  
PAPERS, AND POEMS.

BY DR. SPENCER T. HALL,

"THE SHERWOOD FORESTER,"

Author of "The Forester's Offering," "The Peak and the Plain,"  
"Days in Derbyshire," "Mesmeric Experiences,"  
and other Works.



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Among the Memoirs and Verbal Portraits to follow, are those of MARY RUSSELL MITFORD, Author of "Our Village;" C. R. PEMBERTON, "the Wanderer;" WILLIAM HUTTON, Mill-boy, Stocking-weaver, Bookseller, and Antiquary; JOHN HENRY, Fifth DUKE OF RUTLAND; JOHN CLARE, "the Northamptonshire Peasant;" ROBERT BLOOMFIELD, "the Farmer's Boy;" GEORGE HERBERT, Parson of the Olden Time; JOHN GRATTON, "the Quaker Preacher;" BERNARD BARTON, "the Quaker Poet;" GEORGE FREDERICK WILLIAM, Seventh EARL OF CARLISLE; NANNY SHACKLOCK, a Village Florence Nightingale; the two MONTGOMERIES; GEORGE COMBE, the Phrenological Writer; WILLIAM GREGORY, Professor of Chemistry; DR. DICK, "the Christian Philosopher," and other Scottish Worthies; BARON LIEBIG; an IRISH CHIEF and his People; JAMES S. BUCKINGHAM; ROBERT OWEN; JOHN EDWARDS, "the Dovedale Poet;" PHEBE, Mother of the HOWITTS; GEORGE PURSEGLOVE, "the Poor Man's Poor Friend;" MRS. JERRAM; FREDERICK DAVIES, a Hero of Humble Life; CLAUDE GAY, and other interesting Characters.

\* \* SECTION II will contain MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS on many themes. SECTION III will consist of "LAYS FROM THE LAKES" and other Poems;—and the whole, when complete, will form a Volume which it is hoped may be interesting alike in the private study and the family circle.



## TO THE CRITICAL READER.

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*Though deeply interested in Physiognomy and Phrenology, as in whatever else may throw light on human character, the Author of this work can honestly say that he never sought interviews or intercourse with persons of note for the mere purpose of studying and sketching their peculiarities. But walking through life with open eyes and mind ; loving to read the biography of the past ; and often thrown more by accident than design in contact with living people remarkable for their public spirit, picturesqueness of intellect, or private worth, he has not only enjoyed the impressions they have made upon him, but the giving off again of those impressions, where it could be done without offence to taste and right feeling, for the pleasure and instruction of the many.*

*It was thus that, during the last twenty years, most of the following memoirs, traits and verbal portraits were contributed to the periodical press ; and the Author having frequently been solicited to revise and present them, with additions, in a concise form, a volume was announced several years back with that view ; but from various causes its issue was delayed. One writer strongly advised that it should be withheld altogether, on the ground that it was wrong to publish anything we had learnt from ordinary intercourse with people of distinction ; but with singular inconsistency followed that advice almost immediately with a printed volume of her own recollections of distinguished friends and acquaintance ! Acting on the opinions of others*

upon whose candour and judgment he can better rely, he ventures forth at last, and trusts that his work will not be unwelcome in its present form. The reader will see, as the parts successively appear, that a few of the Characters sketched were of a past generation, and not personally known to the Author; others were known to him only as they might be to thousands, in public; but with the major portion he was, in a greater or less degree, on terms of intimacy, and not seldom of closest friendship. His allusions to persons still living are comparatively rare.—Of course, he is not responsible for the sentiments, theological or political, of those whose lives he delineates; nor does he make them stalking-horses for conveying his own. His paramount desire is to be just to them and theirs.

It remarkably happens that Mr. S. C. Hall is coming out at the same time with a work of somewhat similar bearing, which is here alluded to, to prevent any confusion in the public mind that might arise from similitude of name or theme. These sketches were for the most part written and printed before the Author heard anything of those by Mr. S. C. Hall. The coincidence in the time of publication is curious—yet a mere coincidence. There is room for both, without the least reason for envy or jealousy on either side; and those to whom “*The Sherwood Forester*” and his contemporary are best known will probably be among the readiest to believe it. “*What is writ is writ.*”

The Chapters on other themes, and the Poems, will tell their own tale.

South Parade, Burnley,  
November, 1870.



## Chapter First.

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ERASMUS DARWIN, M.D. F.R.S.

(A CRITICISM—JAN. 1854.)

DID you ever notice the similitude between the heads of Dr. Darwin and Dr. Samuel Johnson—and not between their heads only but their general configuration,—their greatest constitutional difference being one of temperament? Their portraits being at this moment side by side before us, how we wish it were possible to take off their wigs, that we might trace still further their comparative cranial, as clearly as we can their physiognomical development! What a likeness in the outlines of their massive foreheads, in their large noses, their ample cheeks and double chins, and in several minor particulars of expression, as well as in their abdominal rotundity! It is true that, on the whole, Johnson looks the more heavy and reflective of the two—more ponderous and pondering; while Darwin has an apparent advantage in vigilance and keenness. But this may be more or less owing to pictorial accident; and if any one unacquainted with the facts of the case were shown the two engravings, he might very rationally be disposed to think that they represented an elder and a younger brother—or a father and son—or even the same person at different ages! And is there not also a striking analogy in their mental calibre and, (with the allowance due to difference of education and pursuit,) in their cast of thought? What Johnson was in moral, Darwin was in natural philosophy. They were much alike cumulative, analytical and



constructive,—one in his metaphysics the other in his physics,—and were similarly addicted to the use of classical metaphor, to philology, and a love of highly scholastic and sonorous phraseology,—to say nothing whatever of their relation to the muses. Their personal history and circumstances were, however, in many respects, widely different, though even here again there is some analogy traceable, in each being the leading spirit of a literary coterie—one metropolitan, the other provincial—and each as absolute as he was intellectually fascinating.

According to biographical dictionaries and local histories, Erasmus Darwin was born at Elton, in the vale of Trent, near Newark, December 12th, 1732; was sent for the rudiments of his education to the school of the Rev. Mr. Burrows, at Chesterfield; and pursued his subsequent studies at St. John's College, Cambridge, where in 1755 he took his bachelor's degree in medicine, maintaining in his thesis, on that occasion, that the movements of the heart and arteries are immediately produced by the stimulus of the blood. While at Cambridge, and four years prior to taking his degree, he composed a poem of no great merit, on the death of Frederick, Prince of Wales. From Cambridge he went to Edinburgh, where he took the degree of Doctor of Medicine, and had at first some thoughts of practising in Nottingham, but very early removed to Lichfield. At this time Dr. Darwin was twenty-four years of age; and Miss Anna Seward gives us his portrait as follows:—"He was somewhat above the middle size; his form athletic, and inclined to corpulency; his limbs too heavy for exact proportion. The traces of a severe small-pox; features, and countenance, which, when they were not animated by social pleasure, were rather saturnine than sprightly; a stoop in his shoulders, and the then professional appendage of a large full-bottomed wig, gave him at that early period of life, an appearance of nearly twice the years he bore. Florid health, and earnest good humour, a sunny smile on entering a room and accosting his friends, rendered in his youth that exterior agreeable, to which beauty and symmetry had not been propitious."

At the age of twenty-five Darwin married Miss Howard, a young lady of eighteen, whose person is said to have been as lovely as her mind was accomplished. And in the home to which her beautiful spirit gave a constant and cheerful light, with a family growing round him, we see him rising fast in reputation and courted by most of the literary and philosophical minds of the district and the time. Among his frequent visitors we are told was Michell, a skilful astronomer; Captain Kier; Boulton, the celebrated mechanic; James Watt, his partner, the great improver of the steam-engine; a talented young physician, Dr. Small, of Birmingham, who early died; Mr. Edgeworth; Day, the

author of "Sandford and Merton;" Sir Brooke Boothby; Mr. F. N. C. Mundy, of Markeaton; and Anna Seward. To this circle he would often read those passages of his works which he was yet afraid of injuring his profession by introducing to the world. There was in his time an anomaly in English ideas, which even yet is not quite extinct. Society is very fond of imputing to medical men materialistic and other kindred heresies,—sometimes justly, perhaps, but often very unjustly. This occasionally induces some of them to make great pretensions to orthodox opinions, and to put on an outside show of life with which their hearts have little sympathy. Providing such men *assent* duly to all that the world and its Teatoddy circles require, they may indulge in many curious habits and pastimes having no tendency whatever to improve those feelings or advance that intelligence needful to the healing art: all of which, however, is considered as fair, and by no means unprofessional. But, let one of their body be caught with a more intimate acquaintance with Nature, in her interior arcana or her sublimer aspects, than the run of his fellows; let him only add to his dry anatomy, his physiology, and his pathology, some far-reaching power of thought which tends to elucidate and beautify the science of BEING in its higher and nobler relations; especially, let him add the charm of an occasional late evening or early morning hour of poetic reverie to his arduous and useful pursuits;—and, just in so far as he aspires from the animal to the angelic, and snatches a little fire from heaven to light his laborious path on earth; just in the same proportion the very people who are wont to charge the profession most with materialism, are among the first to suspect the claims of a spirit thus refined, and to say, "Ah, but you know he is so fond of poetry and that sort of thing; and one is so afraid he should forget his patients for his books!" Of this singular and incongruous prejudice Dr. Darwin was so well aware, that, though he wrote much and would often beguile a leisure hour by discoursing on literary topics with his friends, some of his poetry was held back from the world many years after it was written, *lest its very merits should hinder his practice*—a practice then becoming almost as important and lucrative as any in the midland counties!

[Since the foregoing was written has appeared the interesting Autobiography of Mrs. Schimmelpenninck, in which are a few characteristic glimpses of the Doctor in his busy professional days. In one place she says:—"It was in autumn that the celebrated Dr. Darwin first came to see my mother at Barr (in Staffordshire). . . . In the latter part of the morning a carriage drove up to our door, of that description then called a "sulky," because calculated to hold one person only.

The carriage was worn and bespattered with mud. Lashed on the place appropriated to the boot in ordinary carriages was a large pail for the purpose of watering the horses, with some hay and oats beside it. In the top of the carriage was a sky-light, with an awning which could at pleasure be drawn ; this was for the purpose of giving light to the Doctor, who wrote most of his works on scraps of paper with a pencil as he travelled. The front of the carriage within was occupied by a receptacle for writing paper and pencils, likewise for knife, fork, and spoon ; on one side was a pile of books reaching from the floor to nearly the front of the window of the carriage ; on the other, a hamper containing fruit and sweetmeats, cream and sugar, great part of which, however, was demolished during the time the carriage traversed the forty miles which separate Derby from Barr. We all hastened to the parlour window to see Dr. Darwin, of whom we had heard so much, and whom I was prepared to honour and venerate, in no common degree, as the restorer of my mother's health. What then was my astonishment at beholding him as he slowly got out of the carriage ! His figure was vast and massive, his head almost buried in his shoulders, and he wore a scratch-wig, as it was then called, tied up in a little bob-tail behind. A habit of stammering made the closest attention necessary, in order to understand what he said. Meanwhile, amidst all this, the Doctor's eye was deeply sagacious, the most so I think of any eye I remember to have seen ; and I can conceive that no patient consulted who was not inspired with confidence on beholding him ; his observation was most keen ; he constantly detected disease, from his observation of symptoms so slight as to be unobserved by other doctors. . . . This is the recollection of my first childish impressions of Dr. Darwin."]

His first wife died in the year 1770 ; and having married, about eleven years after, Mrs. Pole, widow of Colonel Sacheverel Pole, of Radbourn, who had some dislike to Lichfield, he removed immediately to Derby, where, with an increased income, he was able to set all prejudice at defiance and give scope and freedom to his literary tastes.

In the year of his second marriage, appeared part of his remarkable poem, "The Botanic Garden," in which is allegorised the Linnæan system of botany—all the Rosicrucian array of gnomes, sylphs, nymphs, and myths of every sort, being summoned from fancy's widest realm, owing to their affording, as he says, "proper machinery for a botanic poem, since it is probable that they were the names of hieroglyphic figures representing the different elements." In 1789 appeared the second part of the same poem, called the "Loves of the Plants," when he said that, as Ovid had "transmuted men, women, and even



gods and goddesses into trees and flowers, he had undertaken, by similar art, to restore some of them to their original animality, after having remained prisoners so long in their respective vegetable mansions." A third canto was added to "The Botanic Garden" in 1792. A talented encyclopedist (Chambers) has expressed some surprise that a work so full of fancy should have been the product of a man of Dr. Darwin's scientific tendencies, so late in life; but the probability is, that its materials were nearly all collected in that earlier time when it was prudent, as he thought, to hide his poetical light under a bushel. Shortly after this was published his "Zoonomia, or the Laws of Organic Life," in two volumes, at intervals of two years, for which he had been gathering materials not less than twenty-three years. In the latter work is enunciated the theory of "progressive development," from the fibre to the tree, the dog, the horse, etc., and finally to man. Our business here is not to discuss this theory, but merely to state it. He was one of those who argue that it in no wise derogates from God's glory that many things should not have been produced spontaneously; but that it is much more glorious to be the "Cause of causes." This doctrine is, of course, a very debateable one; and many have been the objections raised against it on various grounds. It has recently been very cleverly put forward in "Vestiges of Creation,"\* and, if the truth must be told, there are some other works which have made more or less noise in the world from their supposed novelty, the elements, germs, or similitudes of which might all be easily pointed out in Darwin. And more than this; we have reason to suspect that some writers who have said what they could to make him unpopular, have themselves sponged upon him considerably for the materials of their own reputation. So much for literary consistency! But our business is, at present, with Darwin and his own works.

In 1801 he published another work, "Phytologia, or the Philosophy of Agriculture and Gardening;" and also wrote a short essay, intended more especially for his own family, on "Female Education." About the same time he removed to the Priory, near Breadsall, which he had fitted up for his future residence, and with a view to the indulgence of his favourite tastes in his declining years. But his days were cut short in a most singular manner. In Hone's "Every Day Book," under the date of April 18th, 1802, a story as absurd as it is incorrect is thus told:—"His decease was sudden. Riding in his carriage, he found himself mortally seized, pulled the check string, and desired

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\* Still more recently and prominently by Dr. Darwin's grandson, Charles, in his celebrated work "The Origin of Species."

his servant to help him to a cottage by the road-side. On entering, they found a woman within, whom the Doctor addressed thus, 'Did you ever see a man die?' 'No, sir.' 'Then you may.' The terrified woman ran out of the door, and in a few minutes Darwin was no more." Now the truth is that he died in his own house, as reference to every reliable authority proves. He had for some time been liable to painful disorders of the chest, and had on every such occasion made free use of the lancet—a custom now going out of fashion in nearly every school of therapeutics. Indeed, the practice could only have arisen when the sanguineous principle was totally misunderstood; and that its propriety was not doubted immediately on the recognition of Harvey's discovery of the circulation, is one of those anomalies at which future ages will marvel. But confounding dynamic force with sanguiferous product in the animal economy, mistaking the acceleration of the former for an increase of the latter, and treating *action* as though it were *quantity*, it has been common, age after age, to let off blood on every trivial occasion, as though it came ever in primal freshness from some exhaustless fountain. It was the mistake of the times, and Darwin, notwithstanding all his profound researches, shared it. He had repeatedly risen in the night and bled himself, and recovered. But at length arrived the fatal moment. On the morning of April 19th, 1802, after some illness during the night, he became worse while writing a letter to his friend, Mr. Edgeworth; and before the arrival of his surgeon, who was sent for from Derby, life was extinct. He was a total abstainer from fermented drink, and it has been urged that a glass of brandy might have averted the fatal chill; and so for the time, no doubt, it *might*. But what is the use of increasing the fire to keep the engine going, when all the fluid has been drawn from the boiler? It is the more probable that his death was greatly attributable to his previous habit of bleeding, as, "on the body being opened (says Davies, in his history of Derby,) no traces of a peculiar disorder were found; and the state of the viscera indicated a much more protracted existence."

A posthumous work, "The Temple of Nature, or the Origin of Society," a poem, with copious notes, which he had prepared for the press a few months before his decease, was published in 1803. To copy from its preface, "Its aim is simply to amuse, by bringing distinctly to the imagination the beautiful and sublime images of the operations of Nature in the order, as the author believes, in which the progressive course of time presented them." Here then, again, we have the theory of "progressive development," and it is certainly illustrated with great brilliancy.

Such is an outline—of course a mere outline—of the life and aims of Dr. Darwin. Let his works speak for themselves. We are far from agreeing with some of his opinions. He lived at a time when scientific men saw not the reconcileability of natural truth with the spirit of Holy Writ, and there are points in his philosophy, as well as in his theology, to which we by no means feel inclined to subscribe. Nor do we think that his poetry is of the highest order, or that he understood the highest function of the poet. But let us do him no wrong. He was a great man—great in his sincerity, his humanity, his learning, and his elaborate research—greater still in the purpose for which he plied them—that of interesting and, as he believed, benefitting his fellow creatures. And let it be also remembered that he was exceedingly kind and attentive to the poor, as well as hospitable to people of his own level—without ostentation.

His poems, which were very popular for a time, had they appealed as much to the heart as to the fancy, would have remained so. But they have too little real life; and, with only very few exceptions, fail to kindle that genial warmth in the reader's soul, which must ever be the genuine test of true poetry; for there have hitherto, perhaps, been few better definitions of poetry than Henry Larkin's, who calls it "thought that is felt." It is true, as already hinted, that Darwin ransacks every region of nature and fancy for analogue and metaphor; but the one is often too remote and the other inapt. Although he makes his plants and his flowers human or divine, endowing some with passion, some with sentiment, and others with both, they are not seldom the mere passion and sentiment of polite and conventional, rather than of *genuine* life. All his women, it has been said, are "fine ladies," and his goddesses are much the same. Writing in heroic verse, his machinery is too Homeric for his more gentle themes. He is often too pompous about things minute—marches among the daisies on a small grass plot with measured stride; and frequently reminds one of a giant playing at push-pin, by the elaborate way in which he treats a familiar topic. It is true he never writes about "the indubitable ubiquity of the invulnerable;" but he now and then makes one think of the man who did. Little deals he in homely Saxon, but most largely in words of Greek and Latin derivation. He tires us, too, with repetitions of cold though glittering epithets. His streams are mostly "lucid," save when they become "pellucid" or "translucent;" his sounds "symphonious," his smiles "placid," and his sighs "ethereal." Yet despite these and many other similar disadvantages, we might make extracts that would prove how truly he could sometimes be at home in the beautiful and sublime; and the following, on the resurrection of Nature, is an instance:—



"Roll on, ye stars! exult in youthful prime;  
 Mark with bright curves the printless steps of Time;  
 Near and more near your beamy cars approach,  
 And lessening orbs on lessening orbs encroach;—  
 Flowers of the sky! ye, too, to age must yield,  
 Frail as your silken sisters of the field!  
 Star after star from heaven's high arch shall rush,  
 Suns sink on suns, and systems systems crush,  
 Headlong, extinct, to one dark centre fall,  
 And death, and night, and chaos mingle all!  
 Till o'er the wreck, emerging from the storm,  
 Immortal Nature lifts her changeful form,  
 Mounts from her funeral pyre on wings of flame,  
 And soars and shines, another and the same!"

His group of objects in the Court of Melancholy is as fine a piece of literary sculpture as an artist need wish to contemplate:—

"Deep whelm'd beneath, in vast sepulchral caves,  
 Oblivion dwells amid unlabell'd graves;  
 The storied tomb, the laurell'd bust o'erturns,  
 And shakes their ashes from the mouldering urns.  
 No vernal zephyr breathes, no sunbeams cheer,  
 Nor song, nor simper, ever enters here;  
 O'er the green floor, and round the dew-damp wall,  
 The slimy snail, and bloated lizard crawl;  
 While on white heaps of intermingled bones,  
 The Muse of Melancholy sits and moans:  
 Showers her cold tears o'er Beauty's early wreck,  
 Spreads her pale arms, and bends her marble neck."

The figures in the following are very striking and vivid those in the lines italicised perhaps nearly equal to anything of the kind in Shakespere:—

"And now the goddess sounds her silver shell,  
 And shakes with deeper tones the enchanted dell;  
*Pale round her grassy throne, bedew'd with tears,*  
*Flit the thin forms of Sorrows and of Fears;*  
 Soft sighs responsive whisper to the chords,  
*And Indignations half-unsheath their swords."*

And how finely involuted and compacted is the passage we cull next,—leaving many quite equal, if not surpassing it, unquoted:—

"Lo! on each seed within its slender rind  
 Life's golden threads in endless circles wind;  
 Maze within maze the lucid webs are rolled,  
 And, as they burst, the living flame unfold.  
 The pulpy acorn, ere it swells, contains  
 The oak's vast branches in its milky veins;

Each ravel'd bud, fine film, and fibre-line,  
 Traced with nice pencil on the small design.  
 The young narcissus, in its bulb compress'd,  
 Cradles a second nestling on its breast ;  
 In whose fine arms a younger embryo lies,  
 Folds its thin leaves, and shuts its floret-eyes ;  
 Grain within grain successive harvests dwell,  
*And boundless forests slumber in a shell.*  
 —So yon gray precipice, and ivy'd towers,  
 Long winding meads and intermingling bowers,  
 Green piles of poplars o'er the lake that bow,  
 And glimmering wheel which rolls and foams below,  
 In one bright point with nice distinction lie  
 Plann'd on the moving tablet of the eye.  
 —So fold on fold earth's wavy plains extend,  
 And sphere in sphere, its hidden strata bend ;  
 —Incumbent Spring her balmy plumes expands  
 O'er restless oceans and impatient lands,  
 With genial lustres warms the mighty ball,  
 And the great seed evolves, disclosing all ;  
 Life *buds or breathes* from Indus to the poles,  
 And the vast surface kindles as it rolls ! ”

One extract more, in which a kindred idea has a yet more universal expansion :—

“ Nymphs of primeval fire ! your vestal train  
 Hung with gold tresses o'er the vast inane,  
 Pierced with your silver shafts the throne of night,  
 And charm'd young Nature's opening eyes with light ;  
 When Love Divine, with brooding wings unfurl'd,  
 Call'd from the rude abyss the living world.  
 —‘ Let there be light ! ’ proclaimed the Almighty Lord ;  
 Astonish'd Chaos heard the potent word ;  
 Through all his realms the kindling ether runs,  
 And the mass starts into a million suns ;  
 Earths round each sun with quick explosions burst,  
 And second planets issue from the first ;  
 Bend as they journey with projectile force,  
 In bright ellipses their reluctant course ;  
 Orbs wheel in orbs, round centres centres roll,  
 And form, self-balanced, one revolving whole ! ”

A word, in conclusion, in reference to the style and substance of Darwin's prose, which is as vigorous and perspicuous as his verse is lofty and sonorous, and by which, in truth, it is more fair to estimate him ; for the poems themselves are little more than pegs on which to hang an abundance of invaluable notes, that have since been borrowed and attenuated by all manner of writers on nearly all kinds of subjects. We have heard it said—we know not with what truth—that

he had an occasional habit of eating his food, not in courses, as ordinarily brought to the table, but dished, blended, and presented all together. And certainly this is somewhat the way in which he has treated the intellectual appetite of his readers: for a volume before us, besides containing several of his poems, teems with interesting notes, amounting to four or five times the bulk of the text, and fraught with such information on vegetable and animal physiology, natural and experimental philosophy, metaphysics, philology, and the fine arts, as proves his mind to have been a repository, not only of the elements, but of the principles of them all. We do not wonder that, notwithstanding his ungainly person and his stammering speech, he should, with such a mind, have been so much beloved and respected while living by those who had the privilege of sharing his conversations; and it was no small thing to have won, by his literary genius, the warm praise of William Cowper, whose name will ever remain among the dearest of England's household words.







## Chapter Second.

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### WILLIAM COBBETT.

“If any young man were to ask me what books he should read that he might be sufficiently informed on subjects necessary to be understood, I should say, read all the books that I have written.”—Such, or something like it, is the characteristic way in which the late Mr. Cobbett commenced an advertisement of a list of his own publications, as I read it about forty years back, on one of the fly leaves of his *English Grammar*; and that such an advertisement should have been attached to such a book, by a man who had said that when any one put pen to paper he ought to feel as though he were going to do something that might last for ever, is one of the most memorable curiosities in the history of literature.

To understand William Cobbett, requires that the times in which he lived, and the circumstances in which he wrote and spoke, should also be well understood. The artizan who frequents the modern reading-room in his evening leisure, and skims the richest cream off the literary supplies of the day; or dives deep into works of reference at the mechanics' library, preparatory to undergoing the usual examination for a university certificate, at no greater cost of money to himself than the price of a weekly newspaper, will, without special information on the subject, be hardly able to comprehend it. As an illustration I may just observe, that one of the best periodicals to be had by a boy in the year—say 1823, was the “*Youth's Instructor and Guardian*.” It came out in monthly numbers, at fourpence, and I have a right to speak kindly of it; for it gave me much pleasure, as a dear elder sister, now in a better world, furnished me with the coppers for procuring it, then. But I am bound, in justice, to say that, when the year's volume, including its supplementary number, was completed at the cost of four

shillings, the whole did not contain as much useful or entertaining information as is now embodied in some weekly publications of our own day for a few pence! It was in those days that "The Mirror" began to be published weekly, with a woodcut, for twopence, and was regarded by young readers as something beyond the climax of all their longings for such a boon. Yet at that time Cobbett, a man of almost entirely self-developed talent, was in the zenith of a literary and political reputation that made him admired and worshipped, where he was not feared and hated, throughout this kingdom and the United States of America. Certainly, there was a third class of people—who laughed at him. But, as he often tried to make them laugh, and they did so, it proved at least that they read, if they did not altogether approve of, what he wrote. The steps by which he acquired this influence, and dared to exercise it,—in the age of a Sidmouth and a Castlereagh; when Sir Francis Burdett was sent to the Tower; Thelwall, Horne Took, and Hardy, were tried for high treason; James Montgomery and Charles Sutton (father of our gifted friend, Henry S. Sutton, author of "Quinquenergia") were imprisoned for the most inadvertent breaches of the laws relating to printing; Oliver the Spy was deemed as necessary an employé of the state as at the present time is Mr. Calcraft; Jeremiah Brandreth was beheaded for treason committed chiefly at the instigation of the said Oliver and his agents; while the memorable slaughter of Peterloo took place, and the affairs of government were greatly under the control of a man who had the logical acumen to talk of "*standing prostrate* at the foot of the throne,"—may be pretty generally known to those who are familiar with the history of the last half century. But a few of them may be worth pointing out afresh for the information—yet not in *all* particulars for the imitation—of younger readers of the present day.

William Cobbett was the son of a small farmer in the south of England; and being an independent, daring, and ambitious boy, he early ran away from home. In time we find him a private soldier, but using his leisure hours in the cultivation of his intellect, and in acquiring a knowledge of the rules of composition. He rose in the ranks, until the full possible number of stripes decked his arm: and as he seems to have believed, not only that England was the chief country in the world, but most devoutly that he was himself about the ablest man in it, one can easily imagine that, had promotion above the ranks been more open to such men, he might have remained, and in time have become a leader, in the army. He quitted it, however; set up for a political writer; and—as I once heard one of his contemporary writers say—"having made old King George III almost tremble on his throne, (but whether with rage or fear my informant did not say,)

he fled to the United States of America, turned that country upside down, and had to flee from it in turn."

In a short time, therefore, he was back again in England—writing copiously, not only on *every* political question as it arose, but on agriculture and rural affairs in general, as well as on domestic and social economy, besides sending out volume after volume of educational books. To this hour, his English Grammar, though in some of its elements defective, and marred by ephemeral illustrations and political inuendos that have lost point from the subsequent changes in public affairs, has much to recommend it to those for whom it was written— young men with little time or cash to spare, but earnest in their efforts at self-education. Nor was this all. He was very frequently engaged in public speaking; was several times, before the passing of the first reform bill, a candidate for parliament; was at one time in prison— where (as the victim himself, when grown into a tall compositor, afterwards informed me) he once kicked a P.D.'s breech and sent him back in a hurry for bringing him a foul proof; and went unscathed through a series of vicissitudes, which, altogether, would have again and again shaken any man of less pluck and persistency into the dust. Remembering how, in the neighbourhood of my birth-place, in the Midlands, men of all grades and shades, whether they liked him or not, asked, on the mooting of any notable question, "What does Cobbett say of it?" when he came to partake of a public breakfast given him by his admirers at Nottingham—a breakfast, in deference to his own private habits, as early as seven o'clock in the morning,—on seeing him come down the steps of Thurland Hall, with a number of enthusiastic partizans around him, who appeared to exult not a little in that proximity—I, as a mere lad of seventeen, felt an inexpressible interest in that glimpse of the portly body, the jolly face, and the smile serene, of a farmer who had calmly pledged himself to be roasted alive on a gridiron, if some political event he had prophesied did not occur before a specific date; and that glimpse was shortly followed by an excellent opportunity of, not only seeing him, but hearing him lecture.

It was in the days of the old coaches, when the journey from London to York was as slow as it was long, that he had been lecturing in some of the great northern towns, and called upon his friends in Nottingham, to use his own words, on his "way back to give the fruit of his labours to the Hampshire chopsticks." John Thelwall, who had by this time quitted the arena of politics, delivered a lecture, much about the same date, at Bromley House, in Nottingham, to a very small company, on the comparative merits of Milton and Pope. Cobbett's lecture was delivered in the Theatre, to an audience of, probably, four or five

hundred people, of all political shades, and the theme will be pretty well indicated by what I shall presently have to tell of its conclusion. The presence of a soldier in his red uniform, in the pit, could hardly fail to be an agreeable figure in the scene to one with the lecturer's recollections of younger days ; but a greater contrast to a private soldier in his general aspect than Cobbett, as he just then appeared, it would be difficult to meet.

He came to the front of the stage alone—no chairman to introduce, nor companions to “support” him, though partizans were not wanting in every part of the theatre. It must be somewhere about forty years back, but memory can clearly see him still—a tall and sturdy Saxon, in the full bloom of his years ; round enough to be jolly, yet oval enough to be intellectual, and florid enough to show that his cheeks were on familiar terms with the morning breeze. He had lightish hair, which was plainly cut and combed ; a shrewd “I’ll-tell-you-something-worth-hearing-just-now” sort of play in his eye and about his mouth ; and near the eye, at times, a little crow-foot wrinkle, which added something more of shrewdness to that knowing look. His dress consisted of a plum-coloured coat with gilt buttons, (the colour of the waistcoat I forget,) drab continuations neatly buttoned at the knees, and white knitted stockings, in appropriate keeping with his well glossed shoes. Such is the mentagraph I have of him as he came forward and said, in a somewhat husky voice, while leaning for the moment with the utmost *nonchalance* on the back of a chair, “I am suffering rather severely from a cold, to-night, and am hoarse, as you perceive ; but inasmuch as it was sense and not sound you came for, that can make very little difference to *you*.” Of that chair he made much and various use in the course of the evening, sometimes leaning upon, and once or twice (mentioning his cold on doing so the first time as a sort of half-apology) sitting in it quite at ease, as he talked. Now he would thrust one hand into his bosom ; anon, both hands into his breeches-pockets. Once, in a matter-of-course sort of way, his cold being a little troublesome, he quietly spat on the boards, and then drew his foot over the spot ! In short, during the whole discourse, though much that was fine might be seen throughout in addition, not one single occurrence was allowed to indicate a want of the most complete self-possession. The style of his speech was very colloquial ; his words were deliberately and strongly pronounced, and sometimes peculiarly. I remember, for instance, his rather emphatically pronouncing the word *kindred* with the first sound of the *i*, as in *kind*. His meaning was unmistakeable, and his satire, when he was satirical, very telling. Take one example, in which he said he would relate to them a great

miracle—that of an image of the Virgin Mary, on the continent, being one night moved without human agency, and found next morning, duly placed by its own act, in a chapel at the distance of several leagues. Now that was a very extraordinary miracle; but it was nothing compared to one which occurred in England at the close of the last war with France—namely, that when, after the battle of Waterloo, the army came home and was disbanded, so that a great many officers were thrown upon half-pay, a very considerable number of them had no sooner laid down their arms, which had been so recently used in hot blood, than they were suddenly “moved by the Holy Ghost to preach the gospel,” and immediately thereupon took orders in the Church! Now that, he thought, was one of the most wonderful miracles ever known!

The climax of his address was in keeping with its whole tenour. Drawing himself to his full height, seeming for the moment to fling aside his hoarseness as if by strength of will, and with an air of deliberateness and self-confidence which left no doubt of his own belief in what he was enunciating, he thus wound up:—“And now I have shown you, beyond any man’s power of confutation, first, how the property of the church may be appropriated to the uses of the state, without any hindrance to religion; next, how a standing army can be dispensed with, with perfect safety to the nation; and lastly, and not less clearly, how—the—national debt—itself—can—be—abolished—without—injustice to the fundholders! (The last four words uttered very rapidly.) And when I get into parliament”——At this point many of his auditors burst into a loud laugh, as though the thing were an absolute impossibility; when, bending a little forward, bringing his index finger into companionship with the crowfoot wrinkle near his eye, and changing his voice to about three notes deeper than the key in which he was previously speaking, he added, with a deliberation and emphasis never to be forgotten by those who heard it, and which subdued the laugh at once, and made all before him as still as death,—“AND—SURE—I—AM—I—SHALL—BE—THERE!—if the minister for the time being be but a sensible man, and I fail to convince *him* with equal certainty of the same, then I’ll confess myself to be as great a fool as—the Chancellor of the Exchequer!” Saying which he abruptly bade his audience good-night, and left the stage.

How vividly the memory of that evening came back, when (some years afterwards) I was reading his criticism of Milton’s “Paradise Lost,” which occurs in a tract he wrote against potatoes—food to which he had an antipathy equal to his liking for Indian corn! It has sometimes been given as a proof of his lack of poetical sentiment;

but poetry has many realms, and as no one would say that a Canadian has no knowledge of language because he is not able to understand Hindostanee—so of poetry—it does not follow that Cobbett could see poetry nowhere, because he could not see it in “Paradise Lost” :—“It has,” he says, “become the fashion, of late, to cry up the virtue of potatoes, as it is to admire the writings of Shakspeare and Milton. God, all-wise and all-foreseeing, permitting his chief angel to rebel against him, for which he is cast forth from heaven to a place called hell, the local situation of which no man knoweth ; His there allowing him to gather around him an army of devils like himself and bring them over gates—*iron gates* too ; His then directing His Son to a drawer, where he finds a pair of compasses, which he proceeds to use in the drawing of a map, and then leads forth an army of angels to meet this army of demons, in the air ; His permitting cannon to be brought into this battle in the clouds, and one angel or devil, I forget which, to be split from crown to crotch, as we split a pig, and then for both sides to go slap together again, entrails and all : this, and a great deal more such trash ! and you are said to want taste or sense, if you do not turn up your eyes with admiration when the names of such authors are named ;—while, if one of your own relations were to write you a letter in the same strain, you would put him in the mad-house and take his estate !”

So ! Despite that incredulous laugh in Nottingham Theatre, and probably many a laugh twenty times as incredulous elsewhere, this extraordinary home-forsaking, home-returning, poet-ridiculing, chancellor-bothering, son of the plough, did at last work his way into parliament—being one of the first members who sat under the reform bill, for Oldham. That is now near forty years ago, and whether the property of the church be secure or not, the standing army is increased by the addition of the volunteers, and the national debt about as slowly diminishable as ever ; while he who thus spoke and wrote is gone to that world where, it is earnestly to be hoped, all theological doubts are solved, and all political animosities unknown ! His career in parliament was very short, though not less characteristic of him than his previous pursuits. His individuality was too strong, his mind too tough, and his habits of life too entirely his own, to let him, without being altogether unselfed, fall suddenly, unless with risk of great personal damage, into the usages—the long sittings and late hours of the House of Commons. It is proverbial that anyone who has long been regarded as an oracle outside that arena, and has adapted his general manner and bearing to the multitude, (though there are some striking exceptions, even in our own day,) can rarely find himself at home within it ; or,



without long trial, command or win much deference there. Of this Cobbett, like many other popular orators, soon had sufficient proof, but was not, for that, the less determined to make his way. Thousands of people can still remember his "Weekly Register," with the device of a gridiron on its front page, not unsymbolical of the roasting which many a public man got within. No writer had greater aptitude at tacking a ludicrous nickname on anyone he did not like; and, however his sarcasms might sometimes be sustained by well-tanned men without much wincing, there are few, in any sphere of life, and especially in public life, who would be thankful for such offensive *sobriquets* as Cobbett was fond of bestowing. Hence it happened that one evening, when he was attempting to speak on some question he considered of great importance, his rising was but the signal for the most annoying interruptions the rules of the House would permit. Loud talking, laughing, affected coughing, scraping of the feet, and ironical "hear, hears," were the order of the hour; but there still stood the unbendable Saxon, as sturdy and dauntless as an old oak in a field of rustling corn on a windy day. At length, by some means, he got a moment's hearing, and appalled every man in the house who had the fear of a telling nickname before his eyes, as he said something to this effect:—"Sir, honourable members seem determined to prevent what I have to say being heard; but I can afford to stand here as long as they will have patience to sit; and this I can promise, that as surely as any of them interrupt me again, I will make every one of them read my 'Register' some morning before breakfast!" His point was gained, and the old soldier was accorded, a deferential if not patient hearing.

At my age, and in the circumstances, any personal intimacy with such a man, was altogether out of the question. It would therefore be impossible for me to tell from observation anything of his habits in hours of relaxation, amid the scenes of his rural reign. One might almost wonder if it were possible for any politician so dogmatic and belligerent ever to be cheerily domestic at all. But on this point we are by no means left in the dark. My genial, intelligent, and truthful friend, the late Mary Russell Mitford, has left a most graphic and sunny picture, in her discursive volume entitled "My Literary Life," of what she saw, when young, on a visit with her father to the Cobbett family. Should I be out of place in giving the epitome of her impressions here? My faith in her powers of observation and accuracy of delineation makes me feel disposed to risk it. She says, "He had at that time (but this was long before he was in parliament) a large house at Botley, (in Hampshire,) with a lawn and gardens sweeping down to the Bursledon river, which divided his territories

from the beautiful grounds of the old friend where we had been originally staying, the great squire of the place. Mr. Cobbett's house—large, high, massive, red, and square, and perched on a considerable eminence—always struck me as being not unlike its proprietor. Lord Cochrane was there, then in the very height of his warlike fame, and as unlike the common notion of a warrior as could be. A gentle, quiet, mild young man, was this burner of French fleets and cutter-out of Spanish vessels, as one should see in a summer day. He lay about under the trees reading Selden on the Dominion of the Seas, and letting the children (and children always know with whom they may take liberties) play all sorts of tricks with him at their pleasure. His ship's surgeon was also a visitor, and a young midshipman, and sometimes an elderly lieutenant, and a Newfoundland dog; fine sailor-like creatures all. Then there was a very learned clergyman, a great friend of Mr. Gifford, of the 'Quarterly,' with his wife and daughter—exceedingly clever persons. Two literary gentlemen from London and ourselves completed the actual party; but there was a large fluctuating series of guests for the hour or guests for the day, of almost all ranks and descriptions, from the earl and countess to the farmer and his dame. The house had room for all, and the hearts of the owners had room for three times the number. I never saw hospitality more genuine, more simple, or more thoroughly successful in the great end of hospitality; the putting everybody completely at ease. There was not the slightest attempt at finery, or display, or gentility. They called it a farm-house, and everything was in accordance with the largest idea of a great English yeoman of the old time. Everything was excellent—everything abundant—all served with the greatest nicety by trim waiting damsels; and everything went on with such quiet regularity, that of the large circle of guests not one could find himself in the way. I need not say a word more in praise of the good wife, very lately dead, to whom this admirable order was mainly due. She was a sweet motherly woman, realising our notion of one of Scott's most charming characters, *Ailie Dinmont*, in her simplicity, her kindness, and her devotion to her husband and her children.

“At this time William Cobbett was at the height of his political reputation; but of politics we heard little, and should, I think, have heard nothing, but for an occasional red-hot patriot, who would introduce the subject which our host would fain put aside, and get rid of as speedily as possible. There was something of *Dandy Dinmont* about him, with his unfailing good humour and good spirits—his heartiness, his love of field sports—and his liking for a foray. He was a tall, stout man, fair, and sunburnt, with a bright smile, and an air

compounded of the soldier and the farmer, to which his habit of wearing an eternal red waistcoat contributed not a little. He was, I think, the most athletic and vigorous person I have ever known. Nothing could tire him. At home in the morning he would begin his active day by mowing his own lawn, beating his gardener Robinson, the best mower, except himself, in the parish, at that fatiguing work.

"For early rising, indeed, he had an absolute passion, and some of the poetry that we trace in his writings, whenever he speaks of scenery or of rural objects, broke out in his method of training his children into his own matutinal habits. The boy who was first down stairs was called the Lark for the rest of the day, and had, amongst other indulgences, the privilege of making his mother's nosegay and that of any lady visitor. Nor was this the only trace of poetical feeling that he displayed. Whenever he described a place, were it only to say where such a covey lay, or such a hare was found sitting, you could see it, so graphic—so vivid—so true was the picture. He showed the same taste in the purchase of his beautiful farm at Botley—Fairthorne: even in the pretty name. To be sure, he did not give the name, but I always thought that it unconsciously influenced his choice in the purchase. The beauty of the situation certainly did. The fields lay along the Bursledon River, and might have been shown to a foreigner as a specimen of the richest and loveliest English scenery. In the cultivation of his garden, too, he displayed the same taste. Few persons excelled him in the management of vegetables, fruits and flowers. His green Indian corn—his Carolina beans—his water melons could hardly have been exceeded in New York. His wall fruit was equally splendid, and much as flowers have been studied since that day, I never saw a more glowing or more fragrant autumn garden than that at Botley, with its pyramids of holyhocks, and its masses of China-asters, of cloves, of mignonette, and of variegated geraniums. The chances of life soon parted us, as, without grave faults on either side, people do lose sight of one another; but I shall always look back with pleasure and regret to that visit."

Such is the testimony of one of the most genuine and tasteful Englishwomen that ever breathed, to the home-life of one of the most thoroughly English of men—an Englishman in exuberance—whose chief ambition from young days was to be in parliament; but, that end, by years of long endeavour at last achieved, he almost immediately paid for with the price of his life. And we must now bid him what seems to me a fitting adieu, by observing, that it is not those in a procession who best see the order of it; nor is it always that men who are enacting history see which way it tends. They sometimes get into

circumstances which to them appear perplexing and inharmonious, and regard each other with jealousy, and with a sort of suspicion that whenever they move it must necessarily be to tread on each others' heels or toes. But in the great march of life *there are no conflicting interests*, if men would but view things all round, as from the summit of a hill, instead of seeing them only partially, as from its base. For time, to those who have afterwards profoundly reflected on true progress, has ever shown, that those who have consistently walked on with honest principles for their staves, have always been walking in concert, whether by compact or not. As too rapid action tends to dissipation, and action long diminishing has its terminus in stagnation : so He that controls all forces, and regulates them to exact and useful ends, may see how little need there is for rancour when men freely assert what they as honestly believe. And so it is that, whenever the end of the journey of life is reached by one who has honestly striven for the general good, he is almost sure to be as generally mourned. It has recently thus been with Richard Cobden, and so it was once with William Cobbett. There was, in one sense, but little analogy between them. Cobbett was impulsive, and too frequently perhaps reasoned less with his intellect than his feelings—provoking anon much fret and foam. His propensity to invective sometimes not only drove but marred him ; whilst Cobden, on the contrary, was ever steady, calm, and cool, as a flowing river. But between them there was, or is, this analogy at least : both were peasant born ; each boldly did his duty as *he* understood it ; and the England that gave them birth, now their dust is mingled again with her own, has no animosity, but much love, for the memory of such children. William Cobbett was, in some respects, a wayward son ; but no mother ever yet let a loving son go unloved or unmourned because he had sometimes troubled her a little with his crotchets. Many things, however, which were thought to be crotchets in Cobbett's day have since been proved to be not crotchets at all. *He foresaw the potatoe famine*, and tried to avert the starvation by introducing to the British Isles the culture of Indian-corn. In that he failed. But perhaps, beyond the bourne whence no traveller returns, he may have shaken hands with Elliott, Cobden, and Peel, for having in another way done so much to remedy the failure ; whilst the late good old Duke of Rutland and others, who loved our island homes no less than they, yet once opposed their views as to the best method of blessing them, may now—not looking *from opposite sides* but *from above*—see things as they are, and see alike. Blessed be the memory of every true patriot, of whatever rank or name, for ever ! Let us listen, in conclusion, to an elegiac tribute by Ebenezer Elliott :—

“ O bear him where the rain can fall,  
 And where the winds can blow !  
 And let the sun weep o'er his pall,  
 As to the grave ye go !  
 And in some little lone churchyard,  
 Beside the growing corn,  
 Lay gentle Nature's stern prose bard,  
 Her mightiest peasant-born !

Yes ! let the wild-flower wed his grave,  
 That bees may murmur near,  
 When o'er his last home bend the brave,  
 And say—“ A man lies here.”  
 For Britons honour Cobbett's name,  
 Though rashly oft he spoke ;  
 And none can scorn, and few will blame,  
 The low-laid heart of oak.

See, o'er his prostrate branches, see,  
 E'en factious hate consents  
 To reverence, in the fallen tree,  
 His British lineaments !  
 Though gnarl'd the storm-toss'd boughs that braved  
 The thunder's gather'd scowl,  
 Not always through his darkness raved  
 The storm-winds of the soul.

Oh, no ! in hours of golden calm,  
 Morn met his forehead bold ;  
 And breezy evening sung her psalm  
 Beneath his dew-dropp'd gold.  
 The wren its crest of fibred fire  
 With his rich bronze compared,  
 While many a youngling's songful sire  
 His acorn'd twiglets shared.

The lark, above, sweet tribute paid,  
 Where clouds with light were riven ;  
 And true-love sought his blue-bell'd shade,  
 “ To bless the hour of heaven.”  
 E'en when his stormy voice was loud,  
 And guilt quaked at the sound,  
 Beneath the frown that shook the proud  
 The poor a shelter found.

Dead Oak, thou liv'st ! Thy smitten hands,  
 The thunder of thy brow,  
 Speak, with strange tongues, in many lands ;  
 And tyrants hear thee now !  
 Beneath the shadow of thy name,  
 Inspired by thy renown,  
 Shall future patriots rise to fame,  
 And many a sun go down.”



## Chapter Third.

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### PROFESSOR WILSON.

*Bowness, May Day, 1866.*

It is impossible to live here, on the shores of Windermere, and not see something or somebody, every day, calculated to remind one of John Wilson. I turn out of doors in the morning, and one of the first persons I may meet is an old man who saw him on the very day he stripped off his coat and walked from Penrith to Kendal, beating the coach which was too full to take him up. Stepping into the bar of the Royal Hotel, I there see standing by the fireside that old easy chair in which he was wont to sit asking questions and telling stories, when "the Royal" was but comparatively a little wayside inn. That chair is an heir-loom and goes with the house, whatever its increase or whoever may happen to be landlord, and is well known all over the district as "the Professor's Chair,"—quite as well as was ever known the Chair in his lecture-room at Edinburgh College by the same distinction. If I go up to the Windermere Railway Station or to Elleray, there are ten to one in favour of seeing somewhere thereabouts old James Newby,\* once his servant, and for some years

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\* Since this chapter was written Elleray has been purchased by Mr. Heywood, an opulent banker, who has demolished the large house and built, or is building, a larger; yet with excellent taste has renovated the old cottage and preserved its character with that of the overshadowing tree. But, alas for the rapid changes of time! its old tenant, James Newby, has passed already from the scene.



past living in the rustic cottage at Elleray where the Professor spent a considerable portion of his early married life, and where two of his eldest children, I believe, were born; while in the course of the day I may just as easily meet with a dozen other people, any one of whom can tell me something of his most daring feats or wildest pranks, or perchance of some feat of kindness done in some odd way that no other man on earth would have dreamed of. Near me, while writing this, is a piece of the old yacht in which he had many a strange adventure on the lake, as its ripple and his voice might be heard in the evening when the sun went down cradled between the twin Pikes of Langdale in clouds of gold, or at midnight as the bright moon hung low over Brant Fell,—only drawing to the eastern shore as day had got round and was peeping down over Orrest Head upon his upland home. Or I have but to step, as can be done in less than ten minutes, to the top of Busky How, above Bowness, and thence gaze across the now peopled scene on that cottage he so loved and the less-loved larger house he afterwards built, sheltered as they are, but not obscured, by the woods he himself planted on Elleray, and where he was not unfrequently visited by many of the brightest literary spirits of his time—Wordsworth, Scott, Southey, the Coleridges, De Quincey, Lockhart, Dr. Blair, Thomas Aird, the Ettrick Shepherd, and the rest. Or perhaps in the course of duty, or in an hour of stolen leisure, when all the world around is in repose, I find my way to the very spot, and seated under the broad-spreading tree where he so often sat, muse on the scenes and days to him so familiar there.

Wilson's choice of Elleray was a very tasteful one. It consisted before he bought it of two little estates, and the cottage which he afterwards adapted to his own use was beforetime occupied by the family of a homely weaver—in days when large weaving factories anywhere were rare. A spring of pure water supplied the cottage, and a wild little mountain-beck, gurgling, curvetting, foaming and sometimes almost shouting from lin to lin, among shrubs and ferns and arching hazels, divided it and "the Wood" from the neighbouring and equally retired domain of "St. Catherine's." The whole scene is considerably altered now, by the proximity of the railway terminus and hotel, the rising of a little town, and a growing crowd of neighbouring villas. Yet is it easy to see what it must have been in those days,—a sylvan retreat, where the wildness of the north had not quite tamed into the blandness of the south, yet with more of summerly softness than his native Scotland could altogether claim. This of itself, to say nothing of beauty and grandeur not far distant, and the *then* literary society of "the Lakes" (which in our day has given place to something about

as like to it as is the chance company of a modern watering place to the ancient boast of Parnassus,) must have made it a perfect elysium to a many-sided, romantic genius—one of the most remarkable compounds of the most varied physical and mental qualities that could well meet in the same person!

Come, John Guest and old Christopher Thomson, who happen to be very near my mind while I am writing, let us draw near and imagine we see him at ease in this other favourite "professor's chair," this old seat under his cottage-tree, looking and listening with heart and thought the while! What a soothing and dreamy undertone is made by the many-voiced waters, near and far, as they seek the scarcely ruffled lake from the mountain sides. How the lark's light treble above, the thrush's loud lay below, the stock-dove's loving coo in the woods, and the linnet's lighter voice from yon flowering thorn, all blend and harmonise, while the cuckoo with its mellow double shout counts time! And what a rich array of harmonious colouring *makes music to the eye*. The purple fox-glove, the broom's rich gold, the azure beds of wild hyacinths, "the milk-white thorn" just beginning to eclipse the wild cherry's falling pearls, the hoar of projecting crags, and the masses of green foliage, made by "palmy ferns," spiral larches, loftier pines, and all the varied leafiness of all the other trees; and then the freshness of all the rich pasturage between—the lake's blue gleams, and the mountains growing more bold and defined in the westering light! Are not all these in their beautiful contrasts and blendings as ravishing to *his* eye as would be the grandest oratorio to a Beethoven's ear? But lo! the landscape dims, and the sky has lost its glare; the poet's gaze is rapt there awhile;—and now let us read the sonnet he has just composed on that

#### EVENING CLOUD.

A cloud lay cradled near the setting sun,  
 A gleam of crimson tinged its braided snow.  
 Long had I watched the glory moving on,  
 O'er the still radiance of the lake below:  
 Tranquil its spirit seem'd, and floated slow;  
 Ev'n in its very motion there was rest,  
 While every breath of eve that chanced to blow  
 Wafted the traveller to the beauteous west;  
 Emblem, methought, of the departed soul,  
 To whose white robes the dream of bliss is given,  
 And by the breath of mercy made to roll  
 Right onward to the golden gates of heaven;  
 Where to the eye of faith it peaceful lies  
 And tells to man his glorious destinies.

Now, who would believe that the man who could thus sit *there*, be thus entranced, and write such a sonnet, was at the very time keeping a lot of fighting-cocks in the roosts behind the cottage; and had himself wrestled, leaped, and fought many a tough battle, and was by no means unprepared to fight many another, in town street or country lane; or would start in his slippers and without a hat, and not return till he had completed a ramble it would knock up any ordinary citizen to ride; nay, had perchance that very morning been astride an unsaddled horse, riding through the roughest landscape in a hunt after one of the wildest of bulls; or calling his pen a crutch and himself crusty old Christopher North, while he laid said crutch about the back of some young adventurer he deemed a poacher in literary preserves, until he was provoked to prove his claim to free warren or retreat altogether by the way he had entered? Yet, just such was that one man, who was as ready to fight a main of cocks as to deliver a lecture on moral philosophy, and was probably as little of a hypocrite in either as if he had confined himself exclusively to the one line or the other; for as he was never wont to hide his light under a bushel, neither had he any objection to make his "darkness visible." Good, bad, or indifferent, there you had him—an impersonation of the profoundest principles and the oddest whims, the gravest studies and the wildest fancies, the kindest emotions and the keenest satire—carrying everything he thought or felt into visible or audible action; but, after all, so remarkably self-controlled, and so methodical when he chose, as seldom to let his strangest freaks interfere in the slightest with his normal duties, but rather, as it might almost appear, performing the latter with the greater and safer alacrity for having in the former blown off all his surplus steam! It was, I presume, this very *genuineness* that made the contrasts in his character so tolerable to all such friends as considered themselves judges of human action, and to his pupils, who must have known not a little of his apparently incongruous predilections. Had any man done hesitatingly or sneakingly the outrageous things he did, he would have been kicked out of society, never more to return. But when, on one occasion, he publicly thrashed an overbearing pugilist in Hawick street, while the Edinburgh coach was getting ready for the road, and then had for fellow passengers some young men going thither to be members of the very class he taught in the college, and who had heard all about the fistic transaction; by his frankness he left an impression upon them at last that physical and mental prowess, with an impulsive generosity, were by no means of necessity unallied—not that he tried at all to persuade them so, but left them with no chance of coming to any other conclusion from the

facts. My own thought of him is that there was in him a good deal of the nature of one of those old Greeks, who could take part as regularly in the profoundest philosophical exercises as in the Olympian games; and that as Britain is undoubtedly a country in which all nations in all ages are virtually represented, Wilson was the "representative man"—the impersonation of anciently approved Grecian character—the combination of sage and athlete, in the modern Athens. There can be no doubt that his unconventional mode of life, coupled with his knowledge of the very conventional life of others, afforded him material for rare and piquant thought. In truth, the wealth of his intellect must have been in great measure derived from this very source; and his aptitude for observing, acquiring, and applying, was alike marvellous in all. A gentleman residing in the neighbourhood of Windermere, and with whom the Professor was on the most intimate terms, was one day walking with another person along one of the streets of Edinburgh, intending to call upon him some time before leaving, but without having hitherto announced his intention of doing so, or of his being in the city at all. While yet far off, the Professor coming along descried his friend, and crossed the street to meet him; and it being within a few minutes of the time for lecture at the college, took him there to hear it, placing him in a seat of honour near himself. As the lecture went on, Wilson finely seized the occasion to fling in an episode suggested by the presence of his old neighbour from Windermere—his topic at the moment being the contiguity of time and place. Alluding to the face of the friend thus accidentally present, he expatiated in the most telling and glowing terms on the many periods of time, the long range of events, the number of places, and remarkable grouping of objects it suggested; and not only events, places and objects, but the variety of thoughts and emotions it excited; while his young auditory, kindled by his vivacity, and charmed by his rapid and graphic delineations, were caught up and carried on with him in a manner that won the most marked manifestations of their approbation and delight.

[While reading the last proof of this chapter, I have been struck with a quotation from the late Dr. James Hamilton in reference to Wilson, and will here interpolate it:—"In some respects an incongruous successor to Brown, Stewart, Ferguson, in the prodigal exuberance of 'Christopher North' there was imported into the old university a prodigious accession of vital force. No doubt he was a humourist and there was so little distinctively 'moral' in the rollicking wit of 'Blackwood's Magazine,' that all the learning of the land stood aghast at his appointment; but happy will it be for the future curators if all their nominees do as much to justify their wisdom as Wilson did

to redeem the blunder which spirited into the throne of philosophy a magnificent madcap. No 'book in breeches,' no academical automaton, with parchment face and pedantic tones, grinding forth the same dry formula year by year, he was intensely human; and to young men whose hatred is humdrum, whose delight is truth, courage, mastery, it was a daily rapture when, like a strong man rejoicing to run his race, the splendid luminary rose on their horizon. Rich in fancy, redundant in matter, exulting in promise, he threw himself at once on his theme as a lion springs on its prey; and in the wonderful improvisation which followed, so profuse was the imagery, so brilliant the diction, so exciting the passion, that dull must have been the clod which did not catch fire, very flat the fish which offered to no fly."]

I had the pleasure of hearing Wilson's first lecture to his moral-philosophy class, on the opening of the winter session for 1844-5. Tall, broad, massive, and energetic beyond the strongest men one might see in some thousands, he came to his seat, not only briskly, but somewhat brusquely. He has been variously described by those who have written of him, and has been generally reported as of the leonine type of physiognomy. But to me, as I have often thought of him and remember him now, he appears to have had quite as much about him of the eagle as of the lion. Before his locks were silvered they were golden, and lay over his neck quite as much like the eagle's ruff as the lion's mane. There was certainly more of the eagle than the lion in his glance, as after a very few seconds, during which he seemed to have seized upon and taken into his mind every person before him, he rose up from his chair and flung out his gown in a manner that reminded one of the kingly bird pluming his wings for flight. His discourse that morning was on a no less lofty theme than the "Genius and Writings of Milton;" and as he spoke, he put forth one hand and hovered above it with the other—the upper hand rising higher and somewhat spirally with his argument; or, sometimes when his range of thought became more expansive, his hand would perform a circuit, just as an eagle might be extending its flight, but always returning to its point. At length, having led the mind of his audience far up and out in the realms of imagination, but wishing to show that since all truths must agree, what was true in poetry could not but be consistent with what was true in philosophy, down, eagle-like, he pounced at once on his hand and his argument, clenching the latter with an axiom of Francis Bacon with a force equal to that with which an eagle would pounce upon and clutch its prey—so that it would be impossible for any mind he had once caught to escape the force of his conclusion.

I am not aware if that lecture on Milton has ever been published. It was enriched by many fine passages, and its close was as characteristic as it was eulogistic. The Professor at the time seemed to be in want of some improvement in his dentistry—his *s* being in several instances articulated as *sh*. Still there was an exceedingly fine cadence in his closing words, which, though uttered more than twenty-two years since, I remember, with the manner accompanying them, as well as if it were but yesterday, so impressive were both style and sentiment, as he said, “And thus it was that, when Milton sang, the angels suspended their harps—were mute—and listened.”

There is scarcely one polite citizen in a hundred who knows how to *walk*. Of course I am not so ungallant as to be speaking now of ladies—many of whom have of late years been so sadly hampered with various superfluities of costume that it would be downright cruelty to expect it of them. My mention here is of gentlemen specifically—especially of such as would laugh at a waggoner, who, after walking by the side of his team all day, came into the town at night with a sort of *swing*, in which every muscle and bone in his hide had a gentle share—the laughers little dreaming that, owing to that very motion, he was not more tired with a *thirty* than they, in their mode of doing the business, would have been with a *three* miles' walk. Now, John Wilson felt this secret, if he had never studied it, and knew how to walk as well as talk,—a grand and most useful combination of qualities in any one man! If a fellow screws all his bones save four or six to the sticking-place, and walks as prim and stiff as if five-sixths at least of his joints were ankylosed, the few left loose will naturally have five-sixths more strain upon them than they ought; and congestion of blood, panting, palpitation, and general weariness of nerve and muscle, may be but the natural results. The poor waggoner and plough-boy, of whom the city urchins make game, walk, as natural instinct directs them, *with the entire body*, the spinal column forming a sort of axis; and the consequences to them of this general distribution of force, are an easy and regular respiration, a free circulation, and a power of continuance that ought to shame many a great pretender to physiological lore, as he adjusts his cravat, puts on his gloves, enters his carriage with stately stiffness, and proceeds to give somewhere a pedantic lecture on the animal functions. Now, just as John Wilson was in the habit, when he thought, of thinking with his whole soul; or, when he talked or wrote, of indulging in most unshackled but not less graceful rhetoric; so, I take it, when he walked, he walked with his whole body, and was therefore seldom if ever tired. There was harmony in his action, as there was cogency in his ideas and eloquence



in his speech, because of the *consentaneousness* of all the organs in his frame. Think of this, my young readers, and learn, not to be rude, but to be *genuine* while you are young; and let neither your joints, your thoughts, or your verbiage, *grow anchylosed*! I have known a man, acting on this principle, freely and sweetly singing "*Auld lang syne*," as he neared the top of a mountain, walking persistently on, while not one of his companions could grunt out a single word without first stopping and taking breath. At this moment I have by me, from a public library, a copy of Mrs. Gordon's *Memoirs of the Professor*, in which some previous reader has made incredulous annotations with a pencil, against the passages describing various of his pedestrian feats. If the same reader should ever cast his eye over these remarks of mine, perhaps he will not think it unfair to get the book again and rub out some of those sceptical pencillings. My friend, Dr. W. B. Hodgson, once did a feat almost equal to any of them during a sojourn with us at Matlock. These thoughts are just now suggested by the clear memory I have of Professor Wilson's usual manner of walking along the smooth flagged causeways of the New Town of Edinburgh, *as if they were too easy for him*, and as if it were a pity he should waste on such "*plainstones*" the powers that would have been perfectly at home over Kirkstone, or the Stake-pass, and that often bore him out of sight quite as quickly as disappeared some stately carriage which had come about the same time with him round a corner. Mr. Ullock, who in those days knew him so well, tells me that when Wilson lived at Ellera, and the only post-office of the locality was a mile and a half off, at Bowness, it was no uncommon thing with him to turn out of his cottage for a breath of morning air without his coat, with his shirt neck and waistcoat not yet buttoned, and with nothing stouter than slippers on his feet; and, thinking he would like his letters and newspapers a little sooner than usual, run down for them himself, in that dishevelled condition, leaping every one of the six gates then in his way as he went; and having thus secured his papers in an incredibly short space of time, go quietly up the hill again reading them, without seeming at all out of breath.

It may seldom perhaps if ever be that his country will see again in one man such a remarkable association of the perceptive, reflective, imaginative, combinative, and adaptative, with the dominative, combative, affectionate, generous, and devotional faculties as in Professor Wilson. If he had one fault more to be regretted than another, perhaps it was that of sometimes going too fast and far in one swing, and giving a blow before a reason for it. Holding the droll theory that everything God had made was poetical *except a rhymers*, the

moment a poet new to him was presented for criticism, true to his pugilistic instinct he put himself at once in an attitude of defence, if not of attack, and sometimes (not with malice aforethought but from sheer impulse) bruised his man severely, and even unjustly, before comprehending his whole case. I know one writer of fine and cultivated taste as well as of great original and acknowledged power, who, though he has written as good poetry as Wilson himself, still winces under the remembrance of a castigation in "Blackwood" many a long year ago; and if, as is not improbable, he should chance to read what I am writing, perhaps he may now make some allowance for an organisation and circumstances like Christopher North's; while some young man going into the profession of criticism may take this incident to heart, and be careful with whom, and what, and how he meddles, lest, when he is gone, not the ghosts of old grievances, but their physical embodiments, should live to walk critically in their turn over his grave, as Christopher thus rendered himself liable to be walked over.

In his private affections and attachments, Professor Wilson, according to the testimony of all who knew him, was one of the most tender, fatherly, brotherly, and friendly of men. Nor had he feeling only for the human species. Incongruous as it may appear, the very cocks he was wont to pitch one against another in fight he loved in a fashion; and it was probably owing to the customs of the times and the admiration with which he regarded everything "plucky," that he indulged in a sport which all decent humanity now consents to shun, if not to condemn. It may, however, console any "gentle angler" who considers cockfighting reprehensible, to know that Wilson was fond of angling too. For good horses and dogs he had a fervent liking, as every man who loves his most noble and faithful servants ought to have. The story of all this, and of his whole career, has been so well told by his daughter, Mrs. Gordon, and so often referred to by other writers, that there is little need for me to repeat more than a few of its most prominent incidents, which it is perhaps as well to do, for the sake of younger readers.

Professor Wilson was born in the populous and industrious town of Paisley, (whence other distinguished men of his name, and many a "clever body" besides, have sprung,) May the 18th, 1785,—dying at Edinburgh, as the clock chimed twelve, on the night of Sunday, April 2nd, 1854, consequently near the age of sixty-nine. He had the prospect of a large fortune, and was a student at Glasgow College from the death of his father in 1797, to 1803, when he commenced a correspondence with Wordsworth which grew in time to friendship.

About the time of, or soon after leaving Glasgow he fell in love, and then went to the University of Oxford, where his curriculum, besides a good deal of hard scholastic labour, included a due proportion of cock-fighting, pugilism, boating, leaping, and such other "muscular christianity" as was then thought essential to the education of a brave and accomplished British gentleman. Crossed in his first love, he went into literary life with a sort of plunge—his circumstances and accomplishments helping to win him a welcome to the members of the Lake School. Hence, probably, his choice and purchase of Elleray. During this period, and prior to living at Elleray, he had two rooms, and his library, at the Royal Hotel, Bowness, to which he was wont to betake himself in the vacations; and at Bowness it was that (in the parish church of Windermere there), on the 11th of May, 1811, he married Miss Jane Penny—writing the same day to a friend that she was "in gentleness, innocence, sense, and feeling, surpassed by no woman," and adding that he would to his dying hour, "love, honour, and worship her." It is pleasant to believe that time seemed rather to ratify than weaken this attachment. Of the offspring of this marriage I had the pleasure of meeting one (Mrs. Ferrier, widow of Professor Ferrier), in the neighbourhood of Windermere, last autumn; and, making full allowance of course for femininity, it was interesting during our conversation to see the striking resemblance Mrs. Ferrier bears to her father, not only in physiognomical configuration and complexion, but in expression. Through the failure of a relative, soon after his marriage, Wilson lost most of his fortune. Before this he had written his celebrated poem "The Isle of Palms," and he now resolved to add the life of a barrister to that of a poet—studying for and duly appearing at the Scottish bar. In 1817 was established "Blackwood's Magazine," of which he became the ruling genius, enriching it to the end of his days, as all the world knows, with some of the ripest fruits of his pen. In 1820 he stood a contest for the chair of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, and gained it. From this time there are few names or events of much literary note with which his own is not in some way identified. Belonging to the Conservative school, he was by no means for that fact unfair to acknowledged genius in men of any other, and while himself writing in favour of a continuance of the corn laws, gave honour to and a noble notice of Ebenezer Elliott, the whole fervour of whose soul was directed against them. Mrs. Gordon's memoirs of him are very copious and interesting; but there will be more to tell of him some day when more of his correspondence has been collected and collated. In the meantime, those who wish to see pictures of his domestic as well as lit-

erary and public life, will do well to read that work ; and just while I am concluding this for the press, a chapter on him, by Mr. and Mrs. S. C. Hall, in the "Art Journal," has been shown me. I have not read it, but see how richly it is illustrated with portrait, views of his birthplace, and houses at Ellera.

There is a beautiful passage in John Galt's "Lawrie Todd," where he makes Lawrie, speaking of his childhood, say :—"I had often, stripling as I then was, a wonderful experience that the scope of our discernments is not confined to present things ; nor is this notion fantastical, for future events have proved to me that the fancies of the boy are many times the foretastes of the man's fortunes. Sometimes as I lay with my hands beneath my head, on the gowany quilt of the sunny hill-side, I have had marvellous communications with futurity ; and I have seen such similitudes of unborn events, that when the issues of Providence brought on the reality the acquist had nothing of surprise. I have met with unbelieving men who regarded these intimations of what shall be as mirages of enthusiasm ; but the traditions of all ages have hallowed them to faith, and bound them up with the apocalypses of religion." Could it have been something of this that, in the days of Wilson's youth, entered into the prayer of the following sonnet, which (so far as this world is concerned) was answered to the letter, even to his dying on a Sunday :—

When Nature feels the solemn hour is come  
 That parts the spirit from her mortal clay,  
 May that hour find me in my weeping home,  
 Mid the blest stillness of a Sabbath day !  
 May none I deeply love be then away ;  
 For through my heart the husht though sobbing breath  
 Of natural grief a holy calm will send ;  
 With sighs from earth will heavenly voices blend,  
 Till, as on seraph fair, I smile on death,  
 Who comes in peace, like an expected friend.  
 Dipt in celestial hues the wings of love  
 Will o'er my soul a gracious shade extend ;  
 While, as if air were sun, gleams from above  
 The day with God, the Sabbath without end !



## Chapter Fourth.

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EBENEZER ELLIOTT,

"THE CORN-LAW RHYMER."

(FEB. 1866.)

FRESH from the reading of Bloomfield, Burns, John Clare, and other true poets of the class called self-educated; filled, too, with emotions for which I had no language when gazing on beautiful landscapes in the soft sunshine of a summer sabbath, and grateful to any writer "whose thoughts acquainted me with my own," or whose words gave expression to the poetic yearnings with which my young heart was sometimes moved almost to ecstasy, I one day chanced to fall—it might be in my nineteenth or twentieth spring—on a newspaper criticism of the "Corn-Law Rhymes," poems, of which, or of their author, I had never before heard. What surprised me much was, that the newspaper, being a Conservative one, and strong in the agricultural interest, should speak so warmly as it did of the genius of an energetic repealer; but it quoted Southey in justification, and illustrated its eulogy by the following extracts from "The Ranter:"—

"Miles Gordon sleeps; his six days' labour done,  
He dreams of Sunday, verdant fields, and prayer:  
O, rise, blest morn, unclouded! Let thy sun  
Shine on the artizan—thy purest air  
Breathe on the bread-tax'd labourer's deep despair!  
Poor sons of toil! I grudge them not the breeze  
That plays with Sabbath flowers, the clouds that play  
With Sabbath winds, the hum of Sabbath bees,  
The Sabbath walk, the skylark's Sabbath lay,  
The silent sunshine of the Sabbath day."

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Then speaking of a widow, her son, and their pious and patriotic lodger, he proceeds—the scene being near Sheffield :—

“ And must she wake that poor o’erlabour’d youth ?  
 Oh, yes, or Edmund will his mother chide ;  
 For he this morn would hear the words of truth  
 From lips inspired, on Shirecliffe’s lofty side,  
 Gazing o’er tree and tower on Hallam wide.  
 Up, sluggards, up ! the mountains one by one  
 Ascend in light ; and slow the mists retire  
 From vale and plain. The cloud on Stannington  
 Beholds a rocket—No, ’tis Morthen spire !  
 The sun is risen ! cries Stanedge tipp’d with fire ;  
 On Norwood’s flowers the dewdrops shine and shake ;  
 Up, sluggards, up ! and drink the morning breeze.  
 The birds on cloud-left Osgathorpe awake ;  
 And Wincobank is waving all his trees  
 O’er subject towns, and farms, and villages  
 And gleaming streams, and woods, and waterfalls.  
 Up ! climb the oak-crown’d summit ! Hoover Stand  
 And Keppel’s Pillar gaze on Wentworth’s halls,  
 And misty lakes, that brighten and expand,  
 And distant hills that watch the western strand.  
 Up ! trace God’s footprints where they paint the mould  
 With heavenly green, and hues that blush and glow  
 Like angels’ wings ; while skies of blue and gold  
 Stoop to Miles Gordon on the mountain’s brow.  
 Behold the Great Unpaid ! the prophet, lo !  
 Sublime he stands beneath the Gospel-tree,  
 And Edmund stands on Shirecliffe at his side ;  
 Behind him sinks, and swells, and spreads a sea  
 Of hills, and vales, and groves ; before him glide  
 Don, Rivelin, Loxley, wandering in their pride  
 From heights that mix their azure with the cloud ;  
 Beneath him spire and dome are glittering ;  
 And round him press his flock, a wo-worn crowd.  
 To other words, while forest echoes ring,  
 “ Ye banks and braes o’ bonny Doon,” they sing ;  
 And, far below, the drover, with a start  
 Awaking, listens to the well-known strain,  
 Which brings Shihallian’s shadow to his heart,  
 And Scotia’s loneliest vales ; then sleeps again,  
 And dreams, on Loxley’s banks, of Dunsinane.  
 The hymn they sing is to their preacher dear ;  
 It breathes of hopes and glories grand and vast,  
 While on his face they look with grief and fear ;  
 Full well they know his sands are ebbing fast ;  
 But, hark ! he speaks, and feels he speaks his last ! ”

It was, perhaps, ten years after reading these glowing and graphic lines that I stood with their author himself, one sunny Sunday morning,

beneath "the Gospel-tree," at the top of Shirecliffe, as he pointed out to me and made further comment on the most interesting features of the vast and varied scene, observing how like to the obelisks of an eastern city were some of the tall, and just then smokeless, Sheffield chimnies, rising out of the distant crowd of roofs and domes.

Our personal acquaintance had grown out of a series of very natural and characteristic events. It was impossible ever to forget the above word-pictures, which had so charmed me in youth, at Nottingham; and in young manhood, I longed to express my gratitude to him at Sheffield. Opportunities had in the meantime occurred of learning something of his life: that he was the son of a Rotherham Radical; a slow boy at school; a frequent truant, and quick to be taught of Nature in his wanderings in the meadows where Don and Rother meet, or still farther away among the wild Hallamshire streams, and in the bleak moorland and mountain dells from which they descend to join, "like the five fingers of a hand," at Sheffield;—that in those truanacies (to use a simile of John Clare's), he *found* his poems in the woods and fields, and wrote them down;—that he fell in love with a bonny country girl, but never told his passion; fell in love again, got married, went into the battle of trade and failed; then tried again, and won. And how at length, with his family up-grown and his business as an iron merchant more than established, but with the world-wide reputation of still being a working artisan or mechanic, he was really dwelling at Sheffield in suburban gentility, yet as Allan Cunningham once said of him, "writing about the corn laws, with the desperate energy of a giant famishing on the highway for bread."

There can be no doubt, however, that Elliott *had* roughed it. His sympathy with hard-handed toil was not of feather-bed growth; and when (being rather fond of paradox) he would sometimes show his respect for labour by styling himself one of its most humble sons—just, perhaps, to make some upstart brother feel ashamed of himself for looking shy at it—he evidently drew as much upon memory as imagination for the features of his self-picture. Something of all this I had learnt from various sources, when, in the summer of 1836, business took me on a visit to Sheffield.

It was impossible at the time for any young lover of literature to feel himself in that picturesque neighbourhood, with all its strange mingling of the beautiful and wild, the primitive and grand, which even its marvellous industry and smoke have never been able entirely to obscure, without also feeling an additional interest in it from its being the chosen home of two men like James Montgomery and the Corn Law Rhymer. The former poet I had elsewhere seen and heard some



years before ; and the latter, after some aching parleys with my diffidence, I resolved to see. So calling one forenoon at his iron warehouse in Gibraltar-street, where I was received with a kindly smile by one of his sons, and ushered in, I had only to tell who I was and the feeling of reverence for poetic genius that had constrained me, to be put at ease immediately and made as welcome as an old acquaintance. It was evident the laureate of labour felt a pleasure in my call, asking me with much interest about some of the literary men and women of Nottinghamshire who were known to me ; talking cheerfully and hopefully of our young " mutual friend "—Thomas Lister, the Quaker, who once declined a good official birth rather than take an oath—an event that led, through Lord Morpeth, to the abolishment of that legal disability ; and then, softening his tone to the tenderest key, he gave me all the information he possessed of the probable whereabouts and tried health of the loved and lamented Charles Pemberton, " the Wanderer," whose name was never mentioned by anyone that well knew him without deep and generous emotion.

The little counting-house wherein our chat occurred, and in which his son Benjamin, with his sleeves upturned, came to join us after attending to a customer in another room, had about it a very orderly and business-like, though quiet air. Yet the plain table (not desk) with drawers at which he sat, a favourite bust or two in the room, as if just for index, and the aspect of the man himself, all tended to make one feel that other leaves than those of the day-book and the ledger were sometimes written there. Behold him—not as in the wretched caricature forming a frontispiece to some of his works, nor according to that he once drew of himself in jest when he said, " What, after all, is the Corn Law Rhymer like—made up, in appearance, as he is, of something of a Ranter preacher, something of a primitive Quaker, a shade or two of the Jew clothesman, and a dash of the scavenger ? " True, he was on that morning of my first call in a very calm and gentle, as well as cheerful mood. All his passions were in repose, yet the wrinkles and furrows of manifest thought and care had a peculiar play of light amongst them that served to tell how a shade of indignation might darken them if occasion came. Though an ardent admirer, in some respects, of William Cobbett, a greater physical and physiological contrast than they would have presented each to the other could scarcely be imagined. A slender form, of little more than middle height, clad in a black suit of decent but most simple cut ; a pair of eye-glasses suspended from his neck by a narrow piece of black galloon ; an iron-gray complexion, and a roughed-up head of gray hair, surmounting a square but rather uneven forehead ; somewhat

projecting and bristly eye-brows; an eye, not dark and flashing, but rather light, and *very earnest*; a manly nose, and a deep upper lip, that looked as if it *could*, if called upon, be sufficiently scornful; an affectionate rather than sensual chin; a mouth that seemed—as was just the fact—cut out for saying the kindest, tenderest, grandest, or harshest things; an expression of face, altogether, as if good-nature and sarcasm were not unfrequently in the habit of playing hide and seek behind it; and a sententious utterance, in a tone of voice that could be softened down into that in which you would like to hear the most pathetic poetry, or raised to that in which you might imagine the prophet Ezekiel addressing the degenerate Israelites. This latter—the *peculiar tone of the denouncing prophet*—I observed, in after years, he nearly always assumed, as if instinctively, when speaking of the Corn Laws. Such at that time was the man, in—I suppose—about his fifty-sixth year.

Occasional correspondence between us followed this interview, and, when residing in my native place, on the edge of what once was Sherwood Forest, I one morning received from him the letter subjoined, of which I regret the impossibility of giving a *fac-simile*, the caligraphy being as highly characteristic of him as the sentiments. It bears a sixpenny post-mark, is written in a somewhat condensed but large and rugged hand, and the words of the most emphatic passages, not underscored but leaning to the left, are penned in letters very enlarged—the word “Yes!” near the end of the extract from the lecture on Robert Nicol being as large as what a printer would call double-pica, and, to give it emphasis, spelled with two S’s:—

Sheffield, 7th April, 1838.

Dear Sir,—I feel highly honoured by your letter of the third instant, and equally hurt by your apology for writing it. Such an apology would be wrong if I were a god; but I am only a very ordinary man, precisely what any honest man may be, if he chuses. What are my claims to be worshipped? With a wish to be useful. I have expressed in rhyme thoughts that are not good enough for prose. Yet you apologise for addressing to me a letter which any man might be proud to receive.

Pemberton is now, I believe, about to sail from Gibraltar to Malta. He is better, he says, almost well, *but his hoarseness remains*. If he stays abroad, he may live long; but if he returns he will die of consumption, like poor Robert Nicol, and many, many others; best of the best.

My family being very large, and not altogether out of harm’s way—it was my wish to get invitations to lecture in London, Bristol, Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, that I might see, before I die, Paris, Brussels, Amsterdam, Hamburgh, Wales, Cumberland, and Scotland, *without expence*. But I fear I have delivered my last lecture. I have for some time been visited by sudden breathlessness, as if a valve closed at the bottom of my throat. The symptoms usually follow, in a few hours, excitement of any kind, and especially painful excitement. I find nothing painful in lecturing but the sense of my

ignorance and inefficiency. I am seriously warned, however, that I must abstain from public speaking and all excitement, unless I mean to be hanged without a rope. I passed the night after my last lecture in a state bordering on agony.

In sending your poems to the magazines you have adopted the right plan. Had I done so at first, I could have got into notice thirty years before I did.

What I said of Robert Nicol in my last lecture will apply to poor Millhouse, and many others, best of the best. I will try to quote it from memory: "Robert Nicol! who was he? Is he, then, already forgotten? Why should you remember a poor man's broken-hearted son? Robert Nicol, soon after the publication of a small volume of his poems—some of the finest ever written by a mere youth—became editor of the 'Leeds Times,' the circulation of which paper he nearly trebled in a few months. But in this country, 'the labour of the poor is his life.' Robert Nicol is another instance of self-sacrifice to duty—or, rather, to the death struggle of competition, caused by laws *which limit the food of a nation, whose numbers they cannot limit*. Unstained and pure, at the age of twenty-three, died Scotland's second Burns; happy in this, that without having been, like St. Paul, "a blasphemer, a persecutor and injurious," he chose the right path. And when the Terrible Angel said to his youth, 'Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?' he could and did answer, 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' But do not the tears run down the widow's cheeks? And is not her cry against them who caused him to fail? Yess! 'for it is a truth worthy of all acceptance,' that Robert Nicol is another victim added to the thousands who are not dead but gone before, to witness against the most merciless." I had hoped some of our newspapers would have quoted these words, but was disappointed.

When shall we two meet again, mind to mind?

I am, dear sir, yours very truly,

Spencer T. Hall.

EBENEZER ELLIOTT.

Later in the same year, upon my venturing the issue of a rustic little periodical called "The Sherwood Magazine," he volunteered me the following shrewd warning: "Your magazine, I am afraid, will never pay. No local magazine ever did. Stay! the 'Wath Magazine:' *that* did pay, *but the subscribers didn't*. So it went down, but not before the editor had to pump for copy out of a dry well." And he was not very far wrong as regarded mine. It went down too, after living, like all such, its little day,—but not for want of "copy." And why should it? Contributions of all sorts—some of them very good ones—grew more and more numerous; and even a poor wandering clock-cleaner, in a grave tone of patronage, most liberally assured me that, if I would only continue it, he would himself "engage to furnish forty or fifty verses a month, for a moderate consideration, if I could consent to allow him the choice of subjects!"—an offer with which Elliott was vastly amused when I afterwards told him of it.

My first visit to Elliott's villa at Uppertorpe was in the spring of 1839. He had heard of my being in Sheffield, on the way to York, and left word with a friend that I must go and dine with him, as there

would be a fine calf's head, which he always regarded as "a dish for a poet." But he had a more generous purpose in view than that of merely dining me—that of giving me friendly advice touching a literary speculation into which he was fearful I was about to be drawn, and which, had it been as he suspected, would no doubt have been ruinous. On that, as on many subsequent occasions, his advice, without being uncharitable, was shrewd and caustic; and, like Burns, while touching on the importance of shunning over-worldliness, he strongly urged the value of riches and the honest gathering and saving of money—

"Not for to hide it in a hedge,  
Nor for a train-attendant;  
But for the glorious privilege  
Of being independent."

And such advice was made the more agreeable by my knowledge that, but a short time before, he had in the most unaffected manner, without any personal acquaintance with the man, sent a liberal sum of money to a poor dying poet in another part of the kingdom. At dinner he talked of Hazlitt and Madame de Staël as writers I ought to read and study; afterwards recited several passages from Carlyle's "French Revolution," which he pronounced "a great poem;" and somewhat funnily, in allusion to a living writer, for whom he knew I had much respect, said: "Ah! he's a fine brave fellow, and has written some good things; but, whenever he recites them, he makes me think of John Wesley turned auctioneer." Alluding to my own style of writing—after giving me praise that sounded painfully like flattery—he added: "But you are not artistic enough; you should give yourself more time. You write as the calf sucks. All my own poems, like Pope's translations, were written nine times over."

Other conversation, of course, was intermingled—in which Mrs. Elliott (a fine, tall, golden-haired, matronly lady, with much more precision of manner than the poet), freely and piquantly shared; whilst their two interesting daughters, both then just blushing into womanhood, little more than listened. There were two topics that seemed to excite him greatly. One was phrenology; on mention of which he sprang up and shouted, "Phrenology! Why there was Napoleon Bonaparte, who had not in his army a general whose hat would not go down to his shoulders, so comparatively small was his own head; and yet he was by far the greatest man of them all! Then, there is James Montgomery—no fool!—and yet his head is half a turnip!" He added, pacing about, with considerable vehemence: "You talk to me, too, of your combativeness and destructiveness. Why, man (beating the region of the heart with the right hand as he spoke),

combativeness is here ! and (clenching his up-lifted fist, and rushing towards me as if about to strike me down, he cried yet more loudly) destructiveness is here !” Still, I think he had a little hidden belief in phrenology after all, which he opposed in this style chiefly (as he did many other things) merely for the sake of fun and effect. The last topic was the Corn Laws, on which he spoke long and warmly, extolling General (then Colonel) Peyronnet Thompson as being one of the greatest heroes in the then but partially organised struggle for their abolition. He was fond of uttering startling aphorisms, and much that he said in conversation might well be classed under the head of “Anti-Corn-Law Ejaculations.” Here is an instance when, speaking of the final result of all restrictions of food, he lifted up his clenched hands and his eyes towards heaven, and cried aloud in a terrific alto-tenor voice, “God ! would they handcuff Thee !”

Another year had passed, and I was again at dinner with him, at Upperthorpe. Our talk on this occasion was chiefly of the scenery of the district and its poetry ; and to hear him on these themes was a great delight. His favourite of all the Hallamshire streams was the Rivelin, and he gave me instructions for finding its most wild and beautiful bends and falls. He knew them every one, and loved them as dearest friends. The waters of that valley and its heather seemed to murmur and bloom in his very soul. There was one of its tributaries—not the “headlong Wyming,” though that had several fine cascades, but an overshadowed brook, crossing the Glossop-road some mile or two nearer Sheffield, which had no name at all poetical, until he christened it “the Ribbledin” in one of his sweetest poems. The chief fall in this he gave me directions to find in a stroll, and promised, after keeping another engagement, to meet me there. But, owing to some of the unpoetical people I met knowing it only as the Black-brook (so called, no doubt, from its being in such depth of shade), and giving me directions to a much less picturesque stream further on, I missed at that time both the Ribbledin and its “godfather,” which the latter deeply regretted when we met in the evening, telling me how he and his dog had been on the search for me up the valley, and how he had carried with him “a bottle of fine sparkling ale” for my refreshment, could we only have met. Here is part of the poem already alluded to under the head of—

#### RIBBLEDIN ; OR THE CHRISTENING.

No name hast thou ! lone streamlet  
That lovest Rivelin.  
Here, if a bard may christen thee,  
I'll call thee “Ribbledin ;”

Here, where first murmuring from thine urn,  
 Thy voice deep joy expresses;  
 And down the rock, like music, flows  
 The wildness of thy tresses.

\* \* \*

Dim world of weeping mosses!  
 A hundred years ago,  
 Yon hoary-headed holly tree  
 Beheld thy streamlet flow:  
 See how he bends him down to hear  
 The tune that ceases never!  
 Old as the rocks, wild stream, he seems,  
 While thou art young for ever.

\* \* \*

Would that I were a river,  
 To wander all alone  
 Through some sweet Eden of the wild,  
 With music all my own;  
 And bath'd in bliss, and fed with dew,  
 Distill'd o'er mountains hoary,  
 Return unto my home in heav'n  
 On wings of joy and glory!

\* \* \*

Or that I were a skylark,  
 To soar and sing above,  
 Filling all hearts with joyful sounds,  
 And my own soul with love!  
 Then o'er the mourner and the dead,  
 And o'er the good man dying,  
 My song should come like buds and flowers,  
 When music warbles flying.

Or that a wing of splendour,  
 Like yon wild cloud, were mine!  
 Yon bounteous cloud, that gets to give,  
 And borrows to resign!  
 On that bright wing, to climes of spring  
 I'd bear all wintry bosoms,  
 And bid hope smile on weeping thoughts,  
 Like April on her blossoms;

Or like the rainbow, laughing  
 O'er Rivilin and Don,  
 When misty morning calleth up  
 Her mountains, one by one,  
 While glistening down the golden broom.  
 The gem-like dew-drop raineth,  
 And round its little rocky isle  
 The little wave complaineth.

O that the truth of beauty  
 Were married to my rhyme,  
 That it might wear a mountain chain  
 Until the death of Time!  
 Then, Ribbledin! would all the best  
 Of Sorrow's sons and daughters  
 See Truth reflected in my song,  
 Like beauty in thy waters.

\* \* \*

One year more and I had become Elliott's neighbour, when many a pleasant fire-side hour and ramble we had together, generally accompanied by his favourite dog. This mention of the dog should, however, be made with caution, as it brings to mind something not very complimentary once said to another gentleman by the poet's son Frank in reference to it. Frank was a young man of great originality as well as attainments. He could write most beautiful poetry, but shrank from a profession of literature because he could not come up to his own ideal, or equal those writers he regarded as the best models. In his criticisms, he was severe alike on himself and others, and would sometimes say the most curious and censorious things impromptu. Hence it was, as he told me, that, being one day in conversation with some person with whom he differed about his father's poetry, or his father's own opinion of it, their talk ended by his opponent observing rather warmly, "Well, but I should know something about it, for I often walk with him;" and by Frank's immediate rejoinder, "Oh, yes! you may, no doubt, understand him better for walking with him; but you shouldn't forget that his dog does the same!" There were two or three occasions on which Frank said things equally pungent and ludicrous in my hearing. We were once sitting near each other at a public meeting, where one of the speakers bolted out his words so loudly and thickly as to destroy almost entirely the effect of his oratory, when Frank, quietly putting his lips to my ear, exclaimed, in by no means the lowest possible key, "Bull-and-Mouth!"—The speaker who followed was one of a different calibre, a small, eager, earnest sort of man, who though sadly lacking volume, laboured still to make a heavy impression by puffing and blowing between his words with might and main, when Frank, turning towards me again, said in a whisper almost loud enough to be heard on the platform, "Why doesn't the poor fellow get a young earthquake to help him?"

But this has been a longer digression than I had intended; as I was going to tell, more especially, of one ramble on which Elliott took me, across the meadows of the Don, and up by the top of Shirecliffe, naming as we went, and saying something of the qualities of, nearly all



the flowers we saw by our path. He was by no means an enthusiastic admirer of Wordsworth, whose writings he regarded as generally too wordy and diffuse; but whenever we passed the lesser celandine, with its little gleam of gold among the fresh green leaves, he seemed to have a sincere pleasure in pointing to it as "Wordsworth's flower." I remember particularly well how, in that walk, he lamented the paucity of primroses in the neighbourhood, and we talked of getting some roots elsewhere and quietly planting them in the hedge-bottoms and by the sides of the little streams—a purpose which, from some cause, was never accomplished. He had distinguished the "Gospel-tree" from every other by a nail he once drove into it, and, when pointing it out, lamented that, though in his poem he had called the tree an oak, it was only an ash, and would have but a short life; still, he "hoped it would outlive the corn laws!" And so it did; and so it will! Not only when the corn laws, but when all the rancour and strife they ever engendered and inflamed among the loyal of all parties shall be mere matter of history, that tree will still flourish in the poet's verse, like many other themes on which the Muse has conferred perpetual bloom.

Elliott and James Montgomery had great respect each for the other's genius; and I remember his once holding up to me Montgomery's versification as a model; but there were several local and social reasons why they were never personally very intimate, which was, perhaps, to be regretted. Certainly, in many things, they were exceedingly dissimilar. Montgomery, orthodox in his theology, circumspect in his language, diffident almost to timidity, and shrinking as much as duty would let him from anything that could incur censure. Elliott, on the other hand, bold in his condemnation of what he chose to regard as cant, however respectable its pretensions; confessing to no man what religious faith he held; often saying things the most *outré*, and even coarse, as if in defiance of all politeness and in contempt of all approval; yet all the while—for proofs of it would now and then creep out—yearning for distinction and fame with an intense though often disguised yearning. Very remarkable, too, was his manner of taking up cudgels for a back-bitten enemy. When, one evening, at Uppertorpe, conversation turned upon a public man for whom it was known he had no respect, he expressed a sentiment which made Mrs. Elliot exclaim, "Dear Ebby, I am quite surprised you should say that." "Why?" he asked in a loud and earnest manner. "Why, dear," she replied, "because you know they say he is a hypocrite." "A hypocrite!" still raising his voice and measuring his words out in a deliberate tone of deprecation, "*who* says he's a hypocrite?" "Mrs. So-and-so, my dear."

(I withhold the names.) "Mrs. So-and-so!" shouted he, at the top of his voice, "what business has Mrs. So-and-so to say he's a hypocrite? *She has no right to say it*, for I am sure, if he be a hypocrite, he is by far too deep a one ever to let *that* shallow fool know it!"

So loud at times, and dramatic, were his harangues and recitations, that a scandal once got abroad in Sheffield of domestic quarrels having been overheard at Uppertorpe; and I can easily imagine how unable would be an ignorant servant, in his own or the nearest house, to account for his impassioned utterances on any other hypothesis. One evening's demonstration of this sort was notable in the extreme. We were sitting very quietly, with our feet near the fire—Mrs. Elliott and daughter (afterwards Mrs. Watkins) at a work-table not far off—when I happened to say something occurring to me at the moment, in favour of the aristocracy. Up in an instant jumped the poet, and, twining his spectacle-suspender round his finger, began pacing about, just as John Gough paces about his platform when lecturing, until excitement being at the highest pitch, in a tone corresponding, he—still pacing backward and forward, and with his hair bristling up—thus broke forth: "You! and why should *you* be one of their apologists? What have they not done? Have they not taxed the very light? (The window tax was not then repealed.) Would they not like to box up the sunshine, that they might deal it out in pennyworths? and bad measure they would make you! Would they not like to catch the very rain from heaven and put their own price to you on every drop? I ask this, because they *have* tried to chain the winds that would waft us bread! Where 200,000 sheaves of corn once grew, there are now 200,000 people, with no corn to eat! But there will come a reckoning for this some day, when, in the words of my friend, Thomas Carlyle, they will 'have to thank God for bankruptcy!' Only see how they have oppressed the poor, and so crushed out of his heart every motive for thankfulness, as to make him almost forget to worship! But (his voice suddenly dropping) *He will* be worshipped. They can't prevent the mosses of the dell from lifting up their tiny hands to Him!" Having said which, he came and took his seat by my side, adding, in the gentlest and kindest tone, "Yet I ought, most assuredly, to make some exception, for Lord Fitzwilliam's steward once gave me a piece of bread when I was hungry." From this mood a sudden transition was made to a conversation about the pathos of Robert Burns.

It is not my business or pleasure here to gossip much about the relation in which the Corn-law Rhymer stood, or seemed to stand, to his family and friends; but a word on his public position in Sheffield, so far as I could judge of it, may not be altogether out of place. He

never rushed into society; nor did it ever seem to me that he very much courted it. Yet was he highly sensitive to public approbation, and evidently valued any sincere complimentary recognition. He had an unfortunate habit of sometimes breaking out into language worse than "calling a spade a spade;" and this was taken advantage of by his enemies, as an excuse for blackballing him, where he could, had he been gifted with more of the *suaviter in modo*, have outshone them all. When he did appear in public it was not without effect, yet once, when addressing 15,000 people in Paradise Square, that effect was sadly marred by the slip of a word not usually spoken among the polite, though pretty well understood by the crowd of cutlers. To my knowledge he deeply regretted it, but it was past recall, and he seldom spoke in public afterwards. I think it was before that event that a meeting was held in one of the public halls concerning the propriety of admitting novels into the Mechanics' Library, in Watson's Walk. The sectarians of nearly all creeds raised a strong opposition to the idea, and one speaker dwelt at some length on the evil that had been done among the young by the publication of "Jack Shepherd," just then very popular. Elliott's voice rang powerfully forth on the other side. He alluded to some of the parables of Scripture, and wound up by saying that had Jack Shepherd himself been a reader of some of the best novels, it would never have been his fate to be hanged for stealing.

It was pleasant to meet "the Bard of the Beggars," as he sometimes called himself, in quiet circles, where, amongst men like John Fowler, the biographer of Pemberton, Paul Rodgers, and good but sorrowing Francis Fisher, he would listen as well as talk, reciting the productions of others in preference to his own, even when something of his own was asked for; yet manifestly pleased to hear himself and his own referred to. James Montgomery was the chief star in one local constellation, including many of the *élite*, where one of his subsequent biographers duly Boswelled what he said and did; and very worthy was that sweet singer of Israel of all the attention and honour that could be paid him. But the little set that warmed round Elliott was of a much more unconventional sort—consisting chiefly of people who thought more independently, and freely uttered what they thought.

There was one rather large tea gathering which I can never forget. It was when Samuel Bamford and John Critchley Prince, in the zenith of their popularity, came on a kindly visit to some literary confrères in Sheffield, where an evening was appointed to give them a fitting welcome. Elliott was a warm admirer of Bamford, had reviewed his works admirably in "Tait's Magazine," could recite his "Pass of Death" and "Hours in the Bowers" without the book, and on this

occasion acted, not as chairman, for the chair was occupied by some one else, but more as a sort of patriarchal host. Bamford's own recital, by request, of the two poems I have mentioned, told well, as did one or two of poor Prince's songs and the recitation of his "Epistle to a Brother Poet," at the end of which Elliott shouted, "Aye! while we can have young poets among us like this, some of us may yet live to see the corn laws abolished." Elliott recited a humorous satire, but whether of his own writing or not he would not tell, and, as it is not in his printed works, we never knew. There was an association with that visit of the two Lancashire bards, which was at once very pleasureable and painful in its effect upon me. In making their way across the Peak, from Manchester towards Sheffield, they happened to bait at an inn in Hathersage, where Bamford, picking up by chance my little volume of "The Forester's Offering," expressed great pleasure on reading one of the poems, and being told that I resided in the neighbourhood of Sheffield (as he informed me afterwards) resolved to see me in my home. Thus it was that, during the visit in question, I was one morning startled, very soon after daylight, on answering a knock at the door, by finding Bamford standing there almost knee-deep in snow, it being in the thick of winter, and he having walked up from Sheffield (a distance of nearly two miles) in furtherance of that friendly resolve to breakfast with me. Now Elliott had already invited brave and honest "Sam" to dine with his family that day at Uppertorpe, which was nearly as far on the opposite side of the town. It would have been a great, as it was an exceedingly desirable, event for both. They had heard and said much of each other, but had never before met; and the Corn Law Rhymer in anticipation of it had said, the night before, to Mrs. Elliott, "be sure and let us have to-morrow the best dinner you ever made, for I am going to bring you a POET FIT TO BE SEEN!" Alas, for the disappointment! Glad and proud as I (then a very young writer) was of Bamford's most welcome visit to me, especially on such a morning, the veneration and regard I felt for Elliott also, made me fearful of detaining him one minute too late at my Ecclesall cottage, so that I rather hurried than delayed him when he took his departure. But, as fate would have it, before Bamford got down into Sheffield, his walk in the snow had pulled off the heel of one of his shoes, and he was obliged to call and wait somewhere while a new one was put on. All this time Elliott was waiting anxiously at his warehouse to take him forward to Uppertorpe. But the stated hour having passed, Bamford supposed Elliott would be gone without him, and never went at all. I doubt much if poor Elliott had any dinner that day, for he was nearly broken-hearted about it, his anticipation of

the treat of their having such a meeting being so sanguine and cheery. Nor was that all. Elliott felt quite sure, when he learnt where Bamford had been, that I, by force of unfair hospitality—as I knew of his own invitation—had invited the great Radical up, and kept him at my house too long—a piece of *gaucherie* I would have buried myself in the snow rather than perpetrate. They met at the evening tea-party in the town, where Elliott made a somewhat open complaint, and, though Bamford explained matters as well as he briefly could, it was hardly an occasion for telling the whole story of the shattered shoe; so that Elliott still felt persuaded I had something to do with it, and, if he ever forgave me, never forgot the disappointment, nor did I, for it yet most keenly pains me whenever I think of it.

The last time I saw Elliott was when he was about leaving Sheffield for his newly bought place at Hargitt Hill, beyond Barnsley. He would have me to join him in some oysters and a glass of ale, near the place where now stands his public statue, after which he went with me to my home, then at the Hollis Hospital, and spent with us the whole afternoon. That must be somewhat more than twenty-three years ago. William Howitt, in one of his interesting books, John Watkins (the poet's son-in-law), January Searle, and other biographers, have given pictures of his life, and that of some of his family, at Hargitt Hill; and some of them have told us also how he died, December 1st, 1849, in his 69th year, and how his body was laid in the rural churchyard of Darfield, in a spot that looks down, and o'er the winding river Dearn, on the broad champaign.

Peace to his ashes! He was a remarkably-gifted, patriotic, industrious, and sober man, achieving a double fortune, one half by mercantile, and the other half by late-paid literary labour, and was generous, according to his means, to all around him. For thirty years his earlier poems were little heeded; but when the question of abolishing the corn-laws had seized on public feeling, he struck that chord, and ever after continued to be its champion-minstrel. Sometimes he wrote with wondrous power for his cause; and his politics gained a popularity which to his poetry had been denied. Yet Southey, a man of opposite cast, saw deeper than many, desecrated the poet through the politician, and not only aided in bringing his earlier works into better notice, but in getting one of his sons (who became a clergyman, as did another son afterwards,) a living in the church. Against the evils he abhorred he would call on his Maker to “fulmine o'er darken'd worlds a storm of light;” yet, to use another line, could “pity the scorner of earth's meanest thing.” Strong alike in his sympathies and antipathies, he sometimes did much to neutralise the former by the latter. He had

also a habit of self-depreciation and flattery of others—especially of young authors—which often did harm, by making them vain, when he most likely meant nothing more than a little good-natured encouragement ; and certain it is, good taste would gladly ignore many things he wrote. Yet those who knew him well could easily believe that he not unfrequently barbed his prejudices with sarcasm, from sheer bravado and contempt for what he might—perhaps not always unjustly—regard as orthodox inanity. All who read them will grant that there are beauties, and more than beauties in his Corn Law Rhymes, which will long have fame, and that he as honestly as fervently worked in the cause he espoused, with others whose names do not take rank with those of Cobden, Bright, and Peel, only because they toiled in the cool of its seed-time, and not in the heat of its harvest. With all his zeal, *his face and his pen were ever set against physical violence* ; and in the words of his own “Funeral Hymn,”

“He thank’d the God of earth and sky,  
For all that creep, and all that fly ;  
For weeds that silent anthems raise,  
And thoughts that make their silence praise.

For every thorn and every flower ;  
For conquering right and baffled power ;  
For all the meek and all the proud,  
He thank’d the Lord of sun and cloud.

For soul to feel and sight to see,  
In all thy works but types of thee ;  
For all thy works, and for thy word,  
In life and death, he thanked thee, Lord !

He thanked thee too for struggles long ;  
For storms, that make the feeble strong ;  
For every pang thy goodness gave ;  
For hope deferr’d, and for the grave.”

And in the lowly grave he rests, the grave of his choice, where the voice of the throstle, in the sunny spring time, is heard ; on which the notes of the early lark can fall ; where the wild flowers bloom and the wild bees hum around, while his spirit elsewhere receives its just reward from the God he loved and worshipped.



## Chapter Fifth.

DR. SAMUEL BROWN.

(MARCH, 1866.)

"Without caring to protest against this amiable idol-worship of the immortal Lavoisier, we deny that doctrinal or scientific chemistry is the contemporary of either the printing-press or any other modern instrument, whether of thought or of handiwork. The Lavoisierian chemistry was only one of the epochs of the life of that science. But there were epochal developments before that of Lavoisier, just as the Daltonian theory has come after it. Each of these movements had not only its grand and abiding truth to bring forward, but also some important and deceduous error to leave behind it, as might easily be shown to be the case with the French chemistry itself. . . . A true history of the science in fact would exhibit one continuous stream of truth mingled with error, from the origin of alchemy down to the latest discoveries and views. . . . It is desirable, however, to take a preliminary glance at the ideas of classical Greece respecting the theory of nature, for it will be found that those ideas have not a little to do not only with alchemy in all its stages of evolution, but also with the chemistry of Dalton and the future.

. . . Nor will the reader grudge the time and the labour bestowed on such distant topics, when he finds that the consideration of them is fraught with lessons of importance. *He will learn that man never labours in vain when he is sincere, devout, and industrious in his endeavours. . . . He will perceive to his delight, moreover, that there is no such thing as revolution in the progress of science, but only the large and solemn growth of a living creature. Nor will it be difficult to extend such precious verities from this, their private and particular sphere, into the grander domain of universal history.*"

LET it not be forgotten that the above most significant passage was written by the person of whom we are about to read in the present chapter.

Somewhat like Galileo in relation to astronomy, or Keats to poetry, or Beethoven to music, lived, laboured, enjoyed, suffered, died, and will live again, Dr. Samuel Brown in relation to chemistry. Galileo



knew more than circumstances permitted him to prove to his age;—nothing at the time at which it was written, (long before Fulton's day,) could have appeared more chimerical than this couplet of Darwin's—

“ Soon shall thy arm, unconquered steam ! afar  
Drag the slow barge, or drive the rapid car ; ”—

Keats poured out beautiful and true poetry, to which, in Wilsonian language, “ angels, suspending their harps, might have mutely listened,” but not being to tunes in vogue, it was denounced by the arbitrary critics of the hour as out of harmony, pretentious, and vain ;—while it is said that some of the finest conceptions and compositions of Beethoven have never adequately reached the ear of the world for want of fitting instrumentality to convey them. And the brain of Samuel Brown—that wonderful laboratory of *mental chemics* which may yet some day find corroboration in *physics*, failed to make its grandest conceptions manifest to his age only, perhaps, for want of some fitting menstruum which time, however distantly, may still supply : for in his chemistry he was a poet ; and how often has history shown, though it may have taken ages to embody the prophetic truth in material fact, that the conception of the poet, the deduction of philosophy, and the realisation of the chemist or the mechanic, are a three-in-one ! Nay, it was our Samuel Brown, while himself yet young, who wrote—“ Could the sacred theme be illustrated by the uncertain play of glowing figures, a poet might declare that nature is not the prison-house of the soul, but the nursery of his young endowments. . . . By man alone is the highest function of the soul in nature ever performed ; and even by him only rarely, never continuously, and *always partially as yet*. . . . Manifold nature is the express image, and the true contemplation of nature is the jubilee of the soul. The man in whom such contemplation transpires, is among the blessed. He utters his joy ; he builds his temples, carves shapes of ideal grace, paints the perennial beauty of embodied Godhood, or hymns, in melting music, the harmony that penetrates and dissolves him. He sings God and nature in the life of man. If all the ravishing utterances of sense, and even the higher harmonies of poetry, be for him swallowed up of the serener passion for the True (which enfolds the beautiful as the sky embosoms the glowing stars), he proclaims the law of God in nature. Such are the artist, the poet, and the sage,—Handel and Raphael, Shakspeare and Homer, Spinoza and Plato. There is a form above them all, as far as the heaven is above the earth. It is the saint. He realises, or wrestles to realise, the ideal life. . . . A true life is the wisest philosophy ; a beautiful life is the noblest work of art. Its melody is music, its repose is the perfection of form, its radiance colours the world with

its celestial hues, its eye builds everywhere a fane ; and a good life is the only true and beautiful Theology." It was only the earlier part of this eloquent utterance I was intending to quote ; but the latter part, although it may not strictly bear upon, will by no means mar our argument.

It was in the winter of 1844-5, that dining one evening at the table of Mrs. Crowe, in Edinburgh, I found myself in a select party of ten, including, besides the distinguished hostess, Mr. George Combe, with his calm open brow, silvery hair, and deliberate speech ; Professor (afterwards Sir) J. Y. Simpson, with his round practical head and not less practical manner and tone ; Professor Goodsir, of whose person I have a less clear recollection—though I do remember something about him good-natured and cheerful ; tall, genial, manly Professor Edward Forbes, just then down on a brief visit to old friends, from London ; Mr. (now Dr.) and Mrs. Robert Chambers, taking a quiet, deep, unaffected interest and occasional part in whatever intellectual question came uppermost ; and one for whom it was impossible not to feel friendship at first sight—the grandson of the celebrated commentator on the Bible, of his name—son of the originator of itinerating libraries—the Dr. Samuel Brown we are writing of, with his somewhat pointed though not projectant features, his look altogether ingenuous, his modest heart-in-hand manner, and voice most musically clear ; and with him another young gentleman, whose name I cannot now recall, but of whom Dr. Brown afterwards wrote me as “ a very St. John of a friend ” he should like me to meet again with himself, at Glasgow, where they were about that time engaged in some important chemical experiments.

How apt we are to regret, in after years, when too late—when the good and true we might have better known are passed away—that we ever missed the slightest opportunity of kindly intercourse with them ! Something occurred to prevent my getting to Glasgow just then, and when I did go over neither Dr. Brown nor his young friend was there. As for me, I had soon to go to London ; my own life was ardently devoted to a work which long absorbed nearly every faculty ; and three years passed on, to our subsequent mutual regret, without more than the most casual correspondence between us—the greater loss being on my part ; for of all “ man-childed Scotland's ” gifted sons, Samuel Brown was certainly one of the most gifted, ingenuous, intellectual, and pure.

But before going further, let us glance at a few particulars of his personal history. He was born at Haddington, the fourth son of the good Rev. Samuel Brown there, February 23rd, 1817. He seems to have

been different from any of his immediate family, but not unlike his maternal grandmother, who was noted for a "rare and ill-beloved trick of thinking for herself, and of trusting her thought." There was nothing extraordinarily precocious in his younger years. "He was," says a faithful biographer in the "North British Review," "thoroughly and to the soul a boy; not over studious; his occupations, his amusements, the whole tenor of his life, those of a healthy-minded boy;" but—and this went through all his after-life—"whatever he did, he did it heartily, almost enthusiastically." He was a lover of good-natured fun and frolic, rambled or rested just according to his mood, mated with lads of like pursuit and played a kindly joke on them, or took one from them, as the case might be, but *noted everything and gave it thought*. On the whole, then, his character in youth may be said to have been cheery, sociable, and happy, allowing him to grow naturally and gradually into those studies and labours which ultimately became his very life.

There was nothing extraordinary in his course of learning prior to entering the University of Edinburgh in the session of 1832-3. He mastered whatever he took in hand; but in truth, his bent was shown, not so much on the beaten tracks of learning, as in the delight and earnestness with which he was wont to penetrate the arcana of Nature, away from the old spheres of scientific contest and *éclat*. Not that he did not value the past or the established. He valued it at its full worth; but it was his nature to start where others had left off, instead of wasting time in labouring to adorn himself with the laurels they laid down. He never shunned a useful position, but cared the least of any man I ever knew for a merely honorary one. Hence the history of his medical curriculum glitters but little with prize-medals; yet his doctor's degree was honourably gained, and he was also at different times president of the Hunterian and Royal Physical Societies. The truth probably is, as his biographer hints, that he entered the university more for the sake of the study and discipline prescribed than for the ordinary ends of a medical student. With one of the laughing letters he wrote me many years afterwards, when I had myself been made a little anxious about obtaining academical degrees, he sent me a beautiful and most hearty certificate, but frankly told me at the same time that he had himself only one degree—that of M.D.—and of it he was ashamed! Nevertheless, had he been tested by anyone adequate to the object, there is probably no branch of medical science in which he might not have shone brighter than the majority of his compeers. Yet with knowledge, not *gleaned* but *reaped*, from almost every field of observation and discovery, and with heart and spirit as catholic as his intellect, he staked his all on chemistry, as more capable than any other science

of revealing God's will in Nature to him, and in the pursuit of that he became at once a hero and a martyr.

While Samuel Brown, John Goodsir and Edward Forbes were yet students together, they founded a society the great object of which, whatever its name, seems to have been that of mutual encouragement to the most unshackled research, but from this, ere long, Brown found himself wending almost alone. In 1837 his course of study at the university was interrupted by his going to St. Petersburg to join his eldest brother, a medical student there, preparatory to the completion of his curriculum at Berlin. At St. Petersburg he was unfortunately seized with typhus fever, followed by malignant dysentery—the commencement of a disease which shattered his constitution and at length wore out his life. You have read how King Alfred made all his greatest and noblest achievements while an internal disease was slowly laying his body low; and so it was with Samuel Brown; but he never faltered in the prosecution of his scientific experiments so long as strength remained. In 1839 he was again heavily stricken by the death of his excellent father, to whom his attachment had been most close and tender—more than ordinarily so even for persons in that near relation; and after this he flung himself, heart and soul, into his chemical work. At Berlin he had learnt from Mitscherlich of isomorphism and isomerism, with which that distinguished man's name had become identified in the world of physics. Isomorphism has been defined as the quality of assuming the same crystalline form though composed of different elements or proximate principles, yet with the same number of equivalents; or, in other words, the quality of a substance by which it is capable of replacing another in a compound, without an alteration of its primitive form. Isomerism is defined as the identity of elements and proportions, with diversity of properties. The scientific reader will see at once how these doctrines were likely to bring those who entertained them to a reconsideration of the pretensions and claims of ancient alchemy; and Samuel Brown was the more likely to be drawn in that direction from the love he bore to a maxim of Coleridge, that "There are errors which no wise man will treat with derision, lest they should be the reflection of some great truth yet below the horizon." Some have accused him in this of having joined the ancient masters in chemistry in pursuing a "will-o'-the-wisp" of the imagination. But those who have been taught how all the elements and agencies in creation may have been educible from one principle and may be reducible to it again, as I think was believed by Sir Isaac Newton himself—should, it seems to me, be rather diffident about foreclosing so great a question; and that Brown had the courage to enter upon and ardently pursue the investigation, even though

he did fail on being called upon for demonstration, ought to entitle his bravery and industry to something better than censure. There are two things, however, which the world but slowly forgives—one is success; the other, failure; and, for the time, *he failed*. Ah, he failed! and who has ever counted the cost to the world, and to him? He was then but twenty-four years of age.

In the meantime—in 1840-1—Dr. Brown, in conjunction with gifted Edward Forbes, had appeared before the Edinburgh world (and that means something) as a lecturer on the Philosophy of the Sciences. How different the men! yet here they harmonised, and did much to improve the tone of popular lecturing in that grand old city. It might be three years afterwards that I had a fine opportunity of seeing some of the effects of their labours in this direction, when a mass of intellectual foreheads, and many grateful looks, met one who, in his turn, was doing as they had done, in disrobing mystery and making appreciable some of the more recondite truths of nature. But Brown's lectures were scarcely calculated for the crowd, though none could hear them without some delight. To the more highly cultivated, young as he was, they afforded the truest pleasure; and what wonder, when he had already won from men like Sir William Hamilton, Jeffrey, Chalmers, Hare, Carlyle, Christison, and Forbes, "the testimony, as warm as words could speak, that, turn where he might, victory and fame were sure to him." His four profoundly interesting critical lectures on "The Atomic Theory," and his unrivalled expositions of the science of Methodology, had done much to win him this appreciation when, in the autumn of 1843, in consequence of the resignation of Dr. Hope, the chair of chemistry in the University of Edinburgh became vacant. By the urgent advice of his friends, Dr. Brown, young as he was, became a candidate, having for his rival another most worthily distinguished man, Dr. William Gregory. There was no little anxiety and excitement on this occasion, and each party, no doubt, used all legitimate means to ensure success. But both could not win, and Dr. Brown's chance of being elected depended on the result of one most singular and subtle class of experiments. In a paper entitled "Experiments on Chemical Isomerism for 1840-1," read before the Royal Society of Edinburgh, by his friend Professor Christison, Dr. Brown had not only asserted the possibility of transmuting carbon into silicon, but laid down certain formulæ for conducting illustrative experiments. Passing over all his other claims to the professorship, his chance was made to hinge entirely on his demonstration of this; and in the experimental tests to which he was subjected—and not before—it was found that there was such an imperfection in the proof as must put an end at once to any hope of

his election. He had been in some inexplicable way misled in one of the antecedent experiments on which his faith was founded, and a greater mortification to an honourable and sensitive spirit, or disappointment to his friends, it is impossible to conceive.

This failure had a great and most important effect upon him. There is no doubt that in one sense, after all his days and nights of toil in his little suburban house and laboratory of two storeys,—his patient endurance, his brain-sweat, his manual industry, and strong hope,—he was cast down to the dust; but, if that fall killed the “old man,” it was that the “new man” within him might rise more nobly. It is God alone, after all, that can tell what is failure or what is success in the highest sense; and in that “untoward event,” as it appeared to Samuel Brown, there was a transmutation far more sublime than that of carbon into silicon—a resurrection to a higher life by far than he might ever have dreamed of had this world’s honours been laid thick upon him. It isolated him, no doubt, from much that he had desired, but it compensated by giving him a warmer and more loving UNITY WITH THE BEING WHO NEVER FAILS; and henceforth, instead of being merely an instructor of pupils, he became, though without any pretension to it—perhaps almost to himself unconsciously—a *teacher of teachers*, in philosophies as far transcending material chemistry as the heavens transcend the earth.

Still his chemical experiments went on—still he daily penetrated more deeply into the arcana of his wondrous science—and still the disease that commenced at St. Petersburg was rapidly wearing his body down; and marriage with his cousin, Miss Helen Littlejohn, and a sweet little daughter, though they brought him many joys, brought but little return of health. It was from this time—1852—my friendly intercourse with him, from several causes, became more warm and constant. A floating paragraph about some of his interesting lectures caught my eye, and made me ask him if it were possible to get a reading of them *in extenso*. He replied—

Portobello—Bath-st. 16—May 1, 1853.

My dear Sir,—I now dwell here, three miles from Edinburgh, by the sea shore, peacefully. Those lectures of mine were only four in number, and I have no thought of publishing them. They were extemporarily spoken things, which I gave in order to supply the place of Isaac Taylor, who could not come to Edinburgh at that time, on account of ill health.

I have often both heard and thought of you since we met. If you come near this sea-shore of mine, you must come and see me and my wife and my child. The last would please the Sherwood Forester, for her name is Spring—little Spring we call her—an old family name, not a fanciful invention of our sea-side wits. Harriet Martineau comes to us a few days this July. Mrs. Crowe is often with us. . . . Pray, what are you about now! Any more wonders and signs? any more cures?

I have been seeing a little of Mesmerism lately in Gregory's hands. Did you happen to see my review of Reichenbach in the "North British" this day last year?

I did not get your note till yesterday evening, on my return from Aberdeen, where I had been on a visit. Happy to hear more particularly from you. . . . I am sincerely yours,  
SAMUEL BROWN.

A hearty correspondence followed this, in which he told me more about his ailment. At that time I was living in a valley at Ashover, in Derbyshire,—a valley calm and peaceful as a perpetual Sunday,—and asked him to come and see me, and undergo some mild treatment for his malady, when he answered thus:—

Portobello, Sunday.

My dear Hall,—I have had a sort of relapse, else I should have answered your last kind letter sooner. I am now almost well. It is fixed that we settle in one of the western suburbs of London, such as Kew or Old Brompton; but it will be two months or more hence. I am to go to my mother's in East Lothian this week for a preliminary change of air; and then I shan't have a day to spare from arranging, packing, etc. It will not, therefore, be in my power to accept your hearty invitation this autumn; but we shall see what next Harvest-time will bring us! By the way, for three years back I have been much of a vegetarian, and now am wholly so as well as a teetotaller; so that I shall transcend even your frugality and innocence.

Thanks for your loving peep at poor dear Ireland. By the way, did you chance to read two consecutive articles of mine in the "Massachusetts Quarterly Review," (June and September, 1849) on Mesmerism? I made honourable though casual mention of you two or three times over; for I had seen and read your book at its appearing—Mrs. Crowe's copy.

As I am still weakish and have a world of letters to answer, I must be brief. Cherishing the hope of one day walking from tree to tree in Sherwood Forest for many a mile with the Forester, I am, yours very truly,  
SAMUEL BROWN.

Several cheery letters I received in the course of the next six months, and then this, on his receipt of my little work, "The Peak and the Plain—Scenes in Woodland, Field and Mountain:—"

5, St. James's-square, Notting-hill,  
Friday, Feb. 11th, 1853.

My dear Spencer Hall,—I received your charming country book on the morning of Ash-Wednesday (an appropriate day for going with you into the sweet wilderness of Nature) and I had read several chapters of it before the arrival of your note in the evening. It is just one of the books that I love, when free to lap myself in the wise idleness of a ramble. A city invalid like me, too, is always so glad to be led out by the quiet waters! I cannot go to them, but lo! they can come to me. Blessings on your hills and dales, and living streams—the blessings of the sick, the busy dwellers in towns who are not yet lost to youth and innocence, and the sorrowful of every kind! . . . This little piece of yours is a sweet thing. It will give a world of pleasure wherever it comes; but it is not in its nature to make a noise. . . . Let me beg of you to send a copy to Thomas Aird, of Dumfries—a true and noble but not popular poet, congenial with you in many things, and I shall write him suggesting he should notice it in either his own paper or in Blackwood, for whom he writes not a little. If you send him a note, tell him I put it into your



head, because I knew he should delight in your pastoral spirit. Otherwise I shall do what I can for it. I think I can promise you an article in the ———. The ——— is stingy, and does not love simplicity and nature. But every organ is chokeful of what *seems* more to the purpose, namely, of things which are already making a noise. . . .

So you have settled at Derby. That is right. All success and honour to you, say L. I do think I shall very certainly see you there sometime next summer. Indeed I sometimes actually think of going down now to be mesmerised by you for my weary little malady.

My wife is well, and thanks you. So is little Spring, that smile of God upon me — as full of glee and a kind of singing as the sweetest of your rills.

God bless you, my brave Forester.—Yours most faithfully,

SAMUEL BROWN.

P.S.—I send you a thing of mine, some two years old, which *I am sure you will enjoy*, were it only for the passage on *water and the sea*——ALCHEMY AND THE ALCHEMISTS.

I have just been reading again the striking passage here alluded to, and will copy it; but the two volumes of Lectures and Essays, from which it is taken, and which have been given to the world since her husband's death by his faithful and affectionate widow, ought to be in every library. They can still be had, I believe, through any bookseller, of Messrs. Constable and Co., the Edinburgh publishers:—"It was Thales, of Miletus, the father of Greek philosophy, who methodically originated the conception that water is the first principle of things. He inculcated the scientific dogma that water is the one substantial or underlying essence, of which the rest of nature is but the manifold expression. Water was represented in his system as the sole and primeval matter, convertible and actually converted, by some plastic power, into the thousand-and-one familiar creatures in the universe: now into this one, and now into that; now into wood, and now into stone; now into the grass of the fields, and now into the body of man himself. Nor does this doctrine appear to be fantastical, as has been remarked by Ritter, when one reflects how rocks and salts can be extracted by mere boiling and evaporation, not only out of the sea, but also from the most insipid of lakes and streams, and even from rain. It is not yet beyond the memory of man, that Lavoisier was careful to distil water backwards and forwards in an alembic for many long days and nights together, in order to settle the question whether water were actually convertible into earthy matter, as had been asserted and believed by his immediate predecessors. Scheele, one of his most distinguished contemporaries, instituted another sort of experiment upon water, with a view to the determination of the very same point. It is not fifty years since Davy conducted his celebrated experiments upon the electrolysis of water by means of the galvanic current, with very much the same

object in view. It is, accordingly, easy to perceive that the ceaseless circulation of the liquid element from the ocean into the air, and through the air again to the earth, in dews and mists and rains, only to run once more from springs and streams and lakes and rivers, down to the ocean whence it rose, must have impressed the youthful science of ancient and imaginative times with the supreme importance of water in the economy of creation. But this contemplation of nature as one vast alembic, for the revolution of that beautiful and lifelike creature, was not the only motive to its exaltation as the best and first of things in the mind of Thales. The marvellous effects of moisture in its varying forms of river, rain, and dew, in covering the hills, the valleys, and the plains with verdure, during the flushing spring of Asia Minor and the Archipelago, to say nothing of the indispensable necessity of water not only to vegetation, but also to animal vitality itself, must have gone deeper still into the thoughts of those venerable seers who were first visited by the inquisitive spirit of wonder.

“Willing to forget the moon and all sublunary science, we have stood beside the sea the whole year round, and abandoned ourselves to its first impressions in the spirit of antique faith and awe. It moved for ever at our feet, now driving us before it, and then drawing us after it, its everlasting voices in our ear. One day it murmured about our steps, kissing the brown earth, and kissing it again, never weary of kissing the softened beach; another, it was testy as a great wayward child, and chid the world the livelong day; on a third, it was as angry as a brawling woman, and chafed along the shore; another time it panted and heaved and lashed, like a hundred orators arousing the nations with their ire. Anon it swelled and roared, like an assailing host or an infuriated people; and again it thundered responsive to the heavens, flashing back flash for flash, reflecting an infernal blackness upon the chaos of the falling sky. Its varieties of expression were as many as the days of the year, and far more; but always it was moved from its very inmost, and always it moved to the impulse that stirred it, whatever that might be. It never lay still; it could not be at rest; it could not get away from itself. In vain it threw up spray and vapour and clouds; they returned to its unresting bosom through unerring channels. They went and they came as surely as it ebbed and flowed. They and it were always one, and all nature was penetrated by the unity. Wherever it touched, living things sprang into being:—plants, animals, and man; only to be resolved again into the mighty organism of the waters when their lives were done. The ocean, reaching down to Hades, and stretching beyond the clouds, was the very blood of nature—‘the blood which is the life.’ Blind to sun, moon, and stars, insensible to

the firm earth on which we stood, and deaf to the solicitation of the air and all its winds, we were lost in the contemplation of what seemed more alive than they; and then we understood how the first-born of the Wise Men of old pronounced the great deep to be at once the womb and the grave, the beginning and the end, of all created things!" Dr. Brown then dwells on the other three elements considered as primeval by the ancients.

The next scraps of letters need little introduction or explanation :—

St. James's-square, March 24th, 1853.

My dear Forester,—I have suffered since I last wrote you. Having discovered (after four years of it! my physicians never discovered anything!) that I am and have been the victim of [here he describes his painful disease, and the necessarily painful mode of its treatment by one of the most distinguished surgeons of the day], the long process renders it impossible that I can leave town till May at the earliest, but I do hope and intend to see you and your aboretum sometime in summer. In addition to my personal sufferings, a dearly beloved young brother has just died, and that suddenly. He is not yet buried. The thing has stirred me to the depths, and my whole heart is sore.

In these circumstances you will understand my silence and brevity. Yet I do sympathise with your innocent delight on the reception of your charming book. Write to me ere long. Tell me of spring. My little Spring is full of buds and promise. My wife is sorrowful, but in good health, and wishes you and all innocent men well.—Yours,

SAMUEL BROWN.

May 5th, 1853.

My dear Spencer Hall,—“Thou shalt not” come to Bedford next week without coming to town. Pray come, if only for a night. My wife wishes it. I wish it. Wherefore come. . . . Yes or no? . . .

From Blunham Orchards, in Bedfordshire, I sent a short note, with an enclosure of flowers for “little Spring,” saying I would run up and spend Saturday evening with them at Notting-hill, and got the following in reply :—

Dear Forester,—Come. But do not leave till Monday, mind. . . . These flowers are as sweet as memory. The smell!

Mrs. Crowe and Roffe, and perhaps Coventry Patmore, are to be here on Sunday evening.

My duty in Bedfordshire done, I went forward, and was able to spend nearly the whole of a day and night with the Galileo of his science—the first time I had seen him since we parted at Edinburgh, more than eight years before. Sad as it was to find him so weak and worn, what a fine mental breathing was that visit to me! To one who had formerly been accustomed to such intercourse, but who was now somewhat cut off from it by a life in which hard duty was its own and almost only reward, there was a refreshment at our quiet little evening party—quiet yet glad, and discoursing chiefly on high themes—equal to that of a

clear well in a weary land. Coventry Patmore could not be there ; but good Mrs. Brown and "little Spring," and the fatherly smile of the poet-philosopher on us all, from his grave, earnest but loving and cheerful face—made the visit a doubly happy, though touching one, to me ; and then, soon after my return, I got this letter :—

5, St. James's-square, Wednesday, 25th May, 1853.

My dear Forester,—I like you all the better for your bright little visit. We enjoyed it to the full. Mrs. Crowe, too, was drawn in heart towards you, and good Alfred Roffe, and us more than we could say. Be sure your visit pleased us much. But I have put off writing till I should have somewhat positive to say about Derbyshire.

You must know that I have been particularly well ever since two days after you were here. Quin's new course of medication is telling well on me. I am to go to the country without delay—but I can't well leave till the 28th of June. I go to Leamington first. But it is surmised that Derbyshire is not a good place for me. To eradicate this tendency to intermitting fever I must be not only high *but dry*. I am urged to go to Reigate, sheltered from east and north, and standing on one hundred feet deep of gravel. But Derby hills or not, I shall certainly run down to Derby itself to see you, either now or when I am stronger by country life and air. Whether would you have me about the 10th of June, or during the waxing of a harvest moon ? *Say*. . . I have had many letters to write since I got better. I also go out as much as I can this dear summer weather. Going to my surgeon and physician costs me a whole day. My sister-in-law has come on a visit. A good many people call on me now that we have fine weather—and all these things have retarded the flow of my will you-ward. By the way, you are greatly wide of the mark, if you think I am taken up with these ghostly rappings. . . . As for the table moving, it has occurred before me ; but it needs neither ghost nor *fluidism* to do that.

You have left your compass here—a bad omen ! I shall take it to you.

If your reply be later than the 1st of June, address it to me at Dr. Russell's, York-terrace, Leamington.

Longing to be out a-neath the Sun and among these shifting warm breezes, I cannot prolong my scrawl—but am always yours, SAMUEL BROWN.

When at Leamington, Dr. Brown resolved to come and stay near me awhile in Derbyshire—partly from a kindred feeling, and partly from the hope that I might be of some use to him ; and this was his programme :—

My dear Forester,— . . . I shall to Derby first to see you, where, however, I shall not tarry, since you speak of it as being on a "level." After consulting you about a higher locality, you shall send me thither by the easiest road. I may stay a couple of months. There you will surely come and see me at times, and I shall certainly descend upon you from my hill-side tent again and again. It will "be good for me to be there"—in more ways than one. You will teach me many things, and I shall help your study of some things in my turn. What do you say to this plan ?

Of course the plan had all my heart, and in due time followed this :—

17, York-terrace, Leamington,

Monday, 13th or 14th June.

My dear Hall.—Could you receive me at the end of this week, or beginning or middle of next? If not at your lodging, yet at Derby—looking up the Hill Country for a few days. Write and say. I got here only on Thursday, owing to a febrile aggravation, etc.

Hoping thus to see you and grasp your warm right hand again so soon, I am now briefly but truly yours.

Wednesday morning.

Thus far had I written when I received yours yesterday morning. Don't come over for me—of course: I'm not so feeble as that yet. But expect me on Monday—I know not at what hour: but it doesn't matter. I am good at waiting. So we understand each other. Good day.

S. B.

My reply told him that I was engaged for Tuesday of the following week, at a gathering of intelligent country-people to be held at Robin Hood's Well, near Eastwood: so he had better come on the Monday, and then accompany me on Tuesday, or let it be till Wednesday, as might be most agreeable to him. His answer:—

Sunday—Leamington.

My dear Bard,—Not to-morrow. You would certainly carry me to Robin Hood's Well on Tuesday; and it would hurt me. For safety, I shan't budge till Wednesday morning. I do not understand the trains, etc., only shall leave this as early after ten a.m. as there is one starting. But no preparation for me, you know. Besides, I am uncertain, owing to my complaint. It happened (through that) when I was coming here I actually lost a train twice over.—Till some time or other on Wednesday—Thine,

SAMUEL BROWN.

He came, and no words can tell the tender responsibility one naturally felt for such a man in such a case. At that time many of the warmest and brightest souls in Scotland—many too in England—were tremblingly anxious about him. They knew if he passed from sight he would not leave his fellow, for them. And will it be foolish in me to say how grateful, as well as responsible, I felt for the brotherly confidence of such a spirit at such a time? He knows all about it *now*—perhaps, better even than *then*—how all he loved, loved him; and there will be no hurt to the world in any example of good feeling being made known. He was with me at my own quarters nearly a week in Derby, and then we went and took lodgings for him at Bakewell, where he was joined, anon, by Lady Agnew, with her kind nursing spirit, as well as by his wife and “little Spring.” That good wife's anxiety and tenderness will be best indicated by the following letter from her:—

My dear Dr. Hall,—Accept my best thanks for your kind and frank letter. Your opinion about Samuel is *very valuable* to me; for “love quickens sight,” and I know besides that you would not deceive me in the least, by raising my hopes higher than your own, in regard to his recovery. I do trust the repeated changes

he will have this summer may do some good. We must be very careful for the future.

Our house is still unlet, and until it is disposed of I shall not be able to join Lady Agnew and Samuel at Bakewell, which I regret very much. However, I may be released in time to enjoy a week with them. I must see you then too, or else will insist on your half-promised visit to us, wherever we may be situated.

Remember, I trust to your letting me know if my good husband should be ill, or worse than he is even, for nothing would keep me here if that were the case.

Good Spring Brown is very well—she thinks Papa is with “Do’to’ Hall,” and often talks of you both.—With sincere esteem, I am, dear friend, yours very truly,  
Thursday morning.

HELEN BROWN.

Meanwhile, though I was some years the elder, his clear and gigantic though modest intellect made me feel immeasurably the younger, as we enjoyed ourselves together like very brothers. Such days will never come again to me! Imagine the companionship of a man still young, but who ten or eleven years before had discoursed in this manner on the noblest themes :—“ The progress of science is as orderly and determinate as the movements of the planets, the solar systems, and the celestial firmaments. It is regulated by laws as exact and irresistible as those of astronomy ; although the weather of our changeful English atmosphere may not appear to be more fitful and capricious, that is to say, at first sight and to an uninstructed eye. . . . It is certainly the most provocative and wonderful thing in the history of positive knowledge, that many of the latest results of modern science were anticipated, some four or five centuries before Christ made the methods of such science a practical possibility, by the physiological and other schools of Greek or Egypto-Grecian philosophy. . . . In the art of experiment, and in trying to find his way with untripped step among details, the Greek was as feeble as a child : whereas, in the sphere of ideas and general conceptions, as well as in the fine art of embodying such universals and generalities in beautiful and appropriate symbols, it is not a paradox to say that he was sometimes stronger than a man. . . . Not that all the broad and general conceptions of positive science were foreknown, and therein predicted, by pre-Christian thinkers and seers ; but so many of the capital points of modern theory did actually constitute principal elements of the Greek idea of nature, as to arrest and astonish the historical inquirer at almost every turn. . . . The peculiar circumstances attending our re-discovery of their old truths, is the fact of our having reached the summits in question by a long course of observation and strict induction, climbing every step of the ascent slowly and surely, while they sprang to the tops of thought at one bound, from the standing-ground of the most obvious facts at the very foot of the mountain-range set before them and us. Be the

nature of this difference, and of all its results, what it may—and the secret will be opened in due time—it is certain, always speaking in a very general style, that the whole fabric of inductive science was drawn out in high-going, wide-flowing outline by the earliest masters of conscious thought; the task of filling in all the multitudinous parts, and co-ordinating them into one living temple upon the world-wide basis of experience and common sense, was left to us. Happily, the immense labours of our modern method are accompanied at every step, richly compensated and even glorified, by the most marvellous discoveries of every kind, else its whole toils might have been too great for mortal man to undergo. It takes fourteen years to make out a fact that is worth while, said a living chemist of the true Baconian genius, on an occasion in point some years ago; and every discoverer in the world, whose wealth of experience is not of yesterday, would assuredly endorse the note;—but what a strange contrast does that present to the swift improvisations of those patriarchal grandsires of the present race of inquirers! The maximum of concrete labour and working talent—with as much genius as can be—is the formula of the latter: the maximum of genius and daring, with as little experience as possible—was that of the former. For example, Democritus and Empedocles foresaw those things at once, but it was in a glass darkly. . . . Moses and David, Solomon and Daniel, all the intellectual princes of Israel and Judah, knew as much, but they built no deep-going, sky-confronting, universal theory; because their proper genius had other and holier kinds of work to do. They had no bias, and not the gifts, for second causes; their eye being fixed, as if by fascination, on the Personal First Cause of all causes and effects. If we of Christendom had disobeyed the call of our proper tendency and talents, and not gone on to learn ever more and more of the individual parts of our surrounding world by observation and experiment, the idea of the homœmeric parts of the visible creation would never have come into our work-a-day heads. . . . Every great people, or cognate group of peoples, has its peculiar vocation or genius—for character is destiny—and ours was not to exemplify the primordial Godward instincts of humanity like the Hebrews, nor yet to seize the first principles of things by the process of hypothetical inference resembling divination like the Greeks; but rather to magnify the spiritual insights of the former, and to work out the conceptions of the latter, by the slow and positive inductious of observative science, adding an indivisible element of our own, even the spectacle of humble industry as of a good and faithful servant, followed by all the triumphs of specific discovery and invention. The Hebrews did one work for the whole world, once for all; the Greeks did theirs also once for all;



and it becomes us, now that our turn is come, to conserve and assimilate the results of those national lives, in that which we are living, on our own and all future men's behalf. . . . The Bible penmen and the Greek masters should be the close companions of every man in this busy and distracting age, whose proud heart swells in silent places, when the spirit of science solicits him to go and once more demonstrate the Christian art of discovery to be a blessing, not only to a nation or an age, but to the whole world until the latest stroke of time."

Recognising thus the Atomic Theory as the normal scientific outgrowth of the ages past, and carefully and beautifully tracing its history from ancient days to that of Dalton, Dr. Brown conceived that it still lacked its crowning truth and glory, in that, while it regarded atoms, for the purposes of the chemist, as solid nuclei, centres of attractive and repulsive force, it further regarded them as existing in a manner defying all possibility of calculating their forces or movements; whereas he endeavoured to show that, however absolutely minute they be, relatively to their own dimensions, their distances are as "measurably great as planetary and astral distances are relatively to the unit masses of planets, suns and stars;—whence the forces, movements, ætions, and reactions, though subsensible, are conceivably within the power of mathematical induction and geometrical calculus as strictly as are those of the supersensible, on heavenly masses." Even the unscientific reader will see the probable truth as well as the grandeur and beauty of this idea; while on the scientific mind, when first announced, it shot like a gleam of morning light. It is thus that Brown draws to the conclusion of one of his lucid disquisitions on "The Atomic Theory before Christ and since":—"Still the inquiry recurs, how the aboriginal idea or fundamental conception of this beautiful hundred-handed theory came into the world: that idea which it might never have entered into our heart to conceive; and which was, in indisputable fact, derived to us from a Hellenic and pre-Christian school. . . . The process was as follows, in our humble opinion. The Grecian intellect had an unprecedented and still unequalled keenness of eye for the analogies of things. The slightest resemblance caught, charmed, and fixed its glance. The analogy of the Milky Way doubtless carried the swift glance of Democritus to the conception of a star-like constitution for the sensible forms of nature. The Atomic Theory is just the fact of the unitary world of stars come down, and imaged in a dew-drop, or taking a sand-grain for its orrery. It is this analogy, in truth, which at once constituted its clearness and perfection as a thought, and legitimatises it in the presence of a positive methodology. But the earlier Greek sages were not positivists, whatever may have been claimed for

## THE AUTHOR'S EARLIER WORKS.

"Go on! go on!"—JAMES MONTGOMERY, the poet, to Spencer T. Hall, on reading his first work, "*The Forester's Offering*," in 1841.

"A volume of sterling good sense, pure English, and native poetry, appealing not to our charity but to our perception of excellence."—From a Review by WILLIAM NEWMARCH, Esq., F.R.S.

"It has a sparkling richness and graphichness of description, which rivet the attention and delight the mind. . . . The appearance of this work at the present time is a striking and flattering characteristic of the age.—SHEFFIELD IRIS.

"The effusion of a healthful fancy and a kindly heart, worthy of a wide celebrity."—SPECTATOR.

"He possesses a fine natural taste and great ability, and gives utterance to his thoughts with such truthful earnestness, that by this one little work he holds no inconsiderable place in the ranks of living authors."—From a Review by Mr. JOHN FOWLER, the Biographer of Pemberton.

"Mr. Hall is no common observer of things and men—he sees with the eye of a poet and a philosopher—and his descriptions of scenes and characters are worthy of special attention. He has faith in the strength as well as in the beauty of goodness, and all his efforts are directed to the promotion of right feeling among his fellow men. . . . He writes as if his heart were in his pen.—LEEDS TIMES.

"— One of Nature's gentlemen. . . . The confession of his experiences at the end reminds us of Franklin, and has a noble and impressive moral."—THE ATLAS, March 19, 1842. •

"He is one of Nature's freemasons, and knows all her secret signs—one of her high priests, who is at home in her innermost shrines, where he pays his vows and calls upon his fellows to pay theirs. He is her poet and sings her praises—and her champion too, who vindicates her right."—TAIT'S MAGAZINE.

Dr. Hall's later works have been spoken of in similar terms by the Press; while the late Dr. SAMUEL BROWN, a grandson of the celebrated commentator on the Bible, and himself one of the most distinguished minds of his time, thus wrote in 1852:—"Spencer Hall is not unworthy of his names, like Spenser, a poet, like Hall, addicted to philosophy, like both a christian gentleman. His woodland poems have made him amiably known to all his countrymen as the Sherwood Forester; and his scientific experiences have commended him to the respect of many of the true lovers of science, both at home and abroad. His poems are affectionate, sunny, graceful, true to English nature, and also spiritual in their tendency; his scientific narratives and descriptions are ingenious, vigorous and clear. As a man I know him to be a lover of man, given to self-help, enthusiastic, industrious, dutiful, brave, and altogether honourable."

THIS Work will be continued monthly, and completed in Five Parts. The various Biographies are intended to be given, not merely in deference to chronological precedence or social rank, but to a rule that, the Author trusts, by affording more variety will also afford more pleasure in the reading, as they appear.—Part II, on conclusion of the Memoir of DR. SAMUEL BROWN, will proceed with Sketches of MARY RUSSELL MITFORD, PEMBERTON the Wanderer, WILLIAM HUTTON, etc.



PART II.]

[PRICE 1s.

# MORNING STUDIES

AND

## EVENING PASTIMES:

MEMOIRS AND VERBAL PORTRAITS, MISCELLANEOUS  
PAPERS, AND POEMS.

BY DR. SPENCER T. HALL,

"THE SHERWOOD FORESTER."

Author of "The Forester's Offering," "The Peak and the Plain,"  
"Days in Derbyshire," "Mesmeric Experiences,"  
and other Works.

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Among the Memoirs and Verbal Portraits included in this Work, besides the above, are or will be those of ERASMUS DARWIN, M.D. F.R.S.; WILLIAM COBBETT; PROFESSOR WILSON; EBENEZER ELLIOTT, "the Corn Law Rhymist;" FREDERICK DAVIES, a Hero of Humble Life; JOHN CLARE, "the Northamptonshire Peasant;" ROBERT BLOOMFIELD, "the Farmer's Boy;" GEORGE HERBERT, Parson of the Olden Time; JOHN GRATTON, "the Quaker Preacher;" BERNARD BARTON, "the Quaker Poet;" GEORGE FREDERICK WILLIAM, Seventh Earl of Carlisle; NANNY SHACKLOCK, a Village Florence Nightingale; the two MONTGOMERIES; GEORGE COMBE, the Phrenological Writer; WILLIAM GREGORY, Professor of Chemistry; DR. DICK, "the Christian Philosopher," and other Scottish Worthies; BARON LIEBIG; an IRISH CHIEF and his People; JAMES S. BUCKINGHAM; ROBERT OWEN; JOHN EDWARDS, "the Dovedale Poet;" PHEBE, Mother of the HOWITTS; GEORGE PURSEGLOVE, "the Poor Man's Poor Friend;" MRS. JERRAM; CLAUDE GAY, and other interesting Characters.

\* \* SECTION II will contain MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS on various themes. SECTION III will consist of "LAYS FROM THE LAKES" and other Poems;—and the whole, when complete, will form a Volume which it is hoped may be interesting alike in the private study and the family circle.

## TO THE CRITICAL READER.

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*Though deeply interested in Physiognomy and Phrenology, as in whatever else may throw light on human character, the Author of this work can honestly say that he never sought interviews or intercourse with persons of note for the mere purpose of studying and sketching their peculiarities. But walking through life with open eyes and mind; loving to read the biography of the past; and often thrown more by accident than design in contact with living people remarkable for their public spirit, picturesqueness of intellect, or private worth, he has not only enjoyed the impressions they have made upon him, but the giving off again of those impressions, where it could be done without offence to taste and right feeling, for the pleasure and instruction of the many.*

*It was thus that, during the last twenty years, most of these memoirs and verbal portraits were contributed to the monthly or weekly press; and the Author having frequently been solicited to revise and present them, with additions, in a concise form, a volume was announced several years back with that view; but from various causes its issue was delayed. One writer strongly advised that it should be withheld altogether, on the ground that it was wrong to publish anything we had learnt from ordinary intercourse with people of distinction; but with singular inconsistency followed that advice almost immediately with a printed volume of her own recollections of distinguished friends and acquaintance! Acting on the opinions of others*

upon whose candour and judgment he can better rely, he ventures forth at last, and trusts that his work will not be unwelcome in its present form. The reader will see, as the parts successively appear, that a few of the Characters sketched were of a past generation, and not personally known to the Author; others were known to him only as they might be to thousands, in public; but with the major portion he was, in a greater or less degree, on terms of intimacy, and not seldom of closest friendship. His allusions to persons still living are comparatively rare.—Of course, he is not responsible for the sentiments, theological or political, of those whose lives he delineates; nor does he make them stalking-horses for conveying his own. His paramount desire is to be just to them and theirs.

It remarkably happens that Mr. S. C. Hall is coming out at the same time with a work of somewhat similar bearing, which is here alluded to, to prevent any confusion in the public mind that might arise from similitude of name or theme. These sketches were for the most part written and printed before the Author heard anything of those by Mr. S. C. Hall. The coincidence in the time of publication is curious—yet a mere coincidence. There is room for both, without the least reason for envy or jealousy on either side; and those to whom “*The Sherwood Forester*” and his contemporary are best known will probably be among the readiest to believe it. “*What is writ is writ.*”

The Chapters on other themes, and the Poems, will tell their own tale.

South Parade, Burnley,  
November, 1870.



Aristotle. They rather believed in [their sense of analogies without more ado. They knelt before the ideal creatures of their imagination. Beauty and fitness were enough to command their faith, so they were of the intellectual species of beautiful propriety. . . . The moral attitude of the Greek populace was that of vanity—of the philosophers pride, intellectual pride: and no wonder; for they were a marvellous people, and their sages the most intellectual men the world has yet been able to produce. . . . Christ, Christianity, and the Christian era (surely about to be inaugurated in their purity ere long), present an aspect the reverse of all this magnificent exaltation; that is to say, in their real character; and their true nature has always been shaping men more or less, directly or indirectly, especially our greatest men. . . . It is now obedience that makes men free. If they would enter the Kingdom of Heaven they must come as little children; and Francis Bacon has finely said the kingdom of Nature admits no other guests. . . . This is the moral clue to the new, most patient, self-distrustful, yet always well-rewarded science of Christendom.”

So far as Dr. Brown's health, while he was with me, would allow, we sometimes walked, and at other times rode out together—being now and then joined by that venerable seer, Henry Wild, of Nottingham, who ought to be known all the world over by his “Observations on the Three Powers of the Sun—Light, Heat, and Actinism,—showing how this Triune Power in the Sun is that power which moves the Earth in its Orbit, and on its Axis, without the help of the Centripetal or Centrifugal Force (so called);” and though Dr. Brown was not by any means the person to see things at first sight in the way that Henry saw them, he was of all others the man to enjoy such company and listen to him. In truth, everyone who thought originally, and dared to express himself ingenuously, on any topic, was just the person to interest Samuel Brown; whilst I was a no less interested listener to both. Wherefore, whether in a walk through the Arboretum, or a ride to Chaddesdon, or a conversation at table or by the fireside, every hour that he could spare from needful rest and treatment was one of instruction and delight to me. Talking of Chaddesdon reminds me of an incident it would be wrong to omit telling, were it only for the light in which it showed Dr. Brown's intuitive knowledge of character. I had one day to visit a person there—a young man in a farm-house, whose legs had lost all power, and who therefore had to sit, lie, or be carried about, according to the requirements of the passing time, and the Doctor went with me. It was a substantial and respectable farm-house, but afforded no index whatever to the probable pastimes of its inmates. I knew that my patient was intelligent for one so confined in such a

place ; but Brown on the very first glance at his brow saw farther, and rather startled me by asking him in a matter-of-course way, at what age he had first read Milton ; when the young farmer's reply startled me still more as he said in the same free and easy tone as that of his questioner,—“ When I was about eleven.” No word concerning Milton or any other poet had been previously dropped by any of us, nor was there book or anything else referring to Milton within sight ; and such a power of ready inference, all circumstances considered, seemed to me Cuvierian.

On the Saturday evening we went out as far as Cromford, staying at the Greyhound Hotel, and next day quietly drove up as far as Holloway and Lea Hurst—a beautiful locality, become of late more distinguished as the occasional home of Florence Nightingale. England has few more picturesque or lovely landscapes ; and my especial mission there that day was to address words of encouragement and comfort to a number of homely cottagers. There was one cottage in which resided Philip Spencer, and still dwelling in the same place was the little girl, by this time grown to maturity, with relation to whom the following narrative is strictly true. I had myself heard it frequently and already told it elsewhere, but it was now told once again on the spot, for the Doctor's special information. It ran thus :—Philip and his first wife, Martha, having no children of their own, had adopted the little daughter of a young woman who went to live at Derby, and by her were called father and mother as soon as she could speak, as she could not remember her own parents. When scarcely three years old, she one day began to cry out that there was a woman looking at her, and wanting to come to her. According to her description of the person it must have been her true mother. As no one else saw the apparition, and the child continued to be very excited, Philip took her out of the house to that of a neighbour ; but the apparition kept them company, talking (as it seemed to the little one) all the way. They then went to another house, where it accompanied them still, and appeared as though wanting to embrace the child, but *vanished at last in the direction of Derby, in a flash of fire*. Derby is about thirteen miles distant from Holloway, and as in that day there was neither railway nor telegraph, communication between them was much slower than at present. As soon, however, as it was possible for intelligence to come, the news arrived that the poor mother had been *burnt to death* ; that this happened at the very time of the apparition ; and, in short, that she was sorrowing and crying to be taken to her child during the whole period between being set on fire and her expiration. This narrative, told with manifest ingenuousness by these decent and by no means superstitious

people, and some incidents of another kind characteristic of the locality, evidently made a deep impression on the Doctor's mind, and are alluded to in the following letter,—Philip's second wife, about the time, dying of what we thought paralysis of the pneumo-gastric nerve, with which she had just been somewhat suddenly smitten :—

Bakewell—Tuesday.

. . . . . —I got here not well. I was more out of sorts all the evening than for many weeks back. But no thanks to a most comfortable hot bath I had taken. . . . However I got a good deal of sleep last night; and I dare say I shall get along very nicely now. Yet, like you, I feel lonely after so much hearty intercourse. . . . My portmanteau has not yet come to hand. So I am bookless; for my prayer-book and the map of Derbyshire are scarcely books. Then it is cold: and altogether I should be rather cheerless, but for the prospect of my wife and friend coming to me. Can you come before their arrival? I fear not. But you must come over some day next week when they are here.

Ah! I too can sympathise with Philip the miner. In truth, these pious and picturesque mountain Methodists will not go out of my head. Pray let me know the issue.

Helen writes me of a visit she has just paid to a cousin's husband drawing near to death. How a day might tear my wife and me asunder, and leave me alone like you, Spencer Hall! God forbid! Spring and she are well.

Do not blame yourself. You have been as kind as a brother. Nobody could have done more for me—*except Helen*. . . . Your sincere friend,

SAMUEL BROWN.

It has drizzled all day, but I got a walk. My box has come to hand—thanks. We shall be very comfortable here.

Wednesday Morning.

Dear S. H.—Just received your second note and envelope full of letters. Thanks. Lady Agnew cannot come till Saturday, when I beg you'll receive her at 1-35, and send her up to Rowsley. . . . It is but dull here alone in such weather, but it promises better now. Then I slept more last night than I've done for a long time, and am really wonderfully well this morning.

With regard to these and other letters, it is perhaps due to the reader, as well as to the memory of their writer, that a special word should here be said. There is no doubt that such a man must have written thousands, many of which might be far more interesting to general readers. Were all gathered in and arranged according to their dates, they would, collectively, show his mind on many points in an aspect more beautiful than any biographical outline without them could, even their least important topics being set a-light by his soul's warm glow. Hence one reason for the insertion here of these, with the hope that they may, with the rest, be found and transferred, soon or late, to some nobler shrine. Another reason for here giving them is, the information they afford, (and which cannot but be in some degree interesting to many,) of the tried invalid's experiences and moods in Derbyshire during this half-promising effort for his restoration.

After the arrival of good, motherly Lady Agnew, and the subsequent arrival of Mrs. Brown and "little Spring," the sojourn at Bakewell was one of continual refreshment and enjoyment. Sometimes I went over and gave the Doctor-patient a zoomagnetic operation, besides which he was undergoing other mild treatment under the best advice that could be commanded. And then those beautiful short walks and longer drives! One day it was to Haddon Hall or Chatsworth; another day to Mr. Bateman's celebrated museum of local antiquities, near Youlgreave, and back by the Birchover Rocks, and Stanton. And there was one sweet, sunny-evening drive I shall never forget, through Ashford, and up by the side of the Wye, to Taddington Dale. The party consisted not only of Dr. Brown, Lady Agnew, Henry Wild, and myself, but (O, joy for the gentle invalid,) his dear wife and "little Spring!" Had I been possessed but of a shade of the distinguishing faculty of a Boswell, and looking forward to at any time writing these reminiscences, what a freight of beautiful and sublime, as well as many playful and affectionate sayings, might I have conveyed to this little sheet from that evening's conversations by the winding Wye! And perhaps to Henry Wild it was one of the most pleasant hours of his life; for—after seventy years of remarkable vicissitudes—it was in the very midst of his native scenes he was enjoying that company.

From several—perhaps from all causes, there was marked improvement in Dr. Brown's health during his Derbyshire sojourn. He had some idea of the whole party coming and staying its closing week, nearer to me, at Derby, but another plan was resolved on, as the following tells:—

Bakewell, Friday morning.

My dear Hall,—Will you forgive our caprice? If you have not yet taken lodgings for us, *don't do it*. If you have, then we shall enter them on Monday of course. But we now for several reasons wish to stay here another week. Among other things, I am now quite well again. . . . We probably go to Chatsworth to-morrow. But won't you come another day and see us once more here? Monday or Tuesday? I have business for you. The editor of the ——— Review wishes you to write a brief critique for him. . . . All here join issues in sending you many thanks and good wishes. And I am yours, always true,

SAMUEL BROWN.

I've gained other three pounds in weight—eight pounds in all during exactly seven weeks. Good. S. B.

And there was another happy week at Bakewell, and further meetings; and then I bade the whole of the little party farewell, at the Derby Railway Station, on their way back to London, and — never more saw my friend in the flesh: though in his letters (the handwriting of which is as clear and ingenuous as was his voice), in his eloquent essays, and in some of the warmest, cheeriest, and tenderest

of my memories, I can often see him almost as vividly as ever. The following note needs no introduction. It tells its own tale of relapsing health, and gives in a most significant hurrigraph one gifted writer's impressions of another :—

Notting Hill, Monday, Aug. 21st.

My dear Spencer Hall,—It has not been from forgetfulness, but procrastination, that you have not heard from me before now. Truth to tell, I have never been well since I returned ! I am losing all the little good I got. I almost think of flying to Buxton for the winter. But *fiat voluntas*.

I see you are sure to succeed in the Patmore article, for your heart is in it. . . . I know little of P.'s antecedents :—The son of the editor of the " Court Journal," who was implicated in the Lockhart and Scott duel, he published a small volume of poems at 18 or 19—praised by the " Examiner," abused in " ———." Is in the British Museum Library. Has written loads of reviews in the " North British " and elsewhere, chiefly on architecture and poetry : and now puts forth the poesy you are reading. That's all I know, but that he has a fair wife whom he dearly loves, and three children, and the prettiest of wee housies, and a very choice little group of friends—Tennyson, Ruskin, Millais, and (O anti-climax !)—Yours, very dear Friend,

SAMUEL BROWN.

*Addendum*.—Coventry Patmore is remarkable for pure and high morality, and a liberal though English christianity. . . . I have always found him a very good fellow. There are precious few men alive I hold in more ESTEEM—solid esteem.

Lady Agnew was spending the day with us on Saturday before returning to the North ; and our whole party, down to " Good 'Pring Brown," wished to be remembered to and by the Sherwood Forester. Remember me to Henry Wild.

And I also received other warm and brotherly letters, which, though scarcely one of them lacked some fine touch of life and feeling, so related at the same time to personal and domestic matters, as possibly to make my omission of them here a matter of duty. Then this :—

6th Sept.—Notting-hill.

My dear Spencer Hall,—Accept a brother's sympathy with you ; but rouse yourself to action, which is the solvent not only of doubt, but of despondency. " No intermission and no haste "—these be your watchwords !

For myself I think I am doing pretty well on the whole. Sometimes amazingly so. Sometimes resigning myself to slow death, sometimes crying out to heaven that I will not die, but live, and discover the works of the Lord !

Won't you be near London again soon ? By the way, Lady Ango (as Spring Brown calls her) sends her reminiscences to you in her last letter. My wife does so now. None of us will soon forget that beautiful Derbyshire, and you are bound up in the remembrance of it and its dales, and footpaths, and high-going roads.—God bless and help you.—Yours,

SAMUEL BROWN.

How it was I cannot at this moment recall. Could any letters between us have miscarried ? Did I, amid matters which at the time painfully crowded upon and sometimes overwhelmed my brain, receive a letter that was laid by for the moment and then regarded as answered ?

My memory now does not clearly say. But Heaven forgive me if I committed the crime of culpable indifference to any suffering man—especially to one so noble and so true as Dr. Samuel Brown, who one day wrote me this heart-breaking wail :—

Edinburgh, March 26th, 1854, (31, Morrison-street.)

My dear Dr. Hall,—Why have you never written me in my distress? Why never answered my letter from York-place on our arrival here? Are you well?—happy?—miserable?—or what?

For me, I have had a sad and sore winter of it. “Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.” For my wife, she has been wondrous well on the whole. For little Spring, she *will be* three years old on Wednesday, and she *is already*, like Jerusalem to the prophet, “the joy of the whole earth” to me. For us all, we remember “Dotto Hall,” although he “has forgotten Joseph,” even his friend in bonds,

SAMUEL BROWN.

Within two months of the date of the above affecting letter, God gave to “little Spring Brown” a brother, who bears his father’s christian name—Samuel.

Not for his own sake alone, but for the sake of all he loved, Dr. Brown several times changed his locality, and submitted to all the means that science and friendship could suggest for recovery. But his disease, an intestinal one, greatly accelerated by his former unremitting devotion to his favourite science, mastered. At length leaving Haddington, he settled at Edinburgh, in a locality which he described to his doctor (Professor Henderson) as “a sweet spot to live in,” then significantly added, “and a sweet spot to die in.” And he did die there, in holy resignation to the will of God his Saviour, in the thirty-ninth year of his age. His last articulate words, on the evening of the 19th of September, 1856, were to his wife—“You know there is no farewell between us;” and, as adds the good biographer already quoted—“there followed a brief but voiceless respite; and then, as the fair still dawn of the 20th brightened into morning,

His quiet eyelids closed, he had  
Another morn than ours.”

Thus passed away, in the prime of his manhood, one who ought to be famous, were it for the eloquence and clearness of his diction alone, but whose mental grasp encompassed the profoundest scientific questions, not only of modern, but of ancient times; whose penetration into some of the deepest secrets of Nature, and aspirations towards the Spirit that governs it, seemed at times almost divine; whose life was pure, whose faith was sure, whose soul was as gentle and loving as a child’s, and whose moral bravery has never been surpassed since the days of St. Stephen and St. Paul. As one who knew him well has

said—"It would be impertinent, and, indeed, it would not be possible to indicate to any one who never saw him, or heard his voice, or came under the power of his personality, in what lay the peculiarity of Samuel Brown's genius;—all who knew him, knew it,—none who did not, can. . . . It was as if a new flower had sprung up, which no one ever before saw, and which no one looks for again. His letters and his journal, and above all, his living voice and presence, could alone tell what was best in him: there was a swiftness and a brightness about his mind and expression, such as we never before witnessed; its penetrative, transmuting power seemed like that of lightning in its speed and keenness. With this brightness, and immediateness, and quickness of mind, there was great subtlety—a power of clearly expressing almost impossible thoughts, of working upon invisible points, which was quite marvellous. It is therefore difficult to speak of him without paradox and apparent exaggeration. To borrow an illustration from his own science, his mind was molecular or atomic in its movements and action. Atom upon atom, rather than mass upon mass. We would have expected the convolutions of his brain to be deeper, finer, and more numerous than is common." Above all, he was an unaffected Christian in whatever he thought or wrought.

Let a part of one of his own sonnets put the conclusion to this reverent though feeble tribute to his name. It is in alluding to Nature and to the *transcendent* immortality of her student's soul, he says:—

. . . She helps the gentle mind.  
 I heard her sigh one summer eve to such :—  
 O, son of man, it doth rejoice me much  
 Within thy troublous heart this love to find.  
 Unequal children we of common Sire,  
 But thou hast that to do I cannot know,  
 Much to endure, acquire, enjoy, bestow.  
 Within thee burns an all-celestial fire :  
 O see it nor destroy thee, nor expire !  
 Come, let thy sister serve thee while she can,  
 Tend thou the heavenly flame, and tune a lyre.  
 Come, let her teach thee all becomes a man ;  
 For thou an angel art beneath thy seeming—  
 Ah ! I shall never see thy glory beaming !





## Chapter Sixth.

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WILLIAM HUTTON, F.A.S.

(JAN. 1854.)

IN the whole range of our biography, there are few lives more affecting and triumphant than that of WILLIAM HUTTON, Mill-boy, Stocking-weaver, Bookseller, and Antiquary. He has sometimes been called the English Franklin; and it must be admitted that he has several noble features of character in common with the American. But there are also many traits belonging pre-eminently to Hutton for which Franklin, had he possessed them, would have been a still better as well as a greater man than he was. With all his philosophy, his foresight and energy, Franklin was in some things a sophist and man of expediency—sometimes selfish, even though his selfishness might be of an “enlightened” kind; whereas Hutton did most things on a principle that could not be gainsaid. While Franklin would ask, *is it expedient?* Hutton would do a thing *because it was right*. With that fine sagacity, that natural logic, in comparison with which mere scholasticism is often foolishness, both were alike remarkably gifted. Nor were they less so in their endurance of hardship, their long battle with poverty and difficulty, their industry, the force and perspicuity with which they could use the literary faculty, and the good taste with which they gathered the fruits of these qualities, and wore their crowning laurels when the battle of life was at last all on their own side. But there were some things in which, though Franklin might display a more aspiring and expansive intellect, he did not manifest so large and warm

a heart; and one of the most important incidents in the life of each will prove it—that involving the choice of a wife. Franklin, in his autobiography, enumerates a long list of errors he would avoid were his life to come over again; but he does not include in it the fact which in another passage he most coolly states, that he refused to marry a young woman to whom he had paid his addresses, and whose affections he had won, because her relatives would not give her a dower of one hundred pounds, urging, as a reason, that they had not so much to give. Whereupon, says he, “*I showed them how easily it might be done, by mortgaging the house in which they lived;*” and the match was broken off! Franklin at this time was in their view little more than an adventurer. In the corresponding passage of Hutton's life, we find the following contrast. He is speaking of his interview with the parents of the girl he loved, on the eve of his marriage:—“As I ever detested being a beggar, I wished to have, in the first instance, as much as they chose to give me, for I knew I should never ask after. I answered faithfully whatever questions were asked me, and showed the progressive state of my circumstances, having now an accumulation of two hundred pounds. They offered one hundred. I replied, ‘It is rather too little.’ ‘You cannot (said the mother with mildness, for she was one of the best of women,) desire more than we can give.’ *Struck with this reasonable reply, I could not call in one word to object. If she had offered me nothing, I could not have given up my dear girl.* . . . *She little suspected how near that living treasure lay to my heart.*” In the affections, then, at least, there is not an exact parallel in the cases of Hutton and Franklin.

And what was the early history of the man who had thus already honestly won two hundred pounds by his industry, and that “living treasure” by his personal worth? I wish every boy in England could read and remember it. He was born at the bottom of Full-street, Derby, in some premises on the bank of the Derwent, September 30th, 1723, and was so ordinary, (a softer word for ugly), that his mother said she was afraid she should never love him—a poor reason for a mother not loving her own offspring! At two years of age he was nearly burnt to death; and this event, with the appearance of scenes on a journey into Leicestershire, the same year, he could remember through life. His family in Derby being exceedingly poor and distressed, he was sent, at the tender age of four, to reside with some ill-natured relatives about Mountsorrel, in Leicestershire, and was regarded by them as little better than an interloper. The following passage in that period of his life is affecting:—“Nothing is more common than for people, particularly young women, to be fond of children. I can recollect numberless

instances of insult, but not one civil thing they ever said. 'You are an ugly lad; you are like your father. Your brother is a pretty lad; he is like your mother.' (She was their sister.) I was unable to return an answer. They might have considered that this, and other evils, were out of my power to remove."

Let relatives in particular, and the educational world in general, take a hint from this; not only in reference to the body, but the mind of infancy. Who, when doing violence to the feelings of a *child*, can know what sort of record *the man* may make of it? The three aunts who thus invidiously treated the infant Hutton, were schoolmistresses! At the end of fifteen months he was sent back to Derby, and fared no better, for he says—"I now went to school to one Thomas Mead, of harsh memory, who often took occasion to beat my head against the wall, holding it by the hair, but never could beat any learning into it. I hated all books but those of pictures." And no wonder. How many constitutions have been broken, how many fine characters blighted in the bud, by false and cruel methods of tuition! But a better time for education is not coming merely; it is come; and instruction, if not already—as it ought to be—as pleasant as play, is at all events less of a sorrow than it was in days much later than those of poor William Hutton's infancy.

At the age of six commenced his household toils, as the assistant of his mother in the management of a growing family; and at seven commenced his slavery in the Old Silk-mill, (it was the first silk-mill built in England,) where of three hundred persons employed, he was the least and youngest; for which reason he had to drag about from morning till night, and every day but Sunday, in those weakly years, a pair of high and heavy pattens. In his own words—"I had now to rise at five every morning, submit to the cane whenever convenient to the master, be the constant companion of the most rude and vulgar of the human race, never taught by nature, or ever wishing to be taught. A lad, let his mind be in what state it would, must be as impudent as they, or be hunted down. I could not consider this place in any other light than that of a complete bear-garden."

To "this curious and wretched place," as he calls it (but let it be borne in mind that it was more than a hundred years ago), he was bound for seven years, and served his time, being the only one besides his brother who had then been willing or able to stay so long; and at the close of that period was again bound apprentice, to a stocking-maker, for a second seven years! Here is one of his childhood's sad experiences while employed at the silk-mill:—"The Christmas holidays (1731) were attended with snow, followed by sharp frost. A

thaw came on in the afternoon of the 27th, but in the night the ground was again caught by a frost which glazed the streets. I did not wake the next morning till daylight seemed to appear. I rose in tears for fear of punishment, and went to my father's bed-side to ask what was o'clock? 'He believed six.' I darted out in agonies, and, from the bottom of Full-street to the top of Silk-mill-lane, not two hundred yards, I fell nine times! Observing no lights in the mill, I knew it was an early hour, and that the reflection of the snow had deceived me. Returning, it struck two. As I now went with care I fell but twice."

When ten years old he lost his mother by death; and his father having broken up house-keeping, "sold up" and spent the money, they went (father and three children) to lodgings with a widow, who had four children of her own. Here is another picture of hardship from Hutton's autobiography:—"My mother gone, my father at the ale-house, and I among strangers, my life was forlorn. I was almost without a home, nearly without clothes, and experienced a scanty cupboard. At one time I fasted from breakfast one day till noon the next, and even then dined upon only flour and water boiled into a hasty pudding. I was also afflicted with chin-cough and with boils."

After "seven years' heart-ache," and not without some foul scars on his body, he left the old silk-mill, as already hinted, to be apprenticed to his uncle, a stocking-maker at Nottingham. One short passage will indicate the whole business:—"I now (1738) quitted my occupation, my father, brother, friends, connexions, and place of nativity; for everything was new at Nottingham, where a scene opens for thirteen years. I found a generous, friendly uncle; a mean, sneaking aunt; he, seriously religious; she, as serious a hypocrite; two apprentices, one a rogue, the other a greater." From these associations he once struggled to free himself, by running away; but shortly returned and finished his apprenticeship honestly, having in the meantime learnt to make a dulcimer, and to play it: for he loved music. The dulcimer he sold, notwithstanding, and bought a coat with the money. Indeed, with this, seven pounds saved by over-work, and thirty shillings borrowed of his uncle, he was enabled to keep himself not indecently clad during the whole of his apprenticeship, which ended the year before that in which "the rebels came to Derby."

Yet now his love for music afforded room for still greater love of books to accompany it. Just also, as from love of music, he made his dulcimer; from love of books he became a bookbinder and bookseller, and, ultimately, a writer. Stocking-making he hated, and was determined to give it up; bookselling he loved, and was equally determined

to prosecute it. The latter, everybody who knew him except his sister, discouraged. But he knew best his own bent, and resolved to follow it. His sister aided him as well as she could—deathless be the memory of her warm attachment to him!—and he overcame a mountain of difficulties. His small book trade was at first attempted in Nottingham and Southwell. The latter place he visited once a week, paying at the rate of twenty shillings a year for his shop. He had walked to London and back at the expense of a few shillings, to purchase all the book-binding materials he could for guineas equally few; and now it was his wont to walk fourteen miles and back upon a rugged road, along the border of Sherwood Forest, frequently carrying with him a heavy portion of his stock. But here it is impossible that anything can be more graphic than his own quiet language:—"During this rainy weather I set out at five every Saturday morning, carried a burthen of from three pounds weight to thirty, opened shop at ten, starved in it all day upon bread, cheese, and half-a-pint of ale, took from one to six shillings, shut up at four, and, trudging through the solitary night and the deep roads five hours more, I arrived at Nottingham by nine; where I always found a mess of milk-porridge by the fire, prepared by my valuable sister. Nothing short of a surprising resolution and rigid economy could have carried me through this scene. In one of those early morning journeys, I met upon Sherwood Forest four deer stealers returning with a buck. This put me in fear, lest I should be knocked on the head to keep silence. I did not know them, but was afterwards informed that they knew me."

At the age of twenty-seven he began to think of removing to Birmingham, and shortly afterwards, (but not without many interesting adventures, endurances, and achievements in the meantime,) the transition was accomplished. And though his first display there was of a most moderate character, the best coat he wore having been his "best for five years," he began to make his way; in his second year of residence acquiring a new suit of black and a large and important increase of friends. About the same time it was he became first acquainted with his "Sarah," who has already been mentioned, and of whom, forty-one years after, he tenderly and beautifully wrote as follows:—"Three months before her death, when she was so afflicted with an asthma that she could neither walk, stand, sit, nor lie; but, while on a chair, I was obliged to support her head, I told her that she had never approached me without diffusing a ray of pleasure over the mind, except when any little disagreement had happened between us. She replied, 'I can say more than that. You never appeared in my sight, even in anger, without that sight giving me pleasure.' I received the dear remark, as I now write it, with tears."

And now, remembering what a negligent man—to say no worse of him—had been Hutton's father, let us mark what follows. There is hardly a more noble or touching passage in the whole literature of England than this, by the man who had erst been a poor, despised, thrashed, hirling and illiterate mill-boy:—"No event in a man's life is more consequential than marriage; nor is any more uncertain. Upon this die his sum of happiness depends. Pleasing views arise, which vanish as a cloud; because, like that, they have no foundation. Circumstances change, and tempers with them. Let a man's prior judgment be ever so sound, he cannot foresee a change; therefore he is liable to deception. I was deceived myself, but thanks to my kind fate, it was on the right side. I found in my wife more than ever I expected to find in woman. Just in proportion as I loved her, I must regret her loss. If my father, with whom I only lived fourteen years, and who loved me less, and has been gone forty years, never is a day out of my thoughts, what must be those thoughts towards *her* who loved me as herself, and with whom I resided an age!"

Blest by this union and its offspring, and encouraged by a growing business connexion—though not without an occasional adverse event to remind him of the tenure by which all worldly prosperity must be held, he soon became the most successful bookseller and stationer in Birmingham, began to purchase landed property, and was chosen a Commissioner in the local Court of Requests, which he attended for nineteen years, adjudicating, in that time, in more than a hundred thousand causes. He took part, also, in other important public matters, and cultivated his literary and antiquarian tastes. It is pleasing to know that in this prosperity he remembered his sister with gratitude, and paid her periodical visits of affection at Nottingham.

In 1780, being now fifty-six years of age, he wrote his first book, the "*History of Birmingham*," which Dr. Withering pronounced to be "the best topographical history he had ever read." Hutton says he took up the pen to this work "with fear and trembling;" but the attempt was successful, and in thirty years of his following life he published thirteen other books. In 1782 he modestly says:—"A man may live half a century and not be acquainted with his own character. I did not know that I was an antiquary until the world informed me from having read my history; but when told, I could see it myself. The Antiquarian Society of Edinburgh chose me a member, and sent me an authority to splice to my name F.A.S."

In 1788 he revisited London, and afterwards wrote a most curious and interesting account of the journey; and this at a time when "going to London" was a novelty. The year following he took his afflicted

wife into Derbyshire, in search of health; and shortly afterwards saw his sister, for the last time, at Nottingham. His wife one day riding out with him, said she too must soon leave him, and ventured to name some one she wished to be her successor; but two years and a half after her death, he still mourned her alone, and asked "if a cure could be found for the man who had lost half of himself!"

Space will allow of only a brief summary of William Hutton's remaining life, though his latter days were as strangely eventful as his earliest. The most afflicting of them all, however, after he had become a widower, was the destruction of his property by a brutal riot, at Birmingham, July 14th, 1791, in which he suffered, with many others, including Dr. Priestly, because of his dissent from the Established Church. Three days did the ravages of the mob continue; and he says in one place:—"I saw the ruins yet burning of that once happy spot which had for many years been my calm retreat; the scene of contemplation; of domestic felicity; the source of health and contentment. Here I had consulted the dead, and attempted to amuse the living. Here I had exchanged THE WORLD for my little family." And such was the place, that, to save his life he was obliged, with his beloved daughter, to flee; as though he had been the incendiary instead of the owner!

On recovering from this shock, having ample property, he resolved to quit the busy world, and devote the remainder of his time to antiquarian researches, to meditation and to literature; and in the prosecution of the first he performed, in his seventy-ninth year, one of the most remarkable feats of pedestrianism, for an aged man, on record. With his knapsack on his shoulders, while his daughter and her servant accompanied him on horseback, he walked in five weeks, about six hundred miles among the then wild scenes of the north, for the purpose of tracing the remains of the Great Roman Wall, extending from the Tyne to the Solway Firth; and, with eyes at once almost telescopic and microscopic, was the work accomplished with comparative ease. An account was written of it shortly after, as profound and truthful as it is graphic and interesting, being as pleasant to read as a Border romance.

The following are the dates at which his various works were published:—"History of Birmingham," 1781; "Journey to London," 1784; "A Work on the Court of Requests," 1787; "The Hundred Court," 1788; "History of Blackpool," 1788; "Battle of Bosworth Field," 1789; "History of Derby," 1790; "The Barbers," a poem, 1793; "Edgar and Elfrida," a poem, 1793; "The Roman Wall," 1801; "Remarks upon North Wales," 1801; "Tour to Scarborough,"



1803; "Poems," chiefly tales, 1804; "Trip to Coatham," 1808. Of works so various and voluminous it would be impossible to give the merest summary in a chapter like this. Some of their passages are written in a style so pure and piquant, that a young writer might study them as models of composition. Of course, a fault may be detected now and then; yet the wonder is that such faults are so rare in a man so late and so self-taught. Sometimes he becomes dignified, but never bombastic; and in descending to the commonest topics, he treats them in a manner as lively, novel, and graceful, as it is simple and unaffected.

In person, he is described by his daughter as having been "nearly five feet six inches high, well made, strong, and active; a little inclined to corpulence, which did not diminish till within four or five months of his death, from which period he became gradually thin. His countenance was expressive of sense, resolution, and calmness; though when irritated or animated he had a very keen eye. Such was the happy disposition of his mind, and such the firm texture of his body, that NINETY-TWO YEARS had scarcely the power to alter his expression or make a wrinkle in his face."

Judging by his actions as a husband, father, neighbour and friend, he must (phrenologically speaking), have been gifted with more than an average development of domestic and social affections;—and we may see by his portrait that he had an unusual degree of firmness, self-respect, conscientiousness and veneration, with first-rate powers of observation, retention, and adaptativeness. Dignity without ostentation, and sincerity and intensity, must have been elements in all he thought, or did, or felt. And though we sometimes find him saying a sarcastic word against institutions as they existed and men as he found them; it must ever be borne in mind that he had much provocation—that toil and sorrow were the daily bread of his being, from childhood to maturity; and that in his advanced age the cry of "church and king" (a wild war-whoop, having no relation whatever to religion or order), came on the surges of popular violence, and carried away at one fell swoop the sanctuary which it had occupied him years of affection, anxiety and endeavour to rear—his house being burnt, and his property scattered, until "it paved nearly all the streets" of the town to which he had devoted the best years of his life. Still, he was patriotic and loyal to the last.

The mortal remains of this most patriarchal, ingenious and assiduous worthy, were interred at Aston, near Birmingham, the birth-place of his Sarah—Aston spire (as Charles Knight says), having been the prettiest object seen from his house and grounds at Bennett's Hill.

But his usefulness still lives, extending as far as his native language, and will continue to extend as long as that language is spoken—and longer: for the spirit of a true and useful man is a harp of heaven, the reverberations of whose tones end not with time. Should this inadequate sketch meet the eye of some suffering and struggling but hopeful and generous-hearted boy in the humblest sphere of life, let it inspire him anew with courage to press “onward and upward” in spite of every difficulty: for moral and educational opportunities inferior to those of William Hutton can hardly again be possible in England; while a triumph more complete, over ignorance, want and sorrow, it would be difficult to imagine.

I have heard of, but not seen, a more copious memoir of him by Dr. Samuel Smiles, from whose pen it cannot be otherwise than deeply interesting, and may be well turned to by any one who reads this, yet wishes for further information. In an age which an intellectual friend of mine has said is pre-eminently one of avarice, fuss and worry,—when a few “ambitious busy-bodies” have the power so to work on the mind of peoples, otherwise brotherly and reciprocal, as to fret them up into a bloody commotion, entailing want and woe upon millions,—it is well to bring to the foreground all the great industrial contributors to the prosperity and peace of the many. Samuel Smiles has done as much as most writers in this direction; but though he may have given many examples of men occupying “a larger space in the public eye,” he can hardly have given one more modest yet more honourable in all its aspects than that of William Hutton.





## Chapter Seventh.

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CHARLES REECE PEMBERTON,

"THE WANDERER."

(FEB. 1866.)

LET us be thankful that we are not all alike, but that God has summed up in humanity, in addition to much that is grotesque enough, the picturesqueness, beauty, and grandeur, of the world it inhabits. There are minds for every sphere—some for delving, some for soaring—some qualified to instruct, and others to amuse and cheer; and a few who have the happy gift of all three, though they may themselves have been, as it were, nurtured in the fire and schooled in storms. One of the latter was Charles Reece Pemberton, born in Wales sometime about the year 1790, and of whom I have elsewhere said (as he appeared to me in the ripeness of his manhood,) that he had a forehead almost like that of Jean Paul Richter, but with infinitely more flexibility of face; to which may be added a light, elastic, but not diminutive frame, a wrinkle of care—or, rather, it might be a furrow of grief,—an eye of love, a quiver of restrained satire, and a temperament of lightning. I never saw anyone whose body was so spirit-like—so free in its motions, so changeable in its expressions. There was no sentiment or passion of which he could not render himself the especial impersonator in the twinkling of a thought. He could be old or young, gay or grave, lively

or severe—in short, anything he liked—by transitions magically sudden. Not one specimen alone of humanity was he,

“But all, by turns,  
With transmigration strange.”

This was during his ordinary hours of social relaxation, when his friends were charmed out of their senses by his versatility and *vivacity*. Now and then—just for a few seconds—he would be *himself*, as represented in the portrait we have of him by Oakley; and I hold it impossible for any one with a right heart, who communed with him in his *native* mood, to part with him without feelings of genuine esteem and affection—such was the blessedness of his influence then—his blending of the art of the magician with the candour and frankness of the child.

It was when Philip James Bailey, the author of “*Festus*,” Henry S. Sutton, author of “*Quinquenergia*,” and Anna Mary Howitt Watts, one of the purest as well as one of the most earnest spirits of modern art-literature, were yet little children; when men like Wordsworth, Alaric Watts, and Allan Cunningham, were occasional visitors of William and Mary Howitt (then in the morning glow of their fame), and of their brother Richard, who has been not inaptly styled “the Wordsworth of Sherwood Forest;” when Matthew Henry Barker, “the Old Sailor,” author of “*Tough Yarns*;” profound and versatile William Powers Smith; Thomas Bailey, father of Philip; John Hicklin, author of “*Leisure Hours*,” and other men of literary mark, were among the guides or leaders of the local press; when many were yet living who had been personally intimate with Kirke White; when Thomas Ragg (since in clerical orders) was weaving at once his stockings and his verses—poor Samuel Plumb writing his keen epigrams, rural sonnets, and pathetic tales—Miss Williams thinking bright thoughts, “like a star apart,” at Mansfield—and Robert Millhouse composing his Sherwood poems,—Millhouse, of whom it has been said that

Nature taught and Freedom fired his rhyme,  
And Virtue dedicated it to Time;

While Thomas Miller, who was afterwards to charm the world with so many fresh and cheery books, was positively making baskets in the basement story of the very building,—that Pemberton first came to lecture at Bromley House, in Nottingham.

But before we listen to his lectures, let us endeavour to realise some faint outline of his romantic history.

The Welsh cottage in which he was born, stood by the side of a wild foaming torrent, the name of which, translated into English, means the Stone-breaker. A small garden, “the ground of which was

stolen from the woody hill, looked laughingly down on the cottage, —a little whitewashed cottage, trellised with honeysuckles and roses—circumscribed by a wall of rough unhewn fragments from the neighbouring rocks.” Cabbages were more abundant in the garden than carnations, and leeks one might warrant were there: but the only things he cared about were the borders of double daisies. Single or double he always loved them; better though “the little wild thing that lifts up its beautiful face in the fields and asks a kiss from your feet. I never (he says) could crush them by treading on them.” In this last assurance of his tenderness even for a flower, in childhood, what a key we have to the soul of the man of after-years, when he was known to say that, if a smile could convey a solace or a pleasure to any human being, it was cruel to withhold it! His father was a working man (possibly a sort of overlooker or clerk), who contrived to make all ends meet with twenty shillings a week; but his mother,—a true Welsh woman, who died while he was yet young,—boasted oft of her high and noble, or even royal genealogy. “On this theme (he says) she would talk with enthusiasm, to the bedevilment of the hog’s puddings which it was her business to fry for my father’s dinner. When her blood was on the carpet (our sanded floor) what a race it ran! ‘There had been princes in her family;’ so there had been, and one of their descendants was then skimming a pot of mutton broth, or darning my father’s hose.” Her own share of the last relics of her family’s estates had been *swallowed up* in a law-suit in which she was *winner*! Such was the home and origin of a man destined from that hidden nook to wander in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, and to be able truthfully to say, when emigration was far less common than at present—“I have acquaintances in either half the world. From Australia to Hudson’s Bay, from Ceylon to the Carribee Islands, are scattered those who think they know me.” But when, after thirty-three years of wandering, he returned once more to his native spot, and stood on the old gray bridge over the Stone-breaker, the whole scene was changed—the mineral wealth of the neighbourhood had been torn out of the earth, to the destruction of all its superficial beauty; the cottage itself had been defaced, and all around it scorched into one black scar on the landscape by burning cinder-beds and iron furnaces; and in place of his loved daisy-border there was a dirty pigstye before the very door. He says, however (thinking of the poor pig in it), “there was neither cabbage-leaf nor root visible; so I walked into the town, purchased two penny loaves, returned, and gave them to him. This (I am quoting from his *Pel Verjuice* papers) was all the communion I had with my native place. I hastened from it. . . . My lachrymal ducts were

scorched, and the one compelled bead of a tear which expanded over each ball of sight scalded my lids ; my breath was fire, and the pulsations of my heart were the throbs of mingling agony and maledictions. You may laugh at this extravagance, if you will ; I am not asking your sympathy ; I am writing a tale of confessions and facts—not spinning apologies for my life and character. I had thought of this home of my childhood through thirty-three years of absence from it with such sacredness of emotion, that I believe I never once alluded to it, even to my intimate friend. I had roamed more than a hundred thousand leagues in foreign lands, and over distant seas ; I had meditated in wildernesses of myrtle ; I had walked in regions of the vine and groves of oranges, and woods of olives ; I had been alone in the jungles of Asia ; the solitude of the entangled masses of Guiana I had enjoyed without a disturbing companion ; and I had thought myself out of misery into happiness, as I stepped through sun-impervious forests in the valley of the Mississippi—I had gazed on nature in her terrific grandeur, and in her richest beauty, and *they all taught me to look back with deeper affection on that spot*. In the danger of battles, storm, and shipwreck, I had participated : death had waylaid me, and I had evaded him. He had placed himself in a hundred attitudes to strike me ; and I was drawn aside from the falling blow. He had repeatedly invited me to his embrace, and alluring was the invitation, but I was enabled to resist. A motive for resistance flashed across me, and I was strong again. What was that motive ? Turn over every human cause for human action which you can find in the metaphysicians' catalogue, and guess beyond it ; you are still at a loss. I shall not in direct words inform you what has been, and is the motive ; this binding to resolute endurance : read, watch, and you may trace it in the meanderings of my story. Let me go on ; hear more. I had been borne along on the torrent of prosperity, and suddenly dashed back upon utter worldly ruin. I had been astonished at my own success, where efforts seemed to many powerless, and the bare entertainment of the design was ridiculed by others as insanity. This is rigid truth. While lifting my foot to take the loftiest point of earthly bliss, I have been hurled down to the gulph of misery ; I have fled on hope's wings to within a hair's breadth of my goal, triumph—to be blown away into distance, doubled by failure. It was not strength that I lacked ; there was manœuvring necessary in laying hold, and I *would not* take a circuit. Without a friend to recommend, or patronage to encourage him, a poor boy, with no more than a pauper's education, has been the acquaintance, sometimes the companion, perhaps not the despised one—true, they did not know his origin—of intelligence, wealth, and station, how superior to his !

But through all, he never ceased to frown in secret at his beggarly origin and the stings which poverty thrust into his heart. He was stabbed hourly without the stabbers dreaming that he was their victim. He saw, he felt, he knew he should be despised, scorned, soothed with words, but sneered and scoffed at in practice. Gay equipages have drawn up in the streets, and sparkling eyes, smiling lips, and music-voices have echoed and reflected the delicate touch of the hand, which was held out in congratulation of my "success." Success I was sure it was not, but never so spoke. I have stood trembling with weakness from hunger as I heard this, and bowed acceptance as those voices have given me invitations to dinner. Frequently the only food I have tasted for the day has been crude peas, gathered by me in the fields, while during that day twenty tongues have drummed into my ears eulogies on my 'talents.' And I was at that time hoarding shillings by literally starving myself to pay debts which I had incurred, not in supporting existence, but in labours by which only I could hope to obtain bread; and this, too, was accompanied by the blissful conviction that I was all the while considered by my creditor, and not *him* only, as an unprincipled 'individual' for not paying my debts honourably. It was just that he and they should think so, for I had concealed the real cause of non-payment. I have quitted gay and festive scenes in the metropolis, and walked the streets all night in my dinner-dress. I had not sixpence to procure shelter; for access to my home it was too late. I was compelled to accept the invitation, because I dared not shock a friend by the truth; a false excuse I trembled under. . . . I have been piteously smiled at, while I remained unseen, by the clever and richly mental, whose notice and approbation I have laboured so hard, and endured so much, to win, from the mere fact of their lending credence to the reports of blockheads respecting me. There is, unfortunately for me and for thousands of others, a proneness, even in the wisest, to hear fault-finding as discriminating truth. In me there are abundance of mental weeds; but many of those things which are now regarded as weeds would be called flowers, if they were not looked at through other people's spectacles. Through all the moral mountains and gulphs of my existence, these vicissitudes of happiness and sorrow—these laudations and ridicule—I am sure I never designed injury, or meditated ill will to any human being."

Such were the heart and fate of the man who, after those years of absence, was turning once again, and finally, from the spot where he was born; while, at the bottom of his sorrows, lay one sad and dire secret, which had been his companion wherever he had wandered, and which he could not tell without being an accuser, so bore in silence



from land to land. Shall I tell it here? Yes. He was in that most grievous of all plights into which any man, especially a man of feeling, can fall—that of being neither a husband, a bachelor, nor a widower. The wife for whom he had turned from every other woman in the world, and with whom *he had reposed his heart*, had forsaken him, and mated, it has been said, with a man whose rank still gave *him* social advantages from which the noble and tender-souled Pemberton was excluded, and perhaps excluded the farther for the very wrong that had thus been done him! Alas, poor Charles! Great and sad indeed was thy reason for becoming “a wanderer!”

But let us, as briefly as the subject will permit, go back to earlier time, and glance at some of the events in the calendar of his singular struggles before that woe of woes befel him. The memory of his first leaving the cottage by the Stone-breaker, for some other far-off place of residence, remained fresh through all. “By what means,” says he, “we clambered over the hills and crags from my native place I have no remembrance; but I can yet see a clear, moonlight, frosty night, as I peep through the canvas curtains of a loaded wagon, the broad wheels of which groan and squeak as they slowly revolve, and with their weight crush the crisp earth and young ice, that crackles and jingles beneath the pressure, on a road, which to me seems as smooth as the sanded floor of our home. A sheet of hoar covers an expanse of level country, intersected by hedges and dotted with trees, sparkling with rime as far as eye can reach on either side, and in the distance from the tail of the wagon, whence the survey is made—but there are no hills!—and I wept. They were the first tears of thought I ever shed.”

He was then sent to a dame-school at wages of threepence per week; but as he learnt little there except the “Brummagem” dialect which it took his father a long time every evening to *unteach*, he was soon removed from it to one where, in addition to better tuition, he had a glorious common to scamper over, trees to climb on its borders, birds’ nests to hunt, and wasps’ nests to rifle—for which he often dearly paid. He saw that common again, in the year 1829, and, to his great delight, it was a common still. Writing of it three years after, he says:—“God be praised, it is not *civilised*. There is nothing in the whole range of English scenery, no beauty nor ornament, neither natural nor artificial glory among all its delicious and enchanting variety, that gladdens my eyes and heart so fully, and so instantaneously, as a common of gorse-bush and fern! Turn Blenheim into a potato garden; make brick fields of the bed of Windermere; throw the fragments of Spitalfields, Whitechapel, the Tower, and the Horse Guards into the Wye, but do not touch the gorse-bush and fern common.”

In his ninth year, as he says, he was "taken off the common," when some friendly or benevolent assistant of his father procured admission for him into a school, in which about thirty boys, all equally with himself the children of poor parents, were "fed, clothed, flogged, and taught gratis." Here he seems to have got into his full proportion of scrapes and scrambles, learnt Robinson Crusoe by heart, made Philip Quarle and Robin Hood his mythology, and at the age of eleven had swallowed the contents of every book of travels in the juvenile library—maps, the latitudes and longitudes, and descriptions of far countries being his heaven. At fifteen he left this school—having learnt, reading, writing, and arithmetic, the words of Lindley Murray, and how to score a few lines of curves and angles, but not how to apply them. He had also acquired some notion that William Rufus succeeded William the Conqueror, that Virgil had written one book of poetry and Homer another, though remaining moderately ignorant of what they were about; that Milton had written "*Paradise Lost*"—a book which had no charm for him; though he had learnt to "rattle off" some passages of Shakspeare's plays, which suited him better—better still as time went on.

At fifteen he was bound apprentice to an uncle at Birmingham; but for manufacturing or mercantile life his nature was all unfit, and at seventeen a painful incident closed his connection with it. He was one day sent to purchase some stamps; his mind was not sufficiently intent on the transaction, and the stamp-seller made a mistake in giving him change. His relative accused him of being something worse than merely negligent in the matter. The stamp-seller was—we won't say what—but, in defence of himself, became the poor boy's accuser, and as the boy had no means of clearing himself against such odds, he became hot with rage at the injustice, and then chilled. He somewhere says, that his uncle, without one muscle of his face being disturbed, told him to "go to business," and that he then felt as if his "heart had become a ball of ashes." He was afterwards sure that his uncle believed him innocent, and that he ought to have said so, as it might have saved him from years of misery; but the grievance rankled, and shortly, breaking the tie of his apprenticeship, he ran away.

Ran away! And the soul that was too sensitive for a Birmingham counting-house soon found itself enslaved on board a ship of war; for at Liverpool he was kidnapped by a press-gang, and sent to sea, where, says his biographer, Mr. John Fowler, "he was occasionally engaged in skirmishes and battles, and passed through many strange adventures consequent upon his sea-faring life."

In the meantime opportunities had occurred of seeing something of the stage; he had learnt to study *Shakspeare* for himself; and (though

long after he had left the navy) we hear of him in the West Indies as an actor and manager of several theatres. "By this profession," adds Mr. Fowler, "he there earned a brilliant reputation, with a prospect of great pecuniary success, when untoward circumstances destroyed his hopes. He married a lady of great beauty and talent, and anticipated a life of domestic happiness, but the marriage was not fortunate, and his promised joy proved his certain misery. They had one son, of whose fate I am ignorant. Pemberton's desire for change of scene returned—if it had ever left him—with the departure of his heart's dear hopes. He was without house and without home, and roamed all the world over. He was acquainted with all classes of society, as well as with all coasts of country; and was subjected to all manner of vicissitudes. He became, emphatically, A WANDERER."

The following incident will give some idea of the character and distance of his wanderings. Being one morning (it was in 1845) at breakfast with Mr. Flower, late mayor of Stratford-on-Avon, I happened to ask him if he knew anything of Charles Reece Pemberton. "Pemberton," said he; "Certainly! When we were residing many years ago in the back woods of America, he one day dropped into our log-house as by accident; but he staid with us a month, and we should have been glad could he have staid longer—such a God-send to us there was the visit of such a man. But he has been with us since in Stratford-on-Avon."

It does not appear very clear when he returned to England; but in 1828 he was lecturing and acting in some of the provincial towns, when Talfourd (afterwards judge) then on the Western Circuit, saw him perform at Hereford and was so influenced by his representations of "Shylock" and "Virginus," as to speak of him in terms of high admiration in an article in the "New Monthly Magazine." This led to his appearance at Covent Garden, when London criticism on his performances was as various as London criticism was sure to be; but in glancing back, it is easy to see that the papers most remarkable for independence and taste spoke most warmly in his praise. Still, he did not long remain on the London boards,—one reason for this being (as I have heard it stated, though I doubt its accuracy), that, in some stage "passage at arms," he was so absorbed, soul and hand, in his part, as to forget altogether for the moment that it was play, to the serious hurt of the opposing actor. Whatever the cause, he seemed thenceforth to prefer the platform to the stage, and appeared in various parts of the kingdom as a lecturer on elocution and the drama. He had also become a contributor of his celebrated *Pel Verjuice* and other papers to the "Monthly Repository," edited by Mr. W. J. Fox; and it was

about the same time—I think in 1833—that he first made his appearance amongst us as a lecturer, at Nottingham. Before this visit he had himself written several dramas, which may be read in the volume of his “Literary Remains.” They are, “The Podesta,” a tragedy; “The Banner,” a tragedy; and “The Two Catherines,” a comedy.

Methinks I see him—and hear him—now. In the whole range of a not very limited acquaintance with men, I have never met, to my notion, with one so protean. He possessed somewhat extraordinary powers of ventriloquism, corresponding with an equally varied play of the facial muscles, a litheness of frame that answered freely to both, and all together to a rapidity of conception and vividness of imagination that one usually attributes rather to incorporeal genii than to mundane men. As I have already said in “The Peak and the Plain,” and cannot say anything more to the purpose now, Pemberton, in his readings, gave not only all that was worthy of his author, but so threw around the subject the light of his versatile genius, as to enkindle your own,—to awaken ‘the Shakspeare within you,’ should it be one of Shakspeare’s dramas,—in such a way as to make all machinery, scenery, adventitious aids of any kind, quite needless. You felt and saw the poet’s entire conception represented in all its vast and varied relations. Upon his simple platform, in the lecture-room, with no machinery but a chair, no drapery but a plain scarf, and none to second him but the ventriloquial spirit within him, he would go through all the best passages of Hamlet, and afterwards through some complicated comic entertainment, with more effect upon a tasteful auditory than could have been produced by any large company of performers; because there was nothing out of keeping with his ideal of the piece,—no marring by imperfect supporters,—though not one material point of interest would be omitted. His sudden change from some great hero to an old woman afflicted with the toothache, in a large lone house, on a windy night, with two or three drunken fellows coming home late and making a disturbance at the door, and all this without any other addition to the resources first mentioned than his pocket-handkerchief,—was probably one of the most magical transitions ever seen. Yet, what is remarkable—in all this, or out of it, you never thought of him as of a mere player. Free alike from the professional stalk and talk of the stage, his bearing, manner, tone, everything about him, bespoke at once the dignity, integrity, and kindness, as well as the amplitude and versatility of his soul.

Besides several lectures on some of Shakspeare’s greatest characters—of which I remember “Hamlet,” “Lear,” and “Shylock” best—he gave us some pleasant lectures on, and readings from, popular writers

of the day. Indeed, his lectures on Social Reading, with examples, were perhaps as interesting as any. But his influence was by no means confined to the lecture-room. Wherever he was a guest, the longer he staid, the more he was loved by all, for his *bon homm  *, his pathos, wit, and fun. His racy anecdotes, his graphic descriptions, and his characteristic representations of people he had met in every part of the world, afforded an inexhaustible source of entertainment; and of one of his narratives of a remarkable rencontre he had with an old Indian chief, I deeply regret it is not in my power to give even an outline at all worthy of the subject. A description he also gave of an American camp meeting, and his portraiture of one of the preachers, it would be equally impossible adequately to follow him in. It was rich and rare in the extreme.

One day while in Nottinghamshire he took a stroll, with William and Richard Howitt, to Annesley Hall, the ancestral home of Mary Chaworth, and on the way they called at Hucknall Torkard Church to see Byron's tomb, where many years afterwards I read in the Album there, the autograph of "C. R. Pemberton, a Wanderer;" but though "wanderer" he felt himself to be, he made that walk a hundredfold more interesting to those tasteful and thoroughly-appreciative companions, by the cheerful life and soul he put into the conversation as they went along. Sometimes he would foot it alone as far as the grand old remnant of Sherwood called Birkland, where to this day hundreds of oaks remain, the youngest of which will be six or seven hundred years old—and where some of those which have been felled had King John's cypher deep under the bark. He once took such a walk from London, between two lectures he was delivering to one of the metropolitan institutions, calling in Nottingham by the way, and afterwards published a most original and beautiful description of the old wood (in the "Monthly Repository" for June, 1894,) in which, with striking aptitude of metaphor, he calls it "a ruined Palmyra of the forest."

But at Sheffield, as well as Nottingham, was Pemberton a frequent and welcome visitor. In all his wanderings there were few places in which he felt more at home; for Sheffield (like old Nottingham in that respect) had a circle of the very people for understanding and loving such a man. Dwelling there in those days was a genial, large-hearted Scotchman, Mr. John Bridgeford, who had formerly been a typographical employ   of James Montgomery, and was now co-proprietor as well as co-editor of the "Sheffield Iris." Mr. Bridgeford's literary power was not great; but he had the next great power, that of thoroughly appreciating it in others, and making them mutually known. It was quite enough for any intellectual stranger to find him out, and be in-

stantly made no stranger at all to men of like mind in Sheffield. Whether it was owing to this or to other introduction, I am not clear ; but I do know that there were few men anywhere to whom Pemberton felt more attached than to Mr. Bridgeford, while, as time went on, almost every person of mind and taste in the town and neighbourhood had begun to regard Pemberton almost as a kinsman ; and I had the assurance from Mr. Fowler that his friendly regard for me sprang first from my manifest reverence and love for the Wanderer.

Yet, after all, it would be unjust to say that this feeling was confined to any locality. At Woodbridge, with Bernard Barton ; with Mary Russell Mitford, in "Our Village," near Reading ; with a gentleman named Elliott (then a farmer in the county of Durham, but now in Australia), just as with Mr. Flower at Stratford-on-Avon, I have heard the same interest expressed concerning him, and the following little anecdote is as good as a whole volume. Being, in the summer of 1840, on an excursion in the country bordering Sherwood Forest and Yorkshire, I called at the house of Mr. Astley Cooper Foulds, a surgeon, at Whitwell ; and in the course of conversation with Mrs. Foulds, happened to ask if they had ever seen or heard anything of Charles Reece Pemberton. "Pemberton !" exclaimed the lady, in delight, "do you know Pemberton ? Look at that girl, sir : when she was yet a little child, I was one day lifting my hand to beat her for some fault, but I felt my arm suddenly arrested from behind, whilst the child was as suddenly raised by the other hand of the person stopping me, and held away from me, in the air. Turning round with amazement, I met a strange, expressive, but most kindly face, with which it was impossible to be angry, and, on asking an explanation, received such a reasonable lecture on the susceptibilities of children that I have never beaten one since, and never shall beat one again. The person who had thus singularly interrupted me was Pemberton. He staid to a cup of tea with us, and we could have liked him to stay for ever."

The last time we met was at Worksop, Notts, in the autumn of 1838. A little cluster of Sheffield friends was there, by appointment, with the addition of Thomas Lister, "Bard of the Rustic Wreath," from Barnsley. It was just after Pemberton's return from Gibraltar and Malta, where he had been lingering some time in the hope of recruiting his health, now sadly shaken. As we shook hands in the hall of the Pestalozzian Institution on meeting, he startled me painfully by asking, between coughs, in a husky voice (a large muffler being round his neck, and a stick in his thin, tottering hand,) if I did not know that he was "already a dead man, speaking from beyond the grave ?" He had been announced to deliver a lecture, but was not adequate to the effort.

In the evening, however, he was able to sustain a quiet conversation with a few of us at his hotel—the George. That few (at least two of whom, besides Pemberton, have since crossed the dark valley into brighter lands) consisted of Mr. Thomas Asline Ward, town-regent of Sheffield, Mr. Edward Bramley, afterwards town-clerk, Mr. L. C. Sayle, assayer, “Tom” Tunaley (as he was always familiarly called), Thomas Lister, and myself. It was a touching scene, and a tender meeting, for us all—thus to be with one who had so often instructed and entranced us, and to see him hovering on the confines of two worlds,

“Glancing from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,”

with a look as bright, as intelligent, as benign, as though he really had attained the better world before of this acquit; while some of us felt we were probably having our last interview with him in time. The discourse, although of a subdued character, was to me deeply interesting. It was chiefly on subjects that would have been dear to the heart of any young poet; and I cannot—I would not if I could—forget the benign smile with which the worn Wanderer (who never smiled or spoke falsely) alluded to some lines of mine in the “Iris,” which had been forwarded to him, to where he was lingering at the time, on the shores of the Mediterranean. His intention now (and most wondrously, in spite of our unanimous belief, he accomplished it) was once more to pass that sea for Egypt, though sighing that he was unable to join us even in a ramble in the forest hard by, of one portion of which he had thus written:—“A magnificent temple—the ruined Palmyra ere now of the forest, roofed by the wide arch of heaven! beautifully grand—awful, solemn, and deeply, intensely affecting: while it bows you down in adoration, it fills your spirit with love. There is nothing dark, nothing sad in your soul while you gaze—you *do* love it—it wraps you in a sublimity of affection—you feel it is all your friend—your parent, your guardian—it blesses you while you worship in it: and you bless it for the blessing it bestows. . . . Grey and hoary with antiquity, the massive columns, though scathed and rent and bruised by a thousand storms, yet uplift themselves in stately dignity; or like reverend sages, more reverend from the scathe of elements, stretching out their arms in counsel, or upwards in appeal to the Father of Creation: and they look so nobly calm, so gently majestic. Enchained for a time is every faculty, corporeal and intelligent, till wondering love grows bold, familiar; but in that boldness is no rudeness: it is reverential still: like the confiding assurance of candid and unsophisticated youth in the supervision of an ancient man. . . . It is in the assurance of reciprocated affection that youth grows bold in ancient wisdom’s presence, and



that such child is familiar with such parent. So, on the subsiding of the floods of emotion, mingling awe and love and reverence, you stand amidst this age-worn magnificence, and look upon those antique oaks with a deep serene of joy. . . But turn your eyes to the left, westward: what see you there? Is it a sun-burst upon a line, a sheet, a field of silver? or the snowy haze of a dewy exhalation floating beneath a denser and darker canopy of clouds? Neither. What thus fix your gaze in admiration are the thousands of white and glistening stems of graceful birch-trees—silent spirits of beauty—sylphs in meditation—dryad damsels, assembled there to dream. Look at them, and wonder at their glory."

A gentle farewell; and next morning most of us were away in that forest; but, somehow, though we enjoyed the scenery very much, the mellow and golden autumn day had throughout such associations with our friend, we thought of him so often, and felt him so near our hearts, that when evening came down upon us nearly twenty miles from where we had left him, it seemed not unlike waking from a dream to find him not there.

Between his return from Gibraltar and that day, Pemberton had been able to give a few lectures, at Birmingham, Wisbeach, and Sheffield. Of his first lecture at Sheffield, on this occasion, a correspondent of the "Independent" remarked:—"When he stepped upon the platform there was a tremendous outburst of cheering, which speedily sank into a subdued manifestation of welcome. What a change had come upon him! He was but the shadow of himself; his manly bearing and his free action were gone, and in their place had come the stooping gait and the feeble walk. But oh! what a tale of suffering was told when he opened his mouth and spoke. His voice, which had been sweet as the lute, and loud as the trumpet, had become weak, cracked, and discordant! And there was the dreadful cough, that appeared to be everlastingly tearing at his heart strings! Well, but, he did speak; and wonderful to behold, as he gradually advanced he got the mastery of his infirmities. The subject of the evening's lecture was Brutus, in Julius Cæsar. He brought out, one by one, the beauties of the character, and when he made it appear, as it really is, a glorious specimen of the best qualities of human nature, he held it up for admiration and instruction. Pemberton was no longer the man he had been some short time before,—he had left all his own weakness and entered into the loveliness and truth of Brutus. The illustrated passages were given with the delicacy and power of former times. It was life in death; and showed how the vigorous soul can impart energy to the wasted body."

He lived on, however, for nearly a year and a-half, some portion of which he passed at the Pyramids, then returned and died, at Birmingham, in the house of a brother, whose daughters (one of whom was afterwards married to Anthony Young, the actor,) kindly tended him to the last. I have heard it said (I think it was by Edward Robinson, who married another of his neices,) that Mr. G. J. Holyoake (then a very young man) was often with him in his closing days, and that one day Pemberton asked him to read a passage he pointed out in the New Testament,—a passage that gave him a solace beyond his power to express,—after which Holyoake read a favourite passage from Shakspeare, asking Pemberton what he thought of it, when he replied with some emotion, “Fine, very fine! but (pointing to the Testament) not like *that*.”

In the month of January, 1843, I stood in Key Hill Cemetery, near Birmingham, with Mr. Fowler (now also departed) and read, on a large flat stone, the following inscription, composed by the late Mr. W. J. Fox, who knew him well:—

BENEATH THIS STONE  
REST THE MORTAL REMAINS OF  
CHARLES REECE PEMBERTON,  
WHO DIED MARCH 3RD, 1840, AGED 50.

His gentle and fervid nature,  
His acute susceptibility,  
And his aspirations to the beautiful and true,  
Were developed and exercised  
Through a life of vicissitude,  
And often of privation and disappointment.  
As a public Lecturer  
He has left a lasting memorial  
In the minds of the many  
Whom he guided to a perception  
Of the genius of Shakspeare  
In its diversified and harmonising powers.  
At oppression and hypocrisy  
He spurned with a force proportioned  
To that wherewith he clung  
To justice and freedom, kindness and sincerity.  
Ever prompt for generous toil,  
He won for himself from the world  
Only the poet's dowry,  
“The hate of hate, the scorn of scorn,  
The love of love!”

Fowler, in his memoir, pays this further just tribute:—“After all that has been said and done the world knows little—can know little—of the

true greatness of Charles Reece Pemberton. His genius, his independence, and his truth may be examined and described, but who can tell the power of his loving and loveable nature? I have no doubt that he left his blessing—the blessing of spontaneous and outpoured kindness—wherever he went. There must be many of all climes and all colours who remember and revere him merely for his looks, and smiles, and words of gentleness.”

And finally comes Elliott, one of his warmest personal friends, and thus twines a last and lasting poetic wreath around his name:—

#### POOR CHARLES.

Shunned by the rich, the vain, the dull,  
 Truth's all forgiving son,  
 The gentlest of the beautiful,  
 His painful course hath run;  
 Content to live, to die resign'd;  
 In meekness, proud of wishes kind,  
 And duties nobly done.

A god-like child hath left the earth,  
 In heaven a child is born:  
 Cold world! thou could'st not know his worth,  
 And well he earn'd thy scorn;  
 For he believed what all may be,  
 What martyrs are in spite of thee—  
 Nor wear thy crown of thorn;—

Smiling he wreath'd it round his brain,  
 And dared what martyrs dare;  
 For God, who wastes nor joy nor pain,  
 Had "arm'd his soul to bear;"  
 But vain his hope to find below,  
 That peace which heaven alone can know:  
 He died—to seek it there.





## Chapter Eighth.

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MARY RUSSELL MITFORD.

(MARCH, 1866.)

THERE are two portraits before me of this dear friend of other days, one from a miniature taken at three years of age, the other as she appeared in the evening of life; and it is impossible to gaze at them and think of her as I knew her, without thinking of morning and evening sunshine. It is the custom of many to speak of "old maids" as if the entire class of them lived in a sort of moral Siberia—a chill clime of their own, if not of their own choice, so distinct from the world in which our common sympathies glow as to make them of little practical use to society. But this, as a moment's consideration ought to satisfy anyone, is a great mistake. It is not needful to point to such women as Miss Burdett Coutts or Miss Nightingale—one employing her wealth, and the other giving her very life, for humanity; nor to the thousand and one good maiden aunts to whom brothers and sisters, and the babies of such, owe so much in emergencies when loving services *which could never be hired* are needed; nor yet to those who, from a sense of filial or fraternal duty, remain single for the sake of widowed parents or brothers, that without the comfort of their presence would be solitary indeed. Of such none but the thoughtless, or heartless, could ever be forgetful. Without the slightest disparagement of those noble-hearted matrons who, in addition to the well-performed duties of marital life, still continue to give no little share of their physical and mental energies for the good of the world at large, I allude just now more particularly

to such as—themselves endowed with warmest and purest affections and a strong attachment to their own firesides—think, feel, and work every hour they are there, heart, brain, and pen, for everybody but themselves; or if selfish at all, on the principle perhaps of John Galt, that we can never do an act of kindness to another but it is the benevolence of heaven directing us to achieve some good for ourselves. And one of the best of these (judging by her actions) it always appears to me, was Mary Russell Mitford, whose writings have done so much to cheer the homes of thousands of her fellow-creatures; whilst to those who knew her personally the acquaintance was a blessing indeed.

It will not be requisite here for me to give more than the merest outline of her personal history. The only child of her parents, and her mother dying young, she was naturally made much of by her father—a handsome, frank, hospitable English gentleman of a type now growing rare—a great fox-hunter as well as chairman of the county bench, and keeping a house as open as an hotel for all the hearty good fellows who chose to come to it—and, no doubt, also for, now and then, a rascal in disguise. Holding, too, some rather popular political sentiments, and not hesitating upon occasion to utter them—there need be no wonder that he was a great favourite in his neighbourhood, and frequently tempted to run to the full tether of his means. In addition to this, as Miss Mitford once informed me, he became bound for another to the extent of—I think it was thirty thousand pounds—and lost it, losing about the same time a very expensive law-suit. So that one day he and our friend, who had been beloved and petted in a degree that could only fall to the lot of one so promisingly situated, so amiable, and so intelligent withal, were both as homeless and almost as penniless as the poorest people they had ever succoured. Twenty thousand pounds, which Miss Mitford herself had won by a lottery-ticket given to her when ten years of age, was involved in this general wreck of the family fortunes.

As crushing brings out the juice of the grape and makes its rich flavour known, so an event which threatened to hasten into obscurity the spirit of that daughter and consign her father to absolute penury, had the contrary effect of making the world acquainted with her ripening genius, and blessing his remaining years with an ungrudged home. Her literary powers were already known to her intimate friends; and it was thought that, if some of her productions could only be made more widely known, it might facilitate her—not in making a livelihood by them, but in acquiring some position in which a livelihood would be more easily gained. They, however, did more. Like Byron, she “awoke one morning and found herself famous,” and it was now that

a new and happy thought occurred. In the very parish where their former hospitality and urbanity had been in some way enjoyed by all, she took a cottage—it was but a cottage—made, however, a mansion of bliss by the spirit that was to tenant it; got her father's old arm-chair and placed it in the corner; and securing his favourite dog for a companion on the hearth, set resolutely to work, and there maintained him by her pen, not only in comfort but in positive dignity, as long as he lived!

With much of this I was already acquainted, when in 1845—in the pleasant “season atween June and May”—I was invited to deliver a course of lectures at Reading. It is with me a custom when I am lecturing—I will not call it a rule—perhaps it is (though without design) to justify elevation and extension of the voice—to fix my gaze on a few intelligent faces in the distance, rather than to concentrate my attention on the persons nearest. But occasionally there are some sitting near it is impossible to overlook or forget. This may arise from that *mental* echo which, if a speaker once experiences it, not only attracts but cheers him more than any vociferous applause, and sensibly *aids* him both in thought and expression. It was some such “magic of the mind” that at my first lecture in Reading made me *aware* of a kindred little group in the front seats; the most noteworthy person in which was an elderly gentlewoman, with hair quite white, but with looks which bespoke a soul that could never grow old, beaming not only through the eyes but lighting up every feature, and diffusing warmth and brightness all around. Yet not more unostentatious is the violet, that wins attention by its sweet and silent perfume as we pass, than was this gifted being, unconsciously to herself exercising that genial influence. And this was the gentle heroine who had quitted the hall for the cottage; had there made her father almost forget his fall by her well-timed industry; had written a drama which charmed the crowd of a London theatre for forty nights; had sent her vivid sketches of rural life and character to enliven the social and to solace the solitary in every nook and corner of the land; and who, refusing offer after offer of marriage and all its promised advantages, had kept herself free that she might devote her life the more unrestrainedly to the exercise and enjoyment of those faculties from which others were deriving so much delight: this was Mary Russell Mitford.

The lecture over, we met at the house of Mr. George Lovejoy—a man as like his own name as like could be; and Miss Perry, one of the most vivacious and original of girls—for she was then but a girl—whom my old friend Bernard Barton, having been as intimate as a brother with her father, was in the habit, whenever he spoke of her, of calling

"Jo," was also there, when it was arranged that the whole party should meet, for strawberries and tea, sometime before my return, at Miss Mitford's cottage, which stood about three miles from Reading, at Three Mile Cross, just within the border of Wiltshire, and on the side of the turnpike road to Basingstoke. In those days my own soul lay under a heavy grief, for which the fret and glare of the London life in which I had become involved afforded but little relief; and therefore whatever in the way of kindness—and I met with much—thus beguiled me of it, even if it were but for an hour, was an unspeakable blessing. If this brief tribute should fall under the eyes of others to whom I was indebted in the same way, I trust they will not think I remember them with less love and gratitude, when saying how thankful I was to find that little circle at Reading added to their number, for it was the commencement of a friendship that rises above the grave. Bless that good old parson, who one day said to me, "Let us be thankful for the meetings of genial spirits here, however brief: they will serve us at least to know each other by as soon as we meet hereafter!"

To those who do not know Reading it may be as well to say that it is a large, clean town, on the edge of Berkshire, where the winding Kennet falls into the broader Thames. The country around it is pleasantly undulated and well wooded, and from every great road extending green winding lanes to the most rural villages and lonely farms. Along the road towards Basingstoke, for some distance out of the town, is a chain of villas, in one of which, at the time I am referring to, lived a sister of Lord Brougham. Bearwood, the seat of Mr. John Walter, of the "Times," could be seen in the distance, with Windsor Castle somewhat farther. Silchester (an old Roman city) with its relics, and Whiteknights, another place of antiquarian interest, were within the scope of a moderate ramble, and often resorted to by *pic-nic*-ians, as well as archæologists. And, in short, the whole region might be considered about as fair an epitome of old England as any lover of the country could wish to see in the same space. Miss Mitford's cottage stood exceedingly convenient for the enjoyment of such a neighbourhood. Near to the road-side, its hostess or her guests could always take advantage of the passing coach,—yet be just far enough from the town to be oblivious, when needful, of its bustle. A good garden at the back of the house produced some of the finest geraniums and strawberries in the kingdom; and, with presents of these to her London or country friends, she could gracefully, and to them very agreeably, repay their occasional presents of new books or game: for no woman stood higher in the estimation of some of the "county families" than did that good cottage-peeress, on whom they continued their calls and



compliments just as in more showy, if not more happy days. In a corner at the end of the garden was a rustic summer-house ; and this was where our little party took tea, to which the hostess, by her quiet, unaffected conversation added a charm that will be more easily understood than I can otherwise describe it, when I say it was as rich and piquant as her *Village Stories*, or that pleasant gossip to be found in the volume she afterwards published under the title of "*Recollections of a Literary Life*," and with which, I trust, the whole country, for its own sake, is now pretty familiar.

Miss Mitford's acquaintance with literary people—many of whom had made pilgrimages to see her because of her genius and reputation, and not a few to offer her marriage—was very extensive. But I do not remember her speaking with more enthusiasm of any one than of Miss Barrett (afterwards Mrs. Barrett Browning), whom she described to me as being at that time a prostrate invalid, but with a soul as vigorous and soaring as a morning-lark towards heaven. It was a treat to hear her read (as she volunteered to read for me) with her rich mellow voice and a slight but by no means disagreeable lisp, Miss Barrett's poems of "*Geraldine*" and "*Pan is Dead* ; " and I do not remember a conversation with her at any time in which she did not refer in some way to that gifted woman ; nor can I easily forget the amazement and interest with which, as time went on, she wrote me of Miss Barrett's rapid recovery, and marriage with Mr. Robert Browning.

As our little party wended back to Reading in the evening she accompanied us all the way. It was just the evening for such a neighbourhood at such a time. I think in that three miles we could not have heard less than a dozen nightingales ; and the colour of the sky, as well as the blending hues of the landscape, seemed in positive harmony with their notes. There was only one occasion of discord ; yet, was it discord ? I am not quite sure. It happened that a maid she had thoroughly trusted, had been instructed to pay some of her tradesmen's bills in Reading, but had kept the money, and—if I remember the history correctly—had professed to have lost the receipts : so that in time she was called upon again for the payments. This, to begin with, was, to a mind like Miss Mitford's, a great annoyance ; but some of the neighbours, especially Mr. Walter, so urged her, on the ground of public duty, to prosecute the girl, as to make it to her gentle and compassionate soul a greater grievance still. She stated the case to me in all its particulars as we walked along, but more in the style of a person pleading extenuating circumstances than that of an accuser, and at last put the question to me, point blank : would I advise her to appear as a prosecutrix in such a case, and thereby be subject to all the pain she

would necessarily feel for a girl she pitied about as much as she blamed, besides having her name appearing throughout the kingdom in a police-report ? The question somewhat *posed* me ; but viewing the matter pathologically, perhaps, rather than judicially, and foreseeing the damping effect it might have on her own health and spirits—and that without necessarily mending the girl or doing any good to the community,—I gave kindness the benefit of a doubt, and said it appeared to me that she ought in such a case to be left entirely to the dictates of her own judgment and feelings. I think if any one had told her the millenium had commenced, it could not possibly have produced a greater or more cheery effect, as she exclaimed, “Thank you, thank you, dear Mr. Hall ! that is another vote in favour of my view of the question, and I shall certainly quote you to the opposite party !”

This visit led to a second invitation, respecting which there was subsequent correspondence. Perhaps I ought to have said that my lectures at Reading were on Vital Magnetism (I do not like the name of Mesmerism), and they had furnished a motive for an opposition lecture—a very sophistical one, by a Dr. Cowan, in which he stated there were some diseases our good Creator never intended to be cured by human agency : therefore, it might be that some of the cures of which Mesmerism boasted were of those very diseases ; and “if that be the case (said the Doctor, lifting up his hands and speaking in tones and with a face I won’t describe), need I allude further to the quarter they come from ?”

Being present at that lecture, I got up at the close, and asked the lecturer if he would kindly tell us what diseases they were that he thought God intended should not be cured by human means ? It was important to know—inasmuch as if while in Reading I happened to be taken ill, it would be a sad waste of time should I send for Dr. Cowan and after all find my disease one he was never intended to cure ! The doctor was very irate at this question, adding, he had never heard anything in his life more unphilosophical : but some of my friends thought otherwise ; and the following letter relates to my going again by their wish to give him a public reply,—as well as to other matters. I think the meeting at Silchester or Whiteknights was to be in connection with some Institute anniversary :—

July 1st, 1845.

My dear Mr. Hall,—I saw our friends Mr. Lovejoy and Mr. Cowderoy yesterday. The former has written to you, and the latter intends to do so very shortly. I am just in the height of my summer engagements, so you must give me notice and come some afternoon (for I do not with impunity see anyone early in the day). Perhaps a Sunday evening would be the best and quietest time for both. Whether the Silchester gathering will take place before the autumn appears very uncertain. The present plan is to have a good meeting at Whiteknights in about a month.

I rejoice to hear that you are going on so well in London. Have you heard that Archbishop Whateley is a convert, and means to get more light on the subject? This is a certain fact. I heard it from Mr. Kenyon, whom I met at Miss Barrett's on Thursday, when I spent a few hours in Wimpole-street. I wish our doctor could have the benefit of a good dressing from his most reverend hands. He is one of the ablest and boldest men living, and will be a host for the science. Heaven bless you.—Ever faithfully yours,  
M. R. M.

In the course of that summer I was again several times at Reading, and never so without a welcome to Three Mile Cross. The next letter has reference to one of those visits :—

Be quite sure, my dear Mr. Hall, that we shall all be delighted to see you again. When our Silchester scheme is to take place I cannot tell—but after this present week I shall be rejoiced to receive you any day, not very early, at my poor cottage, and if you will give me timely notice shall try to persuade some intellectual friends to give you the meeting. I am expecting Mr. Horne the poet, about that time, to lodge in the village, to be near me—and a friend of mine who sometimes passes two or three months in Reading for the same purpose will probably have arrived, so that we shall have a pleasant evening. Perhaps, if you still wish to visit Silchester—to join our little gathering—it would be better to combine the two objects. I don't suppose that that party will be long delayed, and I think you would like the scenery and the company. But this you will see. In any event I shall only be too happy to talk over with you your destined book, in which I feel a very strong and a very sincere interest. I saw our excellent friend Mr. Lovejoy last night. He desires me to say that he should have written to you before but that he has been to Hull, to establish a young friend—another act of kindness—and is returned with a bad cold and cough. A certain Dr. Carter has published a pamphlet on Mesmerism—of which you will see the advertisement, but which is not yet, I believe, forthcoming in Reading, although the author lived there for some time, and probably lives there still. He was, and I dare say is, a believer. It is enough to have one in the place like Dr. Cowan.—Ever very faithfully yours.  
M. R. M.

It was arranged on another occasion that I should be there rather earlier than usual, that Miss Mitford might go with me in a ramble beyond the village. Chronic rheumatism compelled her often to use her little pony-chaise, but on this occasion she felt better than ordinary, and adequate to a long walk, in which she pointed out to me many of the interesting places and objects made famous by her graphic and living descriptions. Those who have read "Our Village" will know them all, and would be no better for any description that I could give. But it was not rural scenery alone we talked of, for she was desirous of knowing from me all I could tell her of several men of genius or learning I had known. Especially do I remember how interested she appeared by what I could tell her of Elliott, Richard Howitt, Bamford, and Clare, and of some of the distinguished people I had met in Scotland. When I told her what Elliott once said to me about writing his poems nine times over, to my then surprise she was much delighted,

and, on my asking the reason, she replied with animation, "How could I do otherwise than admire a writer who would take such pains?" My rejoinder was, that from the apparent spontaneity and ease of all her own writings, I should have thought she would have more valued the same qualities in others. "Ah!" said she, looking at me with great earnestness—and this was just in the centre of the scene of one of her own best sketches—"You little know how much labour and patience it cost me to give that free and readable character to my books! It is the duty of every writer to study the ease and gratification, as well as the instruction of the reader; and though I admired Ebenezer Elliott before, I admire him much more now, for what you tell me." It was a beautiful lesson for a young author, and though I may not *always* have acted upon, I have never forgotten it. Richard Howitt once gave me a similar one in different words. He had praised something I wrote, after which I showed him something else, expecting similar praise; but seeing where my danger lay, he pointed out its faults only. Rather disappointed, I asked him if it would not do. "Do!" he replied, "that is not the question. A young writer should never ask if his work will do, but if it can be done better; and if it can, *do it*."

Miss Mitford had a great dislike to what she called "fine writing"—that is, writing elaborately ornate; and in a very kind and voluntary criticism she gave some of my own chapters prior to their re-appearance in "The Peak and the Plain," she crossed with her pencil several passages in which, in younger days, I had somewhat exulted; and wrote on the proximate margin, "this is fine writing." It may, therefore, be imagined how much more I could enjoy the praise of so chaste and careful a critic, when she felt justified in giving it. And now, before embodying the following letter from her, let me have a kindly word with my present reader. Like nearly all her letters this is written without date, in the smallest *scratch-hand*, on the tiniest scrap of paper, and enclosed, as was most she wrote me, in a turned envelope previously received by her from some other correspondent. My first impulse on re-perusing these mementos of such a friendship was to withhold them, lest their publication should be construed into vanity on my part. Next, I considered it would be proper to give them, as letters are sometime meagrely given, with most of the personal allusions to myself struck out. But this I found would weaken their general sense. Then, reflecting how honestly they were written, (as were those in a previous chapter by Dr. Samuel Brown,) and that they had, at any rate, the interest of being written by such a woman, it occurred to me that their mutilation might be just as easily an act of vanity as their publication. I thought also of what Miss Mitford once said to

me herself of a writer she very much admired, but who rather amused her by the vanity he showed in trying to shun suspicion of being vain at all. Therefore, vanity or no vanity, I venture to give the letter, as well as the substance of some others written in the same encouraging spirit—thankful that she thought me worthy of such encouragement. This was received just after the publication of “*Mesmeric Experiences*,” in the autumn of 1845:—

I thank you heartily, my dear Mr. Hall, for your most kind present. The book, (*Mesmeric Experiences*), is clear, honest, and convincing. It ought to do good to the cause and the author, and I really think that it will do so. I particularly like the gentlemanly and manly feeling of the article respecting Miss Martineau. There is, as in all your writings, an impression of singleness of heart which has in my mind the very highest charm—and which can hardly fail to tell with the public.

I have been keeping your MSS. till you should come for them; but as the chance of that seems diminished (though I still hope that we shall meet sooner than you think), and as you will want the books directly, I shall send them to Mr. Lovejoy when I send this letter to the post—he assuring me that he can convey them to town safely and speedily. The Silchester gathering was put off in consequence of the unfavourable weather—so that we shall hope to see you next year—the season being too far advanced to allow any hope of a gathering at present. Our excellent friend Mr. Lovejoy begs me to tell you that he only delayed writing till he had received your books. I can truly assure you that he is your very sincere and very zealous friend. Be quite sure that you have in our corner of the world those who estimate you as you deserve. I can but trust that you may yet be as happy as we wish you—ay, and it may be happier. Say everything for me to Mr. Richard Howitt and to his brother and sister-in-law.—Ever faithfully yours, M. R. M.

The following was received about a year later, when I was residing at Wilford Old Manor House, on the banks of the Trent, near Nottingham:—

I thank you very heartily, Dear Mr. Hall, for your last kind packet, and for many occasional notices of your doings, which always give your friends great pleasure. The verses are very beautiful. I was affected by your mention of Tom Thumb—reminding me as it did of poor Haydon, my intimate friend and correspondent of nearly forty years. His death was a great shock to me, and the heat and drought which we have had here is a great trial to all but pulmonary patients, whom it suits. My friend Miss Barrett has revived in it so much as to walk to the end of Wimpole-street, and drive to Highgate and Hampstead—an unspeakable change and blessing. Our good friend Mr. Richardson asked about you in a letter I received from him to-day; and dear Mr. Lovejoy speaks of you always. His sweet little girl is better, thank Heaven! I did not know dear ——’s destination until I received your letter. It shocks me less than you, provided always that the people with whom she is are kind and intelligent. Anything is better than the confinement, mental and bodily, of a school; and trade is in my eyes a very happy destiny. I should have liked to keep a shop myself.

They are going to enclose the pretty common over which we walked last year, which I think a great desecration.

Heaven bless you, dear Mr. Hall.—Very faithfully yours, M. R. MITFORD.

In the spring of 1849 I was in Ireland, which beautiful land was still sorrowing under the so-called "great potato famine." Believing, from what I saw, thought and felt, at that time, that if there were a country in Europe of which our English people generally knew too little, it was this very country, on my return I published a little book, "Life and Death in Ireland," in which were reflections and suggestions that to some critics then seemed visionary, but the principles of which I have lived to see (though I am not so conceited as to suppose from what I thus wrote) carried into legislation. It must be to this book that Miss Mitford refers in what follows. It is simply matter of fact that the little work was read by the late Earl of Carlisle, Sir Robert Peel, and other distinguished statesmen; and six weeks after its appearance not a copy could be purchased:—

Ah, dearest Dr. Hall, it would have been strange indeed if I had been other than pleased with that kind mention. I have just been correcting the "Recollections" for a cheaper edition; and if my health will permit, I shall comply with Mr. Bentley's earnest desire for a second series, in which case I shall certainly give a chapter to poor Pemberton and yourself, and one or two others of the same class. Your late book seems to me by very far the best you have ever written. I am expecting to-morrow an influential person, to whom I shall very earnestly commend its perusal. After being read it will commend itself to attention and admiration.

Ah, dear friend, anyone who could cure deep-seated rheumatism would be the richest man alive! With rheumatism in my case is joined a severe injury to the principal nerves of the limb affected. From before Christmas I have been confined partly to my bed and wholly to my room, and have no hope except in warm weather. Coming so late, there is good hope that spring will come in all sincerity, and to that I must trust.

What you say of King Alfred is most true. All real reformers—that is to say, all renovators, must have passed for tyrants amongst the slaves of the customs they displaced. I love in the Emperor much goodness and much greatness, and perhaps I like in him his intense individuality as well as anything—that mixture of the gentlest mercy and the firmest will—of political reserve and occasional outbursts of natural feeling, never put before in royal speech or royal message. Above all, I like the wedding—that finest homage to woman and that casting aside of the—to some—baleful intermarriages. . . . Beranger called the first Napoleon "the greatest poet of modern times," but he seems to me more than equalled by his nephew. The best living writer of English prose, and Mrs. Browning, the greatest English poetess, hold the same faith; so if I sin, I sin in good company.

Adieu, dear Dr. Hall. I trust by this time you are well.—Yours faithfully,

M. R. M.

Between the receipt of the above and the next I am able to give, I know that many letters were received on which it is impossible at present to lay my hands. In one she again alluded to Louis Napoleon as the man for France and his time. In another she expressed her admiration of Hans Christian Andersen, and his child-like candour. In a third she alluded to my practice of homœopathy—jocosely adding,

"I do not myself believe in it; but as you do, I have at least this consolation—that you will never do any harm with it!" The following letter has, for the reason she gives in it, a date. It refers at the commencement to my rural volume, "The Peak and the Plain:"—

Swallowfield, near Reading, Feb. 25th, 1853.

I thank you, heartily, dear Dr. Hall, for your kind and welcome letter, and your charming book—charming I see that it is, although I have as yet only run through it. . . . If it please God that I should be well enough to comply with Mr. Bentley's earnest request for a second series of "Recollections," I shall be able to give it a capital advertisement—half-a-dozen of the books mentioned in the first having been reprinted in consequence. . . .

You will see from my date that I have removed from my old cottage, having staid there too long, until the damp and consequent rheumatism laid hold of me. I am now in a comfortable dwelling, three miles further from Reading, on the same road—not on the high road, but at a pretty corner, situated at a confluence of woody lanes leading down to Strathfieldsaye.—The country is lovely—the neighbourhood very kind and excellent—and if I were but in good health everything would be going well with me. But I am crippled with rheumatism, however, and all last summer was confined with low fever; and when getting better just before Christmas I met with a very serious accident, being thrown violently out of my pony carriage, in Lady Russell's park, on the hard road. No bones were broken, but the nerves of the hip and shoulder were terribly injured; and I have ever since been lifted into bed and lifted out of bed, and not able to turn when in it—or to stand, or to put one foot before another. Mr. May, our great Reading surgeon, tells me that I shall probably get better as warm weather comes on. In the meantime it is a great blessing that my head and right hand were unharmed, and that everybody is most kind, and that I still retain a vivid pleasure in poetry and literature. Should you come our way, I need not I hope, say how very glad I should be to see you here. You must let me know a day or two before, and not come before two o'clock.

Patty Perry is now Mrs. Phillip Bell. Her husband is a fine young man. . . . She has one child, and I hope is happy.

If you have not seen the enclosed curious instance of figures turning into a word, and that word a prophecy, it will interest you. I think Louis Napoleon the only great man since his uncle—perhaps the greater of the two.

Adieu, dear friend.—Ever with the sincerest good wishes, yours very faithfully,  
M. R. MITFORD.

Of the following, received somewhat later, I cannot ascertain the exact date:—

Thank you, dear Dr. Hall, for your attention. These are days of lectures, and I am sure from what I know of you that you would not fail to do justice to the very interesting subject which you have chosen. [My theme, I think, was Heroism in Obscurity.]

Your book is, I rejoice to see, most favourably reviewed in every quarter which has come under my observation. I have lost no opportunity of speaking of it as I think to everyone whom I have seen, and you need not wish any higher commendation than that implies. I am still so nearly a prisoner that my circle is limited, for although got down stairs, and with the pony chaise (I hardly know how, I am so



weak and so nervous,) my drives are limited to being led at a foot's pace round the lanes. I wish I could show you our pretty neighbourhood, even in this ignominious way. You would be sure to like it. God bless you, dear friend.—Ever yours truly,  
M. R. MITFORD.

It was in July, 1853, that I one day received a most touching note, kind and thoughtful for others as ever, in which she said that, having undertaken some literary work that would require, in her very crippled state, all the physical power she could summon to it, and that for a long time, she was writing hasty notes to all her friends, to bid them a sort of farewell, lest from her necessary silence they should think her lacking in her wonted regard. The following is its conclusion, and the last words I ever had from her by letter :—

One last word—quite the last, dearest Dr. Hall, for this while—since the two publications will be of two volumes each at least, and *must* engross all my time. Your “Pemberton” is quite safe. If I had not been turned aside by the vehement desire of Beswick to see my Plays and Domestic Scenes in a collected form, I should have introduced him into a second series of “Recollections,” for which Bentley was pressing me. This project is of course postponed; but, if it please God to spare my life, will probably be renewed. In the meanwhile I will try to find a safe occasion to return the book. Perhaps next summer you may come and fetch it. I trust you will obtain literary work of the congenial nature you mention, which goes well with any liberal profession.

Adieu, dear Dr. Hall,—accept my own good wishes,—and believe me ever faithfully yours,  
M. R. MITFORD.

And thus it was, secluded from the world she was propped up in her bed to work for and to charm; with rheumatism gnawing at the tender fingers with which she had to nip and drive her scratching pen; with her once nut-brown hair as blanched as snow, perchance by past griefs and cares of which she was never heard to complain; that aged gentlewoman, who had been born in the lap of luxury and nurtured amid the loving and ambitious expectations of the fondest of parents, gave out at last, like ripe fruit, the sweeter aroma for having been bruised. To use her own words, she had been, at three years of age, perched on the breakfast table by her father, and admired the more by his guests, because “a small, puny child, looking far younger than she really was, nicely dressed, as only children are, and gifted with an affluence of curls which made her that she might have passed for the twin sister of her own great doll.” Yet thus was it that, when not very far on one side or the other of her sixty-fifth year, she taught by example the true philosophy of life—the realising of the greatest possible amount of good in the most trying circumstances, and scattered that good broadcast over the land, with the love if not the facilities of an angel set free. Then laying her body down at last in its painless rest, she joined the kindred spirits gone before to a better world with the happy conscious-

ness of having made the best they could of this, not for themselves alone, but for all.

This gifted descendant of the ancient Mitfords, of Mitford Castle, in Northumberland, and of the Bertams who came over with William the Conqueror, was born at Alresford, in Hampshire, in 1789; died at Swallowfield, on the 10th of January, 1855; and was buried there, without ostentation, on the 18th of the same month, in the presence of a few friends, and in a spot which had been selected by herself, as my friend Lovejoy quotes for me, "under that beautiful elm tree where the rays of the setting sun might gild her grave."

By me Miss Mitford will be remembered to my latest day as one in whom genuine warmth, wit, and purity, dwelt together. For hers was (and these are words of her own in relation to another)—

The expression calm and even,  
Which tells of blest inhabitants within;  
A look as tranquil as the summer heaven;  
A smile that cannot light the face of sin;  
A sweetness so composed that passion's din  
Its fair unruffled brow has never moved;  
Beauty, not of the features nor the skin,  
But of the soul; and loveliness best proved  
By one unerring test—no sooner seen than loved.

Nor is this by any means my feeling alone; it belongs to numbers of good men and women who had known her much longer than myself, and by whom the question must have been well tested and settled in the affirmative, as to whether true friendship admits of more than one object. Like that great heaven which is in the bosom of God for us all, there is sometimes "a little heaven below" in the human heart, having "many mansions" and many inhabitants, and it is pleasant, as I gratefully lay down this poor pen, to feel that, whilst Mary Russell Mitford's large heart had within it many older and, I trust, worthier guests, without robbing them she could spare so large a share of good will for me. I would it were possible for me to pay a more adequate tribute to her memory.





## Chapter Ninth.

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### THE FIFTH DUKE OF RUTLAND.

(APRIL, 1866.)

IN the course of these chapters I have had, and if God spares me may have again, much occasion to speak highly of the lowly born. My heart is ever with them and in their struggles; my trust is for them; and I would rather myself be the humblest of them all than flatter any other class to their injury. But let my pen be just—just to my feelings, my honest opinions and my theme, while repeating what I wrote at the time, that when on the 20th of January, 1857, Death seized on his Grace, John Henry the fifth Duke and fourteenth Earl of Rutland, he chilled one of the largest and warmest hearts in England—the heart of one who, though seventy years a duke, never forgot that he was a man, and whose life would probably have given dignity to the most homely, as it threw a lustre around the distinguished position to which in the order of Providence he was born. I was for twenty years the friend of a person who had been *his intimate friend* more than twice as long, and being myself in the concluding years of his life one of his Grace's invited and intimate correspondents, I can speak from *much knowledge*—as many others, probably, still better could. And—though, should my writing of him thus freely now cause the slightest pain to any of his noble relatives it would grieve me deeply—it would be disloyalty to my own best instincts were I to proceed with this series of “Recollections” without giving him in them a distinct and fitting place.

Born as he was, to the inheritance before he was ten years of age of a princely territory, and to an income when he attained his majority of £100,000 a-year, besides a vast sum of ready money accumulated during his long minority—and scarcely more of his own educator than he was his own maker—it is wonderful how at last his humanity, or perhaps I had better say his christianity, stood out from amid the splendour, luxury, flattery, gayety, racket, and—I fear it may be added—the care and anxiety, of his ducal lot. Whilst respecting himself, he scorned no other being; and, intense in his affections as honest to his principles, he was in his domestic relations a model, in his friendships unfaltering, and though a high Tory and a churchman, asked me one day to be his guest, and placed me at his right hand at his family table at Belvoir Castle, when he knew I was in the neighbourhood for the purpose of addressing a very humble body of people at Grantham, in behalf of their Sunday school;—whereas some ostensibly very liberal people of another town where I had never before appeared as a lecturer without a crowded auditory, long afterwards gave me “a tremendous letting alone,” for having once complied with a request to do the same thing there. Such are among the paradoxes of human society!

As I have said on some other occasion, every house, like every person, has its ruling spirit. In one it may be acquisition, in another pride, and in a third veneration, or any other cardinal principle of humanity; but no one well acquainted with him could think of the late Duke,—with circle beyond circle around him, beginning with his kindred and ending only with his remotest cottage tenantry,—without thinking at the same time of *the most genuine affection*. Such was his love of the beautiful Duchess, his wife, who died thirty years before him, that her private apartments at Belvoir Castle, with all there she most valued, were kept to the end of his life exactly as she left them,—for to *him* she never died; while to the very last, in writing to his friends, he was in the habit of alluding to his family, (distinguished in politics or literature though some of them had become,) as “my children.” Even when in the feeblest health, he would still cheer his friends of every rank with the most lively letters, abounding with genial sentiments; and as for the poor, I believe he felt for them all in his inmost heart. His opinions of the best methods of benefitting them, or his politics at large, it is not my province here to discuss. He never interfered with or questioned mine.

Sprung on one side from the family of Manners, lords in the twelfth century of Ethale in Northumberland; and on the other side from the Avenals, Bassetts, and Vernons, of Haddon in the Peak, the D’Albinis and Lords de Roos of Belvoir—families which had caught kinship by

the way with many other families of note, including those of the Lord William Russell who was beheaded, and the Dukes of Somerset and Beaufort—John Henry Manners, grandson of the celebrated Marquis of Granby, was born on the 4th of January, 1778, and on the death of his father, the fourth duke of his line, was placed under the guardianship of Mr. Pitt and the then Duke of Beaufort. He was educated at Eton, and afterwards entered the university of Cambridge, where he took his degree of M.A. in 1797. Immediately on attaining his majority, he married Lady Elizabeth Howard, fifth daughter of Frederick, Earl of Carlisle, and in 1801, commenced rebuilding Belvoir Castle, in designs for which and for the laying out of the adjacent grounds, that beautiful peeress is said to have assisted with a taste and skill that might have been professional. He raised a regiment of militia on the threatened invasion of 1803, afterwards going with it to Ireland, and as years passed on, naturally fell in more or less with the pursuits of most men of his rank and time, on the turf, in the field, the political arena, or on the wild moors—yet not unfrequently gave his mind to matters more grave; and whatever he did, he did with alacrity and entirety, so far as was possible. His great houses were open for all the purposes of hospitality, and for public gratification, from which no rank was excluded. There more than once the crowned head had welcome, and there the shoeless foot of the poorest wanderer found rest.

In 1814 was born his Grace's eldest son, the present Duke, of whom delicacy will forbid my saying more here than that I doubt if there be in the world a person of any rank having more affectionate regard for the memory and traditions of a father. But the joy of that event was followed in about two years by a serious calamity—the burning of a great part of Belvoir Castle, with much plate and many paintings, including "The Nativity" by Sir Joshua Reynolds, valued at three thousand guineas. That event brought out no little of the Duke's ripening character—most of all his gratitude and reverence, as was indicated by a document placed under one of the towers of the renewed building, of which the following is a copy:—

On Saturday morning, October 26, 1816, between two and three o'clock, the Castle was visited by a most awful, destructive and alarming fire, which for a considerable time appeared to defy the persevering efforts of my numerous friends of all ranks and classes, who gave their prompt and zealous assistance on the occasion. By the blessing of Providence, their manly exertions were at length crowned with success; and the south-west and south-east fronts were preserved perfect and entire. The principal part of the plate, and more than one half the collection of pictures were saved; and a mercy of still greater value to the Duchess and me, (then absent at Cheveley Park,) was the preservation of our five dear children, and of the whole family in the Castle. So true is it, that even in his just chastisements,

an Almighty God is merciful, and that his severest dispensations possess sources of comfort to the mind of a christian! It is with a deep sense of the Divine goodness, and with a proper gratitude for the mercy of God, that I recommence on this day the rebuilding of the north-west and north-east fronts of Belvoir Castle, (which were totally destroyed by the fire,) having committed the superintendence of the building to the Rev. Sir John Thoroton, knight, assisted by Mr. Thomas Turner as clerk of the works;—fully confiding in their ability to temper splendour with prudence, and comfort with economy, but more particularly conscious that

Except the Lord build the house  
Their labour is but lost that build it.

RUTLAND.

But a far greater calamity than the fire, was the death, in 1825, after a very short illness, of the Duchess—acknowledged by all who knew her to be one of the most beautiful of women, and scarcely less talented and accomplished than beautiful. Like her husband she had considerable taste and ability; they had conjointly written pleasant histories of some of their continental trips, which were richly illustrated by her pencil; they had lived in wedded happiness more than twenty-six years, and as says a well-written *brochure* published at Grantham at the time of the Duke's decease, "she was snatched from him in the prime of life, and in the possession of a mind whose comprehensive faculties were daily more and more developing themselves." The mausoleum which he erected over her remains at Belvoir is one of the most tasteful and sublime works of its order. And there is a portrait of her in the Castle from which a large and admirable engraving was taken, and copies of it placed in houses associated with her memory, or given to particular friends. It was perhaps twenty-seven years afterwards that the Duke gave me one of them, companion to one he gave me of himself, both to be held as keepsakes, in a little house I had just furnished. I was myself at that time solitary enough, but such mementos made me feel less solitary, and one afternoon as I sat looking at the fine but chaste engraving, I could not help taking my pen and writing—

Thou peerless index to a mind,  
The loveliest of her lovely kind!  
I always thought the Graces three,  
Until, fair form, I gazed on thee;  
I always thought the Muses nine,  
Till, sweetest picture, thou wert mine;  
But thou hast made my Graces four,  
My Muses ten, for evermore!

How full of life and thought that face!  
In all that figure how much grace!  
And from those eyes what looks of love,  
The hearts of all to melt or move!

Well may thy widow'd lord proclaim  
 Thy cherish'd name "a sainted name!"  
 Well may he deem thee, even yet,  
 The "loveliest, best, he ever met!"

On Belvoir's towers I see thee bent,  
 O'ergazing all the vale of Trent,  
 Whose landscape Eden's bloom doth leaven,  
 Whose stream smiles back the light of heaven;  
 While England's fairest sons and daughters  
 Are mirror'd in its glowing waters;  
 Yet o'er the whole of that bright scene  
 Thou reignest matchless, Beauty's queen!

I see thee walking Haddon's halls,  
 A light amid their shadowy walls;  
 Or, venturous, riding forth to seek,  
 The wide-famed wonders of the Peak,  
 Where Nature, queen o'er change and time,  
 Has rear'd her mountain-throne sublime;  
 Yet there, fair princess! even there,  
 'Tis thine sweet Nature's fame to share!

Thou art not dead—thou can'st not die!  
 While art thus gives thee to the eye;  
 While history to the mind doth give  
 Thy deeds when here 'twas thine to live;  
 While heavenly hope, with sunny wings,  
 To where thou dwellest now upsprings;  
 While faith doth all things crown with love,  
 And death below is life above.

Thou art not dead—thou can'st not die!  
 Whate'er with beauty lights the eye,  
 Whate'er with goodness warms the soul,  
 Beyond mortality's control  
 Thenceforth, like all things good, retains  
 Part in the life that knows no pains,  
 In that blest sphere where woe comes never,  
 But joy once felt is joy for ever.  
 Such warmth, such light, oft hast thou given,  
 And, angel! such are thine—in Heaven.

Derby, Feb. 14, 1855.

It is not my object here to present an heraldic history of all the honors inherited or achieved by a nobleman who, in such circumstances, lived to the age of four score, nor indeed to give a history at all, but rather to present a few of those good and genuine characteristics which the dazzle of his surroundings could never obscure, and to add what the title of this little essay professes, a few of my own recollections of him, and of the very natural course of events which led in time to something like friendship.

H



It was a golden afternoon, early in the autumn of 1852. The spires of Bakewell and Stanton were telegraphing the time of day to each other in reflected sunlight, with the bonny Wye, winding along the vale between them, more bright than they; while the hoary towers of Haddon, as the river sped along, studied their architectural history in the clear mirror it lent. The anniversary festival of the Bakewell and High Peak Institute was going on in that famous "History of Norman England in stone." Every cotted mountain-side, every inhabited pastoral dell, within a dozen miles, had sent some eager and lively mind, some warm and happy heart, or heart hoping to be happy there, to join the throng. Many people there were too from great distances—old M. Bally, the worthy phrenologist, for one. Lords, ladies and gentlemen were mingling for the nonce with some hundreds of the people whose institution gave the jubilee its name. And there, too, though seventy-five years of age, walking almost as erectly and looking as happy as the youngest, was the representative of the long line of the domain's ancient owners, the Duke of Rutland himself, with a kindly word for any who felt free to court it, and for some who did not. As evening came on, another distinguished person, the late Duke of Devonshire, arrived; and I happened to be by when, in the great court near the entrance, the host gave hearty welcome to that noble guest and led him where the simple but cheery banquet was being held. Music and speeches—less music and more speeches followed, in which I remember, besides the two dukes, Lord John Manners, the Rev. Canon Trevor, and some of the local gentry taking part. The Duke of Devonshire enjoyed the scene, but looked as if troubled by his deafness, and made a short but genial and graceful speech; Canon Trevor confessed that the effect upon him of the surrounding scenery, and the historical character of the place in which they were assembled, had made him almost too emotional for speaking at all. Lord John Manners gave a jaunty, jovial sort of address, flinging in some hints about bodily as well as mental cultivation—a cheerful word or two (though without using the phrase) in favour of "muscular philosophy." The speeches of the resident neighbours were naturally very congratulatory and complimentary of the titled visitors, especially of the Duke of Rutland. His appearance at the time was that of a hale, shrewd, polite, and somewhat *fatherly* man. There was keenness as well as kindness in his glance—the kindness somewhat predominating. He had just the look that, as occasion might be, could assure a friend or—if he had one—repel a foe. Altogether he had the appearance of being ten or more years younger than he really was—much as though a trace of the smart young country gentleman had threaded his whole life through and was

not obliterated yet, or as if a breath of morning air had lingered and still mingled with his evening sunshine ; and his speech was decidedly the most practical, concise, and pointed of them all.

The speaking done, fireworks of all hues followed on the lawn outside, answering to the lights now streaming from the large oriel and latticed windows, and flinging up to the towers and minaretted chimneys above, and over the trees and old terraces around, a glow so grand and strange, not only from the varied colours of the light, but from the objects it fell upon, as to make the whole scene more like an "Arabian night's entertainment" than anything having connection with the reading-room of a quiet English market-town like Bakewell. And when the two dukes had left, the dance began in that historical old ball-room of which all the world has seen drawings, or heard,

Where Dorothy Vernon danced of yore,  
And many a Vernon danced before.

And it was a little after this event that I was made known to the Duke of Rutland. Among his most intimate friends for many, many years, was the late D'Ewes Coke, Esq., of Brookhill Hall, a gentleman of great talent, both original and acquired—a lover of art and letters as well as of antiquities—and mingling with his various tastes a love, too, of encouraging young authors. From the days of my earliest literary efforts Mr. Coke had manifested a kindly wish for my success, and he it was that was the first to make me and my writings known to the Duke, who from that hour to the last showed a similar interest, as the tone of the following letters tells :—

Belvoir Castle, February 22, 1853.

Sir,—In acknowledging your letter of the 9th February, as well as the copies of the work, "The Peak and the Plain," to which I had subscribed, I have great pleasure in saying that not I only, but others who have perused many of its pages, have been greatly delighted with it. It had to me as owner of some of the scenes so graphically and beautifully described much pleasurable anticipation attached to it,—and I can truly say that such anticipation has been more than realised. I beg that you will believe me, with many good wishes, sir, your very faithful servant,

RUTLAND.

Some days after, in writing to Mr. Coke, his Grace added :—"I think Dr. Spencer Hall's 'Peak and Plain' one of the most agreeable books I ever read. I read it aloud in the evenings to my children. I have complimented him upon it, and had a beautifully expressed letter from him in reply."

The "events" of my early life referred to in the subjoined letter were these :—At the age of sixteen, stimulated by reading the life of Dr. Franklin, I ran away from the home of my loving parents, longing

for some intellectual occupation, and resolved to make my own way in the world. My hardships during that time were some of them severe enough: one was lying on the cold floor of a workshop in Loughborough on a chill winter's night, when the snow, drifting through a great hole at the bottom of the door, made, as it accumulated at my side, a not very congenial bed-fellow. And when some twenty-five or six years afterwards I was invited to lecture to the Philosophical Society of the town, and several of the best people there were competing for me as a guest, a few of us went to look at the old workshop (now a carpenter's), and picked up some shavings from the spot I had lain on, to bring away as mementos. Having soon after to write the Duke, who knew Loughborough so well, and feeling the contrast between being a run-away boy on a snowy night and now a correspondent, invited too to be a guest, of the lord-lieutenant of the very county, I enclosed one or two of the shavings in my letter and gave him some outline of the adventure. Hence the allusion to it here:—

Stanton Woodhouse, Dec. 19, 1853.

Sir,—I am favoured by more than one communication from you, each containing matter interesting in no common degree. I can assure you that I was deeply interested by the detail given in one of your letters of events in your early life—especially of an adventurous night spent in the town of Loughborough. I shall retain and preserve the shavings [he made a book-marker of one of them] from the carpenter's shop, kindly sent in your letter—a memento honourable to you and most creditable to your feelings.

I have to thank you for the transmission of the "Derby Mercury" of the 7th instant, which I will return should you desire to have it. You have been most obligingly mindful of my wish in the guarded introduction into your lecture of some lines in a letter of mine, of the desirableness of a good understanding between the upper and lower classes of our great community, which can alone be brought about by the latter being made fully aware that they are cared for by the former. The notice which you have taken of those sentiments in my letter is a source of much pride and gratification to me.

I received with deep interest the preface which you have written for the volume of Poems by Mr. Edward Hind. It cannot fail to interest all who are desirous of noticing oppressed merit. Is it the intention to publish Mr. Hind's poems by subscription? In that case I shall willingly place myself on the list. I trust that he is recovering from the malady by which he was afflicted when you wrote.—Your very faithful servant,

RUTLAND.

Let me be just to my friend Edward Hind, a man of remarkable poetical genius, and with all the sensitiveness of the poetical temperament. He asked no help. But I knew he was very ill, and persecuted, and thought it only a duty to mention one of his projected volumes to anyone who was likely to purchase it. There was something almost spontaneous—I was near saying intuitive—in the fine old Duke's sympathy for him: as witness—

Belvoir Castle, April 9, 1854.

Sir,—Various circumstances have prevented me from noticing, and with many thanks, communications with which you have favoured me, accompanied too by some interesting extracts from newspapers containing reports of your labours. I was much gratified to observe the reception you met at Leicester and Loughborough, and perused with deep interest your several addresses so far as they were given. I can readily understand what interest you must have felt in delivering a lecture at Loughborough, after the anecdote you related to me in one of your letters, as applicable to your early life. I sincerely hope that the world prospers with you, and that you are gradually acquiring the elements of a happy latter end of life. I had a letter a short time since from our mutual friend, Mr. D'Ewes Coke, and he pronounced himself tolerably well, which I know will give you pleasure. I shall be very glad to hear that Mr. E. Hind is better. It has been with much gratification that I have looked through some of the pages of the volume of poems which you so kindly sent to me, composed by Mr. Hind. Piloted by your observations, I was enabled to go at once to the gems of the volume, and they are very clever and agreeable. I am very anxious to acknowledge the pleasure which I have in their perusal by transmitting something for his use. Would you object to be the recipient of it for him? and believe me, your very sincere and faithful servant,

RUTLAND.

The next letter needs but little introduction.

London, June 18, 1854.

Sir,—Since I received your letter of the 10th May, I have been so assiduously occupied that it has been out of my power to acknowledge it and to assure you of the interest with which I read its several subjects—first and foremost the account of your recovery.

I herewith transmit to you the small token of respect for merit and talent which you are kind enough to say you will place in the hands of Mr. E. Hind. It will give me much satisfaction to know that his cure is permanent, and that he is enjoying his return to the society of the busy world.

I have lately been living with my regiment, and took an occasion one morning on parade to have a word passed for Henry W—. He immediately came forward, and he had a distinct recollection of the several interesting circumstances relating to his early years, mentioned in your letter. He is now a comely young man, and my adjutant gave him a good character. The conduct of the regiment is extremely good, for with one thousand men in the large and hazardous town of Leicester we had only five light punishments to inflict during the whole training, and not one court-martial.

I observe that you are about to enter upon a house of your own at Derby. When I return to Belvoir Castle I shall have much pleasure in looking out for one or two articles to put into it, and shall be flattered by your acceptance of them. [These were the fine portraits of himself and Duchess.]

The expression of "our mutual friend Mr. Coke" came, I assure you, very naturally and sincerely from my pen, and I am glad I used it, for what it elicited from you in turn.

With the repetition of an anxious wish for your renovated health and welfare, I beg you to believe me your very faithful servant,

RUTLAND.

The following letter, with its date on board his Grace's yacht, the Resolution, is characteristic :—

Dartmouth, Resolution Schooner, July 7, 1854.

Sir,—I don't like to detain Mr. D'Ewes Coke's letter longer than is necessary, therefore I return it. . . . I can readily believe the suggestion you throw out accounting for the present characteristics of the population near Ilkeston, viz., that they are the descendants of an immigrated body in former days, or that of a race which has been kept distinct during the Roman or Saxon immigrations. . . . I have been on the coasts of Brittany, in France, where the French which I spoke could not be understood by the population, and I was obliged to obtain the aid of a Welsh ship-master as an interpreter. The Welsh designate themselves ancient Britons; the inhabitants of Brittany are called Bretons; and the names of places are very similar in both countries;—in Brittany Aber Vrach, Aber Benoit, etc.; in Wales, Abermawr, Aberystwith, etc.

I was greatly pleased by a letter which I received from Mr. Hind a few days since; but the trouble which he took in writing it was supererogatory, and far more than my letter to him deserved.—I remain with the best wishes, your very faithful servant,  
RUTLAND.

The next speaks for itself. The allusion to his long-departed Duchess is both striking and affecting. The reference to my letter about the poachers, who were tried for killing Mr. Bagshaw, resulted from my having been at the trial and carefully noted the men, who (as in my letter I said) were prone by their very constitution to field adventure, and ought therefore to be legitimately employed at home or in the colonies, in something by which their faculties would be properly exercised and gratified :—

Newmarket, November 13, 1854.

Sir,—In a letter which I received from you a short time since, you asked me whether I would allow Mr. Hind to dedicate a volume of poems to me. I am sincerely rejoiced that he should be restored to his interesting avocation. . . . I cannot decline in this case, having had much pleasure in looking through Mr. Hind's last publication; but I shall be obliged to him not to advertise the dedication as being "by permission," having refused this form to several others.

The two Derbyshire newspapers to which your letter of the 20th ult. refers, arrived safely. I have read them with much interest and now return them. Nothing can be more powerful than the evidence referred to by you of the existence of a Deity ruling the universe and superintending the destiny of everything having life in the world.

You mention in far too warm terms the little present [of the portraits] which I directed to you in September. It afforded me much pleasure. . . . The terms in which you allude to the Duchess are not only beautiful, but you describe her as if you had seen her. I have always said that I never yet saw her equal, whether as to person or merit; and it is a singular coincidence that I am writing on her birth-day, and immediately after having addressed one hundred and thirty villagers who were assembled at my seat at Cheveley, near this place, on her virtues and perfections, and after having given out to each in *her* sainted name articles of bedding and clothing. I have in my possession a letter from Mr. Buck, the author of "Sublimities of Nature," with whom I became acquainted in a very accidental manner, describing her as she appeared in a ball-room at Bury St. Edmunds the year of our marriage.

Two evenings since I had the pleasure of reading to a company after dinner your very interesting letter to me on the subject of the trial of the poachers, with whom Mr. Bagshaw was so fatally engaged in August last on the river Wye.—Your very faithful servant,  
RUTLAND.

The winter following the date of the foregoing letter was one of severe suffering for the good old Duke, whose constitution was evidently breaking up. But he wrote sometimes, and to some of his friends frequently. When he could not write much he would direct one friend to call upon another for him ; and in that way his domestic chaplain, the Rev. Philip Mules, called upon me at Derby, with a message as he was passing through. On the 26th of March, 1855, his Grace wrote me himself, offering his vote by proxy to an allopathic friend of mine, candidate for the office of physician to an infirmary, and added :—

My long and serious illness has prevented me from acknowledging many letters received from various correspondents, and among them one or two from you. There was no occasion for you to suppose that your lines on my late Duchess could in any way offend me. My admiration of her whole being and my devotion to the memory of her multifarious perfections make it impossible for me to think any view taken of her merits, or any praise of her, exaggerated ; and I read the lines with deep interest.

In one letter you gave me an agreeable detail of a journey which you made past the [Stanton] Woodhouse. I was actually there at the time ; and had you heard so at the Rowsley Station and had journeyed so far out of your ordinary route as to have called there, I should have been most happy.

It was here that, a few years before occurred a scene which is thus described by one of the Duke's then guests :—" It happened that I and one other private friend spent the last day of the year 1848, which happened to be Sunday, with his Grace at a small house of his in a very retired part of the Derbyshire hills. In the morning his Grace and his two guests walked a couple of miles to attend the nearest place of worship—a kind of school-house chapel on one of his estates—but at night the Duke himself read family prayers for his domestic congregation, consisting of his two friends, a few of his ordinary servants, who accompanied him to the Woodhouse, as the little mansion was called, and a larger number of the inferior servants belonging to the locality. After the prayers his Grace read a short sermon—I think one of Paley's—and after that he addressed them by the title of his 'kind friends,' praised them for the good order 'in which they had conducted their several duties in the last year,' expressed his satisfaction at having, as he hoped, contributed in return to their welfare and happiness, and hoped that the year which was just about to begin, might be equally propitious and prosperous to the whole domestic circle and connection of which he was proud and happy to be, he would not

say the master, but the chief partner—the responsible head and guiding hand. I never in my life heard a more appropriate and touching allocution. It was both simple and more in detail than I have been able to give it, though I made my note that evening; and it was followed by a respectful cordiality of assent from the little audience, and an affectionate murmur of ‘God bless your Grace,’ which was very affecting.”

In one of the early months of 1856, at the age of four score, died at Brookhill Hall, the Duke's and my old friend, Mr. D'Ewes Coke—an English gentleman who wore his faults outwardly and made no parade, or even profession, of better qualities, in which he was rich enough, had he cloaked or gilded his failings, to have had one of the finest worldly reputations. Though the inheritor of good estates (which he did not diminish, but added to by an economy which, however, was never allowed to check his generosity), he was brought up to the bar, was a great friend of Lord Denman, when, as young men, they went the circuit together, and might have risen to the highest rank in his profession but for his deafness, which compelled him early to retire. Of some of his opinions and his modes of manifesting them, it may not be here out of place to say a passing word. He had a peculiar theory of tenure and rental, which was—that the first persons having a right to live on the produce of the land are they who cultivate it; next, the poor who cannot help themselves,—the landlords coming last and taking what can be justly spared; and this I believe he carried out on his own domains. Waste of any kind was decidedly painful to him, from waste land to waste paper, whether belonging to himself or others. He had much to do in his day with common-inclosures; yet he never therein forgot the rights of the poor, but arranged in every needful instance for leaving them their moiety of recreation-ground. His sense of order was marvellous; and, were he walking along the turnpike road the least stone out of its place would catch his attention, and cause him to adjust it to its right position with his walking-stick, if he had time. If he saw a piece of loose writing-paper lying about any of his mansions he would pick it up and turn it with quiet dexterity into an envelope, using also a small seal to prevent extravagance in sealing wax; yet, not improbably, that very envelope would in due time enclose a gift to some struggling worthy in literary, artistic or professional life; or to some poor clergyman's widow, or other decayed lady or gentleman, whom the world was in danger of passing by in the winter of their age. He was a person of tall, open, intelligent and manly port, and not indifferent, but rather the contrary, to his genealogy, connected in some way with the olden Sachevorrills, and even the Plantagenets, as well



as more nearly, some two centuries back, with a secretary of state and a bishop; but there was not an humble cottage on his estate beneath his watchful care, or that, if out of repair, wanting drainage, or afflicted with a downward-smoking chimney, gave less pain to him than to the tenant until it was rectified; and I have good reason for knowing that at one time he paid an annual sum to a doctor for attending to poor people far around him when they were out of health. His counsel regarding their property was often sought by neighbouring landlords, one of the chief of whom, distressed by some complaining tenants, asked him to look over the part of his estate they occupied and advise him what to do. He did over-look it, and suggested a lowering of the rents as the only just remedy, and it was as readily complied with as if the suggestion had been to raise them. He would omit all needless show and parade that he might spend what they would have cost, in building, endowing, and subscribing to schools and libraries, or in providing for those whom some in his sphere would have left to the parish or to chance. He knew the immeasurable distance there is between politeness and fuss; his contempt for flattery was equal to his love of good sense. And he had a grateful heart. While a boy at school, another boy lent him money when his pockets had prematurely collapsed. That school-fellow became a banker, and fifty years afterwards failed. The moment Mr. Coke heard of this misfortune, he hurried off a note, offering his friend the use of his own best mansion, with the servants and plate, while matters might be arranged,—an offer declined not the less gratefully because another arrangement had been already made. That he was not perfect is true; but he certainly never held himself up as a model, and the faultless alone may be left to cast stones at him. I speak of him according to the side he chiefly presented towards me; and as he was one of my severest critics and sternest of advisers, so through all vicissitudes was he a faithful friend. He was in most things cautious, and could on occasion indicate proud reserve; but would I believe have braved the world, and all its possible censure of appearances, rather than go a round-about way to his object or speak falsely. It is of him the Duke makes kindly mention here:—

Belvoir Castle, March 29, 1856.

Sir,—I regret much that two letters which you have had the kindness to write and I the happiness to receive, should have been so long unacknowledged. My health has shown no symptoms of amendment since it was taken aback on the 31st March, 1855, and I feel great reluctance to write letters which I know must be imbued with the gloom generated by disease. But I cannot help thanking you for the eloquent tribute of respect which your letter of the 22nd inst. contains to the memory of our mutual friend, poor D'Ewes Coke. We know little of what may be the immediate destiny of that which is immortal—ever-living—in us, when our last breath is drawn on earth; for sin is, I fear, the most certain portion of our worldly

inheritance, and no doubt Mr. Coke had his frailties. - - - But he was I firmly think a believer in the doctrines and revelations of Sacred Writ; and with so many attributes of christian benevolence and charity towards his fellow-mortals, we may envy him the amount which will be on the credit side of his great account. His son (Mr. William Coke) informed me that he had great pleasure in hearing from me constantly while prostrate in bed during the three last weeks of his valuable life, and I believe I did not miss more than two days during that period sending him a letter.

I received a most interesting letter from you of the date of the 6th February. My capacities are not equal to its reply at this moment. I am exceedingly feeble, and the mind keeps pace with the body. I have been out of the Castle but once since the 16th of December—enough without any other cause to impair the mental faculties.

I can have no objection to your presentation to Mr. Greaves of the lines which owe existence to your ready and able pen, and which had my never sufficiently to be lamented Duchess for their subject.—I shall be most happy to receive any recollections of Mr. Coke.—Believe, me, sir, your very faithful servant, RUTLAND.

Hearing from me that I was going to be at Grantham at Easter, by the desire of some homely but worthy people there, to give them an address, and knowing also that I wished to have a good survey of the Castle and the Vale of Belvoir, the Duke at once wrote me saying that he hoped I would avail myself of all the enjoyment I could derive from my visit to the neighbourhood, and asked me to lunch with his "family," adding he did not think he should be able to be at the luncheon, but would join us afterwards. On my arrival it was manifest that everything had already been arranged, so far as was possible, for my information and gratification. For many details this is not the occasion; and to give an accurate history of all I saw, thought, and felt, in that magnificent mansion, its gardens, and the adjacent lands,—embracing within all that taste could desire, and commanding outside all that a view expanding into four or five counties could yield to one with whom love of the picturesque from veriest childhood had been a passion,—would require not a little chapter like this, but a volume. Yet it is not easy to pass on without a word or two.

"Standing upon a hill, a gentle hill,  
Green and of mild declivity—the last  
As 'twere the cape of a long ridge of such,  
Save that it has no sea to lave its base,  
But a most living landscape, and the wave  
Of woods and corn-fields, and the abodes of men,"—

Belvoir Castle is among midland mansions one of the most beautiful as well as one of the most conspicuous. Save that it is ducal in all its style and appertainments, it has little in common with Chatsworth, Haddon, or Hardwick. Each of those distinguished places has its own peculiar attractions, and so has this. Though without question a *Castle*,

substantial, strong and commanding, it has no frown, but somewhat of a cheerful smile, as it looks in one direction to Lincoln cathedral and in another to Nottingham town and castle, and on many an ancient tower or spire besides, sharing the broad expanse of its rural reign. And all within and immediately around it is in good keeping. There is enough of everything, without anything being overdone—much that is elegant or *recherché*, but nothing elaborately or oppressively ornate. A stranger could not be in any room, or at any point, without a sense of being in the atmosphere of surroundings more dignified than ordinary, yet by some magic so tempered as to make him feel no stranger there. What is this? I have often experienced it in the houses of the truly aristocratic; but not always in the houses of their imitators. I suppose it comes mostly from this—that, whether in the sphere of greatness or of humility, we breathe the more freely, and feel the more happy, in proportion as the spirit that presides over the spot is itself a genuine and unaffected one, and so catch its character. It is this that, though a courteous man will take off his hat even in the cottage of a labourer, makes him feel welcome and at ease in the noble's palace.

At an hour appointed the Duke sent for me to his private room. It was a touching sight which met me as I entered that apartment—and the memory of it is not less affecting now. "Another, yet the same!" Wasted, wrinkled, and sitting before the fire in an old man's doze, with his right hand placed slenderly round his left wrist and his head bowed down, was that noblest peer of all his race,—whose cheery hunting call had been echoed a thousand times a thousand from wood and hill and o'er the wide champaign,—the vigour and elasticity of whose step, and precision of aim, had rendered him almost rivalless on the mountain moors—whose language, eloquent because of its earnestness, had won the applauses of three-score years—who had appeared in his ancient palace in the Peak but a few autumns before with so much *éclat*—and had even so recently been writing letters daily to cheer his old dying friend at Brookhill! The difference in his appearance from that festive-evening at Haddon to now was so startling that for the moment I could scarcely believe what I saw. Yet, no sooner did he hear my name than he arose almost erect; a genial light suddenly kindled in his eyes and beamed through all his face; it was as if winter had in a moment flushed into spring. There was more than a mere touch of the life of younger days in him still, and the warmth of his welcome—frank and cordial, but more deferential to one like me than I had expected—it was not easy to forget. He came away from the fire, and taking his seat at a large square table covered, nay heaped, with books, papers, and many a memento of old friendships, he talked

with me animatedly on topics that he knew would please me—repeated with manifest sincerity some of his former praise of my humble writings—asked questions about several in whom he knew I felt an interest—spoke much and tenderly in memory of our departed friend Mr. Coke, while showing me his photograph; and then on his handing me another photograph with a pleasant assurance that there were few among the many about him he valued more, I was of course agreeably surprised to find that it was *my own*.

From some cause the Duke now felt better, and resolved to join the family party at luncheon after all, taking the head of the table, with a chair for me at his right hand;—strange contrast to the cold winter's night I spent at Loughborough when a boy, and of which he had just shown me in his room the treasured memento—that piece of wood shaving I had once sent him! Holding as a rule that, should anyone be admitted to a private table, and then, without consent of the whole party, make it public by reporting what passes, he ought never to be invited to another, I ought perhaps only to add to this passage the remark that if, as somebody has said, "one of the finest of the fine arts is, without extravagant professions, to make a guest feel happy and that you are happy to see him," it never was practised better than at Belvoir that day. For once, however, a slight step or two beyond my rule may be forgiven. As the hour flitted away it was very pleasant to see how the Duke revived, and before it was gone he looked almost as bright and animated as on the evening at Haddon Hall. One of the points in our conversation, on his part characteristic, was the scrupulous way in which in every case where an event was mentioned he required *the date* of it. Thus it was, that at the conclusion of every matter of information, he gave a more than usually expectant and exacting glance, as with a voice in keeping with it, he put interrogatively the two brief words—"The date?" which but for the next kind word or look that immediately followed might sometimes have slightly troubled one when unable to give it. The doctor having, before his Grace sat down, warned him against much speech, it gave an opportunity for others to say the more. Lord John (Manners, who sat next me on my right hand) evidently with the kindly purpose of giving me an easy topic, asked me if I happened to be an agriculturist. My answer was that I had some pleasant domains in the field of thought—the only field, except that of daily duty, I had much opportunity of cultivating, on which he smiled and said he had been with me there. Then he asked if I could tell him anything of the state of trade in Derby; he knew it was at the time very bad in Nottingham. I said there was an old joke about Nottingham being a rather *fast* and Derby

a *sted-fast* place, and it did so happen that, at the time, Derby seemed the firmest of the two. His lordship then said that when he was on a committee upon a bill affecting the framework-knitters, it singularly appeared by the evidence that, of the three towns, the operatives in Leicester were not uniformly so well off as those of Nottingham, nor those of Nottingham as those of Derby. Could I account for that? My reply was that it might be hard to do so without some thought; but it did occur to me at the moment that as Leicester was, (as it was at that time, but is not now), chiefly dependant on one manufacture while Nottingham had two, and Derby, for its population, had a greater variety of manufactures still, with the railway-plant besides, that might possibly in some degree account for the difference—one branch of trade being often better than another. Lord John's tone was that of a person deeply interested in such questions, and he thought the reason I gave might partly account for the difference mentioned. Opposite to me, and near her venerable father, sat Lady Adeliza Norman, and as she now and then threw kindly words into the conversation, his aged face had more than usual light. Her husband, the Rev. Frederick Norman, came in afterwards—one of the most unaffected and quiet though earnest of clergymen. He it was who a few years afterwards did Sunday service in the old banquetting-hall at Haddon, for a crowd of navvies employed on the Ambergate and Buxton line. Not far off, and amazingly like his own portrait then hanging behind him, was the Marquis of Granby (the present noble Duke) with whom, after the party had risen, I had pleasant conversation about some of the picturesque scenery of the Peak. The rest of the family group that day consisted of Mr. George Norman, the Rev. P. Mules, private chaplain, and Dr. Parsons, the family physician. The Duke gave me, as he left me with the Marquis, a genial good-bye, and about seven weeks afterwards I received the following:—

Belvoir Castle, May 31, 1856.

Dear sir,—I write by desire of the Duke. . . . He would have written himself, but I regret to say he is in bed and unable to write. He was seized last Wednesday week with pain internally, but I am happy to say he is much more comfortable—though we are still very anxious about him.—Believe me, dear sir, yours very faithfully,

GRANBY.

As his Grace recovered from this attack, I thought it would interest him to hear a little history which I knew would have pleased Mr. Coke had he been living, so sent it. One of the friends of my youth, poor Tom Daubney, who had found me the "lodging on the cold, cold ground" on the memorable night at Loughborough, and for whom I afterwards wrote several love letters, married early and died, after which his first and therefore only child, "Lizzie," was born. She in time

had grown up, was about to be married, and asked if I would take the place of her father at the wedding, and "give her away." I did so, from my own house, at Derby, for dear Tom's sake; and when the happy young couple had left, thinking over the strange course of events, I wrote the letter to which, in this following, the Duke alludes:—

Belvoir Castle, September 20, 1856.

Dear Dr. Hall,—I am sorry to have been obliged to leave unanswered during so long a period letters from you of much interest to the reader, and which proved so especially to me. Alas! I am little able even now to attempt a reply to any of the points successively (and I may add successfully) treated upon in your letters. Under your guidance the pen seems capable of throwing light and interest on any subject. . . . It reminds me of a Scotch keeper who, in praising the excellent qualities of a pointer he had for sale, described him as being able to "make a muir-bird out of a flint-stane."

I know the labours to which your profession exposes you, but I trust that your health has been sufficiently stout to bear you through them without let or hindrance. I am sorry to say that since you last heard of or from me, I am almost bed-ridden; on no day during the past eighteen or nineteen weeks have I risen from bed before the clock has tolled five p.m.; and then only for three or four hours. Nor have I much hope held out to me of any improvement at present. The fine part of the year is over, and that which is so bleak and requires caution from all invalids is coming on. My prospect is not brilliant. But this I know well, that in various ways I am able to trace mercy in the chastisements and forbearing of a beneficent Creator. There does not appear to be much chance of my recovering wholly unless an improvement soon commences. I observe this opinion is somewhat opposite to what you had heard of me when you wrote me on the 14th ult. . . . In that letter you clothed the history of "Tom Daubney," with a degree of interest which induced me to read it again and again, and with increased sooner than diminished pleasure—thus inducing me to rejoice at your having thought me a worthy successor of the late dear D'Ewes Coke, in being put into a knowledge of the facts relating to Mr. Daubney's daughter "Lizzie." I hope you have a good account of the first days of the young couple. . . .

In one of your letters you gave me an account of the Peace rejoicings at Derby. I suppose those who have been at Moscow will have been almost blinded by the dazzle of Muscovite magnificence. I hope there may not be a mingling of *dust* with the other article. But I have never been able to unravel the mysteries of the late war from beginning to end. Why the Emperor of the French was so eager for peace can in my mind be accounted for in one way only, viz., from the reflection that another campaign might have witnessed the annihilation of the Russian navy, which would have left England and France the only powers in the possession of a navy.

I have written more than I am permitted generally at one sitting, but I will not end without an assurance of my being, dear Dr. Hall, your sincere friend,

RUTLAND.

In my feeble state I must save my character for writing by adding the words "errors excepted."

To me, the ability of that noble and venerable sufferer to write such a letter at all at his age and after his long illness is amazing, especially

as one thinks of the other numerous and more pressing claims on his attention at such a time. It would be sad ingratitude on my part to let it die; and if my children should still possess it when I am gone, I trust they may treasure it tenderly and reverently for the writer's sake, and mine. The next letter is the last he wrote me, and must have been very nearly the last he wrote to anyone:—

Belvoir Castle, December 26, 1856.

My dear sir,—Your very kind remembrance of me in the portrait of our friend D'Ewes Coke, affords me the highest gratification. I wish I could express myself as I feel on the occasion. The likeness is remarkable when caught in a good light. My health is so bad that you must excuse me for being short in my letter: but when I tell you that my last question on going to bed for several nights past has related to the possibility of my life being preserved till the morning, you will know that to write a single line gives much pain. I sincerely wish you well, and remain, dear sir, yours truly,

RUTLAND.

My son, Lord John Manners, has shown me your interesting letter to him.

The reader will not now wonder at the respect and regard I have expressed for such a genuine patrician. Twenty-five days from the penning of that letter the hand that held it was cold—the brain and the heart that moved it, were still—and the body was soon after laid by the side of that of his Duchess, in the beautiful mausoleum he had built for her near their Castled Home. Blessings on his memory! The following impressive lines, said to have been composed on his last birth-day and a few days later, have more than once been attributed to his muse; but I know that some of the family believe them to have been composed by a clergyman of the name of Wilson—or was it Wilkinson? Whether some good and sympathetic pastor received the thoughts from his lips in conversation and gave them rhythmical expression, or they were adopted by his Grace because of their aptness, I cannot tell; but that they so well corresponded with his mood as to become associated with his name at all, entitles them to a place in any record of his closing hours:—

“Welcome from Heaven sweet dawn and sunrise bright,  
That tell me of my birth-day, and of days  
And years that have been mine—they passed—and now  
Sing with the nights and days that bless the Lord.  
Praise Him and magnify Him for ever.  
They pass. In Him who gave me life I am,  
And shall be, though my sun of health hath set.  
Through the long sickness, and the lonely hours,  
The presence of my God has been my light;  
In him no darkness is—but all within  
Luminous of his love, my perfect endless day.  
I drink His goodness from the countless hearts  
He cheers—their smiles, their happiness are mine.



The world in which so many are in joy,  
 Father, is still a world of joy to me  
 And through the months of sorrow will I cheer  
 My poor weak heart with thoughts of others' bliss,  
 And pray for them a welfare of bright days,  
 Days without spot, that they may be bright hereafter;  
 And most for those most dear to me, and for him,  
 Next to myself succeeding in my line,  
 Inheritor of all that I have been—  
 Lands, honours, and my name—heir of them all in Thea.  
 Welcome, unseen possession, hours to come,  
 Ye ministering spirits of my Maker's will,  
 Whether ye wake me to the matin prime  
 Of health re-orient, or, as still ye pass,  
 But touch my brow through many a sleepless night,  
 As with the gentle pressure of a friend,  
 Comforting softly where he cannot heal,  
 Sing me the anthem that I love to hear,  
 Sing with the days and nights that have been mine,  
 Sing with the nights and days that bless the Lord,  
 Praise Him and magnify Him for ever.

## A FEW DAYS LATER.

The wheel of life turns slowly, the cold drops  
 Fall slow upon the cistern of my heart;  
 But, O my Saviour, deeper than my heart  
 The fountain is of Thy most precious blood,  
 Shed to cleanse every sin, heal every wound—  
 Thy blood—deep-river of the water of life,  
 Fresh spring of the Immortal, of the Pure as thou art pure,  
 Thy Peace give unto me—Thy Grace—the Comforter.  
 I yet am in the world, but all how holy,  
 How calm and blest around. The world at vespers.  
 Silence is stealing o'er me—the sweet sleep  
 Till morn in Heaven: be hushed my soul. This still  
 And parting air: it is the breath of angels—  
 The soft low music lulls me to my rest,  
 "The Spirit and the Bride say come" up hither, come.  
 I come. Farewell to time, and hours, and years,  
 Lost in the distance—yet from age to age  
 Singing and making melody—Praise ye the Lord.  
 Farewell to those who love me. As ye love  
 And think of me in tender memory,  
 Many a far winter's morn and summer's eve,  
 Bless ye the Lord—love Him—and live to Him—  
 Praise Him and magnify Him for ever."

## THE AUTHOR'S EARLIER WORKS.

"Go on! go on!"—JAMES MONTGOMERY, the poet, to Spencer T. Hall, on reading his first work, "*The Forester's Offering*," in 1841.

"A volume of sterling good sense, pure English, and native poetry, appealing not to our charity but to our perception of excellence."—From a Review by WILLIAM NEWMARCH, Esq., F.R.S.

"It has a sparkling richness and graphichness of description, which rivet the attention and delight the mind. . . . The appearance of this work at the present time is a striking and flattering characteristic of the age.—SHEFFIELD IRIS.

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"Mr. Hall is no common observer of things and men—he sees with the eye of a poet and a philosopher—and his descriptions of scenes and characters are worthy of special attention. He has faith in the strength as well as in the beauty of goodness, and all his efforts are directed to the promotion of right feeling among his fellow men. . . . He writes as if his heart were in his pen.—LEEDS TIMES.

"— One of Nature's gentlemen. . . . The confession of his experiences at the end reminds us of Franklin, and has a noble and impressive moral."—THE ATLAS, March 19, 1842.

"He is one of Nature's freemasons, and knows all her secret signs—one of her high priests, who is at home in her innermost shrines, where he pays his vows and calls upon his fellows to pay theirs. He is her poet and sings her praises—and her champion too, who vindicates her right."—TAIT'S MAGAZINE.

Dr. Hall's later works have been spoken of in similar terms by the Press: while the late DR. SAMUEL BROWN, a grandson of the celebrated commentator on the Bible, and himself one of the most distinguished minds of his time, thus wrote in 1852:—"Spencer Hall is not unworthy of his names, like Spenser, a poet, like Hall, addicted to philosophy, like both a christian gentleman. His woodland poems have made him amiably known to all his countrymen as the Sherwood Forester; and his scientific experiences have commended him to the respect of many of the true lovers of science, both at home and abroad. His poems are affectionate, sunny, graceful, true to English nature, and also spiritual in their tendency; his scientific narratives and descriptions are ingenious, vigorous and clear. As a man I know him to be a lover of man, given to self-help, enthusiastic, industrious, dutiful, brave, and altogether honourable."

THIS Work, continued monthly, will be completed in Five or Six Parts. The various Biographies are given not merely in deference to chronological precedence or social rank, but to a rule that, the Author trusts, by affording more variety may also afford more pleasure in the reading, as they appear.

The commencing chapter of Part III, will be "AN IRISH CHIEF AND HIS PEOPLE," followed by "THE TWO MONTGOMERIES," &c.

PART III.]

[PRICE 1s.

# MORNING STUDIES

AND

## EVENING PASTIMES:

MEMOIRS AND VERBAL PORTRAITS, MISCELLANEOUS  
PAPERS, AND POEMS.

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"THE SHERWOOD FORESTER."

Author of "The Forester's Offering," "The Peak and the Plain,"  
"Days in Derbyshire," "Mesmeric Experiences,"  
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Among the Memoirs and Verbal Portraits included in this Work, besides the above, are or will be those of ERASMUS DARWIN, M.D. F.R.S.; WILLIAM COBBETT; PROFESSOR WILSON; EBENEZER ELLIOTT, "the Corn Law Rhymers;" FREDERICK DAVIES, a Hero of Humble Life; JOHN CLARE, "the Northamptonshire Peasant;" ROBERT BLOOMFIELD, "the Farmer's Boy;" GEORGE HERBERT, Parson of the Olden Time; JOHN GRATTON, "the Quaker Preacher;" BERNARD BARTON, "the Quaker Poet;" GEORGE FREDERICK WILLIAM, Seventh EARL OF CARLISLE; NANNY SHACKLOCK, a Village Florence Nightingale; the two MONTGOMERIES; GEORGE COMBE, the Phrenological Writer; WILLIAM GREGORY, Professor of Chemistry; DR. DICK, "the Christian Philosopher," and other Scottish Worthies; BARON LIEBIG; an IRISH CHIEF and his People; the Author's FATHER; JAMES S. BUCKINGHAM; ROBERT OWEN; JOHN EDWARDS, "the Dovedale Poet;" PHEBE, Mother of the HOWITTS; GEORGE PURSEGLOVE, "the Poor Man's Poor Friend;" MRS. JERRAM; CLAUDE GAY, and other interesting Characters.

\* \* \* SECTION II will contain MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS on various themes. SECTION III will consist of "LAYS FROM THE LAKES" and other Poems;—and the whole, when complete, will form a Volume which it is hoped may be interesting alike in the private study and the family circle.

*Author's Address*—BURNLEY, LANCASHIRE.



## Chapter Tenth.

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### AN IRISH CHIEF AND HIS PEOPLE.

(MAY, 1866.)

MANY years back I was the friend and occasional guest of a family of some distinction,—the sire an undoubted descendant of Brian Boroihme, one of the ancient kings of Ireland—his lady the sister of an English peer—and both connected in various degrees with other houses of note in either country. The gentleman I allude to was owner of a large and beautiful estate in one of the midland counties of England, and of thirty thousand acres, or thereabouts, of all sorts of land—some wild, barren, and picturesque enough, but much of it richly arable and pastoral—scattered over various parts of three counties in the sister island. Without being a pretentious, the good chief was in several respects a remarkable person. In build he was not unworthy of his traditional descent. Though not so gigantic as his royal ancestor, it was manifest that no such frame as his ever sprang from a race of ordinary men. Tall, manly, frank, and warm, he was a great favourite in the English county where he usually resided, and was solicited to become one of its representatives in parliament. This, however, he declined, but recommended his son, whose name as a politician of the Conservative school, and whose untimely death, owing as was said to medical mistreatment, will be well remembered by those who were familiar with public affairs at the time. The chief himself was in politics “Whig

and something more." In short, he once told me in a playful way that he believed he was more than half a Radical. Whatever might or might not be the other elements of his Irish heritage, it was certain he possessed that of unbounded hospitality. His house was the constant resort of a crowd, amongst whom no doubt were many who loved and respected both him and his gifted lady, but many more who, it is to be feared, so long as they could revel at his board, and share the sports of the field which were carried on most magnificently and extensively around, cared too little about the cost to him and his. And certainly one thinks that of all others his seat was the very place for attracting such. How clearly is its mentagraph defined to me now! Its lawns, and vistas, and woods waving away for long miles on one side, and its artificial lake gleaming off into the blue distance on the other. Its old church hard by; its fountain's "ribble-bibble" and rooks' deliberate calls at hand, and the "wild buck's bell" or fox's bark afar; its boweriness and floweriness here, and wide-spreading, well-herded forestry yonder; with many a quiet, streamy dell and sheltered, shrubby out-o'-the-way pensive nook to be enjoyed at will, just for the finding! No wonder that with a liberality still larger than such a liberal domain, when the potato-blight descended on its kindred Irish estates, consternation and gloom seized upon even that English elysium, and aroused considerations as to the propriety of closing its renowned hospitalities and proceeding to make the best of things, bad as they had become, on the other side of the Channel.

I did not know what it was that made such a family look with so much reliance on a person like myself at such a juncture. I had visited them, it was true, in brighter hours, and had been perhaps of some little service to an invalid relative, and there might also have been something in writings of mine that had won their regard. My own feeling towards them was one of most respectful good-will for the confidence and courtesy with which they had treated me from the first hour of our acquaintance; and this was the simple and only relation in which I considered myself to be standing towards them, when, in one of the early months of 1849, a letter came to me at Brighton saying that, as they were about to leave their English estates for a residence of some time in Ireland, and were going to have a large farewell party before closing, they wished I would run over and be one of their guests on the occasion. I went, and it was indeed a remarkable gathering—a strange mingling of all the constituents of a numerous connection in an extensive neighbourhood. Clergymen and fox-hunters, representatives of the army, the navy, and the law, literary and professional men, relieved by a fair sprinkling of the gentle sex, all met—it was osten-



sibly to settle the affairs of a society for aiding poor people to emigrate, but in reality, as I have already said, not less to celebrate the closing (at least temporarily) of a long series of such scenes, enacted from "the days when George the Third was king."

Next day there was still considerable throng and excitement with the guests who had remained over night—some of whom held conference on one theme and some on another; while others again rode or rambled in the adjacent grounds, and some (to the great disturbance of a large eagle chained on an island in its midst) took part in netting the lake for one of the finest takes of fish I ever saw—part of the proceeds of which were carted to a distant pond, and the rest distributed for frying all over the neighbourhood. During these operations it was affecting to see the number of poor Irish people who, sure of the chief's sympathy, had found their way to him here, and were kindly treated. He took me to one of the farm-yards where an outhouse had been converted by a poor family into the *fac simile* of their Irish cabin, with a fire on the floor, and the doorway for a chimney. It was a touching sight. The matron of the half-famished group had died as they were leaving for England, bequeathing a baby which was still but a few weeks old, and which from the time of her death had been suckled by a goat that was performing that motherly part as I stood by—the poor goat, in turn, being treated by them all with much tender regard as "one of the family."

The dinner party at the Hall on the second day broken up, and most of the other guests departed, I was sitting alone in the library, reading, when a married daughter of my host and hostess came to me and said how much they wished I would stay with them during their few remaining days in England, and then accompany her mother to their Irish destination. They desired me the more, as a family friend, to take that part, since her father, accompanied by a clerical friend then in the house, would have to leave almost immediately, and her mother would not be ready to depart so soon. Her father would himself also like me to stay to the last, to put the family seal on some of the rooms she named, and then give him the seal itself with my own hands in Ireland. Would I not kindly comply with this wish?

It was a startling request. Why from all their numerous connection select *me* for this friendly office? At first I did not see how I could well spare the time; but, on being pressed again, said I would try. Their confidence, or reliance, itself seemed to leave me no alternative. Besides, being convinced that Ireland was of all the countries in Europe that of which we English people really knew about the least, and that I myself knewfar too little, was another inducement to seize such an

opportunity. Therefore in due time, I was on Board the Banshee, Holyhead and Dublin steamer, and a few days later with the chief and his lady at their mansion on the banks of the Shannon, nearly opposite the ruins of King Brian Bóroihme's Castle of Carrig a Guillan,—transition from London and Brighton as rapid and inexplicably strange as it was unanticipated !

Yet, was it inexplicable ? It grew less so day by day. On my preparing to return, the fine tall chief, in a tone and manner never to be forgotten, asked me if, being at the time single, I had any tie to England it would be impossible for me to break. From some cause he felt a more than ordinary faith in my fidelity. Mistakes in the rent returns had excited his suspicion. The friend who had preceded me with him in this visit had detected them ; and if I would stay and look through the books myself for the purpose of checking them, it might be a friendliness of the greatest importance to him. He went still further, and said it might lead to his asking me if I would like to stay in Ireland altogether and take charge of some portion, if not the whole, of his extensive property there !

What a singular position, to be so suddenly placed in ! Could it be a dream ? Not exactly *that*. There was evidently some discrepancy in the books and consequent dissatisfaction with the agent, who said, however, that it was *but a mistake*, which with a very little time granted him he should be able to set right. As for me, being somewhat consulted as to what it might be best to do in the case, I had only to say "dismiss him and let me take his place," and it would have been immediately done,—whereupon I should have had guaranteed to me ten per cent. upon £15,000 annual rental, and been installed a justice of peace, while the old agent would have been a ruined and humbled man. But I took a contrary course, and to this hour am thankful for it. As I was afterwards assured, the agent's accounts were in time satisfactorily cleared up and settled. He retained his post, and I did mine—that of family friend still, acting also for the remaining two months of my stay as my host's particular companion and occasional amanuensis, which led to my seeing both him and Ireland in a light and aspect, to a person of my mental cast and temperament, peculiarly interesting.

The chief being fond of fishing, as well as of agricultural experiments—disposed also to take advantage of his present residence for making observations of his widely scattered estates—we often rambled or rode out together, sometimes to the falls of the Shannon, at Donass, sometimes to greater distances. The chateau in which we were domiciled, though occupied for the present by the chief and his lady, had been a gift to, and was now, with its surrounding domains, owned by his eldest

son, the member of parliament, to whom I have already alluded. Irish in many particulars, it was especially so in being, like almost everything else in the country, somewhat unfinished. Yet it was very beautifully situated. The first object catching my eye, on awaking in the morning, was a dark old ruined castle—one of the same sort marking almost every distinct estate in the landscape, whatever else might have sprung up in its neighbourhood. On the contrary side of the house arose a shadowy old rookery. Behind, a neat carriage-drive through a shubbery formed a link with the public road; and beyond that some cultivated fields, dotted here and there with white-washed cabins, extended to the foot of a long, low wooded mountain, said to be the last vestige of an ancient forest. On the southward front was a broad terrace, the length of the house, and like it unfinished; next a brief extent of lawn and meadow; and at the outlet of the vista a noble sweep of the Shannon, apparently nearly as wide as the Mersey at Liverpool, with its salmon weirs, islands, passing ships and yachts, and a semi-cirque of interesting country, stretching round from the Keeper mountain behind the city of Limerick on the left, and embracing (besides the ruins of Brian Boroihme's fortress and some dimly-developed scenes in county Kerry) the gray towers of Bunratty as a closing point on the right; a magnificent back-ground being formed by the sometimes snowy peaks of the Galtees, striking up with an effect almost sublime into the pale and distant heaven. Such was the scene in which even then gaunt Famine was still at work; and though the immediate employes on the estate were all industrious and well-fed, it was not uncommon to see people coming from the "outside" and dropping faint at the gate, one living skeleton carrying another still further famished, and both occasionally falling together on our very path. Sometimes it was difficult to know which to pity most on these occasions, my aged, dignified, and feeling host, or the poor people—come whence they might. After one such scene I saw him stand for a full minute with his eyes wandering over the beautiful landscape, then fixed awhile on space, as though he were thinking of all the wealth that had been wasted in the feasts of other years. He then smote his breast as if in self-reproach, and at length found relief in a gush of tears. Matters like these, and others that may follow, remember, my reader, I should never commit a breach of hospitality or personal confidence by telling here, but that I *know* (from the tenour of some of our conversations) that were my old friend at this moment alive he would have no objection whatever to my doing it. Rather the contrary, for the sake of future times.

Although the potato blight was now nearly over, its effects were not. There was just outside the city of Limerick a new grave, like one of the

ancient historical tumuli, which had been recently formed, upon the principle of one trench (or grave) being made by throwing out the earth to fill another. That grave, thus formed in one month, contained nearly two thousand bodies that had died of starvation or cholera, and in the neighbouring union of Newcastle one contractor had undertaken to supply eight hundred coffins a-week ! At Limerick not only the ordinary poorhouse but a number of warehouses and hastily built sheds were filled with poor people—to say nothing of the enormous number scantily aided with out-door help, chiefly in rations of Indian-corn meal. Such was the state of things, as, one sunny afternoon, the chief and I turned out for a walk towards the mountain, when we found leaning against a dyke, nearly dead, a poor fellow belonging to another estate, who told us his name was Connor M'Inherny. His body and legs were so cedematose that an indenture made any where by pressure of the finger remained. On asking him how he came there, he said he had escaped from Limerick workhouse, where his wife had already died, and where two of his children would soon die too ; so he had come away that he might breathe the fresh air, see the sunshine and *noneens* (wild flowers) once more, and die among his people. But, though he was an “outsider”—that is, not belonging to any of the chief's estates, we had the poor fellow helped, cleaned, and fed, and before I came away he was basking in the sunshine again, on the side of a flowery dyke, not dying, but recovering “entirely.”

Another day we went on a car far off into County Clare, where, after receiving the Fergus, the Shannon, with its hundred islets, broadens into one of the finest estuaries in Europe. The excitement created by a live landlord among his tenantry on those shores was to me amazing, and the scene altogether abounded in the richest and oddest traits of human character, as well as the most picturesque lines of country. One thing pleased me much : although numbers of the people were two, three, or even four years behind in their rent, not one eviction had taken place. It, however, added nothing to this solace to find that though there was not a single Protestant on the whole estate, and but little produce of late, the landlord, as he told me, was regularly paying “tithe” for every inch of it.

It happened during my stay that the leases of two or three farms fell in, and the chief himself, instead of the agent, was resorted to by persons desirous of taking them. On our going out one day we were met by a farmer who, after paying his compliments and getting a hearing, quietly put into the chief's hands a roll of bank-notes (I believe to the amount of £200). “What is this for ?” asked the old gentleman. “Sure then, it's that your honour may order me to be set down tenant

for the farm that's at liberty, at ——." "Indeed, I shall do nothing of the sort; take them back," he replied, as he handed them again to the disappointed suitor, and then explained to me that it was no uncommon thing in Ireland for tenants thus to offer *bribes* to their landlords as well as to the agents, middlemen, and bailiffs, whatever difficulties there might afterwards be with regard to the rent. Nay, now and then they had even come over to him in England with that temptation! Such was the anxiety for land in a country so comparatively low in manufactures.

One day another person came about a farm in a different spirit, and an arrangement was made that the chief should go over and perambulate it with him, and that I should be there for company. It had been my resolve from the first never to carry arms in Ireland—rather to the chief's disappointment, as he said it would be safer, and the people need not know of it. "I beg your pardon," said I, "if you have a pistol in your pocket, it gives you a feeling, the feeling gives you a manner, and an Irishman being quick and intuitive can see it in your very eye." On the morning of our start to the farm in question, when ready to mount the car, the chief looked at his double-barrel and asked his attendant servant if it were charged and in order. "All right, sir," said the man. "And how are you off yourself?" "All right," again answered the man, taking out and showing his well-garnished revolver. "And *you*?" asked the old gentleman, as he turned to me with a significant glance, and spoke with some emphasis. "All right, too," I answered—perhaps somewhat laughingly. "Let me see what you've got," he gravely said, on which I showed him my naked hands. "Ah!" he banteringly observed, "a deal of use you'd be to me if anybody attacked us!" Feeling my heart grow suddenly warmer and larger as he said this, and probably also with a flushing face, I drew to him boldly but respectfully, saying, "Sir, I have one particular favour to ask of you before we start." "What is that?" he enquired, with a subdued surprise. "Only this," I answered, "that if any one offers to molest you while we are out, you will allow me the privilege of putting my person immediately between yours and danger!" During the whole of my remaining stay he never spoke to me about arms again.

When we reached the farm, which was distant about fifteen English miles, the farmer who wished to be tenant was already there, and with him another man, simply a peasant, but so like Daniel O'Connell, in bodily figure, height, port, round face, active eye, dark hair, curls and all, that—except for the difference of dress and circumstances—he might have been the celebrated politician's "dopple-ganger." Nor was that all; from the first commencement of the survey to its finish, he

played the part of an "agitator," as though it was important that he should take more than a mere observer's share in the proceedings. Nay, even when checked, he took it all with exceeding good humour, yet always consoled himself by immediately recommencing. But to me the most amusing and characteristic touch of the whole business was at its close. The perambulation completed, and the whole party gathered near a cluster of trees, at the corner of a field, the chief and the tenant-expectant proceeded to make their calculations previous to negotiating the terms. The farmer went down on his hams upon the grass, and turning up his shoe-sole for a slate, began to make figures upon it with a bit of lime he had picked up for chalk. The landlord, who had taken out his pocket-book, and written on one of its leaves while resting it against a tree, looked down at the farmer and said—"Now, my calculation is made, and written here; when yours is finished, tell me what rent you'll offer, and I will show you what I've written; we shall then see how near we come: we can discuss the difference afterwards." "Ready! ye'r honour," said Patrick, springing up and naming the rent he would be glad to pay. "Look here," said the chief, holding the book towards him: *the landlord's figures tallied exactly with the tenant's bid.* No further negotiation was needed; the farm was let, and in half-an-hour afterwards we were examining some of the blithe, witty, and intelligent children of a distant school. Little need for *arms*, that day! Yet was it quite possible that the landlord might know of some reasons for fearing danger where a visitor, new to all the circumstances, might not; as witness one of our subsequent adventures.

It was the last week in April, and the country around was glowing in all the beauty of an Irish spring, when the chief, one of his sons, and myself, went partly by rail and then on the saddle, to give hasty supervision of an estate, comprising an entire electoral division near the border of the counties of Limerick and Tipperary. We were met at the railway station by a number of tenants, who, having greeted their landlord and placed their best horses at our service, fell behind and formed a regular cavalcade while escorting us to the little central town of the district, almost every brick and stone of which, as well as every acre of the country for several miles round it, belonged nominally to the chief—though some portions of it yielded little, as one of his ancestors had lavishly given large slices away to his needy friends on perpetual leases, at rents it would never give them the least trouble to pay.

The little town itself on this occasion—the real presence of a landlord being so rare—presented a lively but not all cheerful scene. Every

man on the estate who could raise a horse or a mule soon joined the cavalcade; and those who were not rich enough for that came on foot to swell the crowd,—most of them having some congratulation, petition, or complaint, which they were anxious to prefer. Many of their requests would have struck some of our English proprietors with consternation, their object being perhaps not only to obtain forgiveness of two or three years' rent, but to get some bonus besides, sufficiently large to pay the passage of a whole family to America. And in truth there was no dispute about a landmark—no wrong between relative and relative, or neighbour and neighbour, though smothered up for years—no hope delayed—no service, real or imaginary, unrequited—no want of any kind—that they did not seem to think could now be satisfactorily settled, so unlimited was their faith in the influence of their landlord.

On his asking me to take memoranda for him, as it was impossible he could pay attention to them all, since some of them, old widows and children, came clinging to his stirrups enough to pull him off his balance, they then rushed from him to me, whilst he rode a little forward. But the memoranda I was allowed to make were few, so fast did the crowd around me increase and their entreaties multiply as I tried to write. In truth, it took nearly all my skill to keep them from under my horse's feet; and when I lifted my eyes and saw the cavalcade already winding away, two brothers who had some dispute about sharing their mother's small holding, both clung to the stirrups, and ran by my side nearly half a mile, reiterating their plea.

We were bound to the survey of some drainage works going on at a considerable distance among the mountains; and on arriving at length at the head of a streamy glen, where a natural fountain was gushing sweetly from the rock, we halted to take refreshment; but I had scarcely dismounted when the two brothers I had left miles away, in the plain, having taken a short cut were with me once more that day (and after that on another day at Limerick), renewing their story, and women and children were coming in groups from all the cabins we could count below.

But it was now past noon, and as we were mounted again, there was a dash of the romantic in the landscape itself, and in our relation to it, irresistably charming. We were now at about mid-height on the breast of the Guanavon mountain, and very near the confines of the two counties already named. Backing out of the procession, I lingered somewhat apart, the better to catch and retain its character. Still winding upwards, the cavalcade kept on its course—the old chief at its head, with that noble frame-work of the Irish giant inlaid with some traits of the English squire befitting him well. But how unlike was all the rest



of the scene to anything we ever behold in England ! The farmers, nearly all in their long cloaks and capes, and their slouched hats, wanting little to make their costume completely Spanish, and many of them talking in their ancient language too. The eager pedestrians in their motley dress, some of them walking with, and others shouldering their shilelaghs ; at one time spreading out from, and at another closing up with and running alongside the horsemen ; and women and children in costume equally picturesque, gathered or running here and there, both on the heights above and the plain below, to watch the passing spectacle ! Such was the scene one instant, yet changed the next. For now we had come to a natural platform in the bosom of the hills, were resting our horses, and gazing with its owner (not without emotion) on the vast and variegated expanse, all glowing as it was, beneath as soft and bright a sky as ever ravished the heart of an Italian painter. Uncoiling itself in the middle of the plain was a shining river, and on its banks the town through which we had come, dwindled in the distance to a tiny hamlet. Here, comparatively near to us, crumbled the low ruins of an abbey. Yonder, afar, were the towers of old castles, with fields around them diminished in that perspective to the size of diamonds. The smoke of white cabins in the mid-view curled up in slow and graceful columns, while that of those in the distance cast a filmy haze, scarcely more dense than is often occasioned by the intense sunshine of a summer day. The bright peaks of some mountains beyond all, completed the prospect. And there, in the position I have described, sat the owner on his steed with his son and successor, also well mounted, by his side, and his peasantry around him, o'er-gazing the whole. My friend, to whom I am relating this simple tale of truth, do you not envy him ? If so, let me further tell you that he had the credit of being as good a landlord, with as good a tenantry, as any in that part of the kingdom. For the greater part of that land he had himself to pay a specific sum for tithes, and for no inconsiderable portion of it the poor-rates too. Yet mark. Such had been the effect of the great potato blight, and so unfortunate the dependence of the main bulk of the population on the potato alone, that there were scarcely half-a-dozen persons among all who had gathered to greet his arrival, who were not one, two, or three years behind in the payment of their rent ; and on our descending again to the town in the afternoon, the implorings of the poor for a trifle of money to buy food with were so general and heart-rending, that we were obliged at last to tear ourselves away to escape them !

Yet was not the chief's visit without good effect. About a week after that day his agent was sitting to receive rents in Limerick, and he,

accompanied by the same son and myself, was also there, when a man who had long been employed on that estate as a bailiff was summoned before him. What I am stating, from beginning to end of the chapter, is simple matter of fact; but names are withheld for obvious reasons. Encouraged by the presence of their landlord to expect justice and protection, the tenants *en masse* became accusers of the bailiff. His position between the agent and them—and let me add that he was one of their own countrymen—had given him an opportunity of deluding them with the belief that he had almost unlimited influence at headquarters, and to be secure of his good will and their “holdings” they must be continually *bribing* him. It was, however, understood that this must be done on principles that would preclude any chance of his afterwards being accused, and must therefore be managed through the medium of a villainous “go-between.”

The landlord and agent sat at the head of the table as the accused bailiff was called in and the tenants appeared. One tenant, who was also a poor-law guardian, said he had once bribed the bailiff with five pounds, and that it was paid through the medium just mentioned, who also was called in to explain. This ingenious person was a little the worse for whisky, and looked the very villain he proclaimed himself to be, as he said it was not five pounds, but three, and was not given him to hand to the bailiff at all, but to bribe him to —— Here unfolding his arms, compressing his lips, and tossing back his head, he gave a significant twirl and a loud snap with his finger and thumb, to imply that it was to bribe him to commit a murder! On the landlord asking him if he performed that part of the bargain, he answered, pointing to the tenant with a contemptuous sneer, “Not likely then! Why should I run my neck into a string to serve *him*?” “But (continued the landlord) do you think it right to receive money with such an understanding?” Answer—“And why should I not think it right to take the money when a man is fool enough to offer it me? Surely, when I want the money I can take it, without doing the deed.” Landlord—“And do you mean to say, standing coolly there as you do, that you would take such an offer at any time were it made to you?” The manner of the reply to this question was even more characteristic than the words. Partly unfolding his arms, poking his head forward, letting his left arm still remain across his breast, but raising his right forefinger to the level of his cheek, and speaking every word deliberately and earnestly as from his throat, the fellow said—“If your honour were yourself to make me such an offer, when I had no money, I would take it; but it does not follow that I would do any more.” Significant looks were shot over the table from eye to eye, and we each drew

a longer breath as the room was relieved of the unholy presence of a man who had already been tried for murder but acquitted, and whose present tale the agent said was only a *ruse* to clear the bailiff and damage his accuser. Some other tenants told similar and far worse stories. One poor fellow said he had given the bailiff two sheep, but never got what he was promised for them. Another said he could not get some land that had been promised him without a bribe of money and lambs, amounting on the whole to eleven pounds sterling. Nine of them declared altogether that he had the use of their horses gratuitously whenever he chose. One said he could not get his rights until he had given a cow, which the bailiff rebutted by saying that the man was too poor to give anything at all! And another said that he had given nine pounds that some land might be set to him, which he had got. The bailiff was now, of course, dismissed—the agent observing to us by way of palliation, that the man *had but played his part in a system that in Ireland was universal!* He also said that the chief had not on all his estates a set of more quiet, industrious, reputable tenants than those who had just been making these statements. I am not sure that, among the often talked of “wrongs of Ireland,” this universal system of extortion and bribery may not be about the worst; and the sooner it is corrected the better will it be for all parties.

It always appears to me remarkable, when pondering on the above affair, that it should have been upon the estate, not of a Saxon or a Norman, but of an undoubted Irish proprietor—descendant and bearing the name of the very family reigning there in ancient days; that the bailiff himself should have been, not less than any of his victims, a thorough Irishman, as his name implied—as also was the man who took fees for murder, performed or not. And I could not but be impressed with the fact, that when some of the tenants thought me, (as thorough an Englishman,) coming to stay among them, they were glad. Certainly, had it been so, that wretched game of extortion would not have revived, unless I were shot out of the way for checking it. But the whole thing seems to argue, whatever Fenianism may urge to the contrary, that the griefs of Ireland are less a matter of *race* than of *system*. Rectify the latter, and all rancour on the score of the former will die out. For, allow me to remark, that though I have seen much of the various races and classes of the British family—and I wish to consider Ireland as British as any other of our cluster of kindred isles—I have never seen anywhere, despite the sad scene just described, greater contrasts to it, or more in human nature to excite the kindest feelings, than in that beautiful land and among its people. Humanity at large is still imperfect. Every country—every family—every person—has

probably much to regret and correct, as well also as much to love; and I do not see why there should not be as glorious a future for Ireland as for the rest,—a happiness that, however, will not be gained by its cultivation of discontent or its succumbing to despair; not by submission to customs of extortion and bribery like those just mentioned, and the consequent nursing of smothered rancour such injustice is sure to beget; not on one side by invidious sarcasm, invective, and exasperating caricature, nor on the other by cherished jealousy and hate; but rather by an equitable, blessed and beautiful blending with English independence, Scottish perseverance, and Welsh regard for order, that genuine Hibernian warmth and wit which all the world admires, and which thus interfused, by enlightened and mutually beneficial reciprocities, would in time make our united national character one of the most loveable as well as one of the most honourable the world has ever known.

Taking leave (not without regret on both sides) of the chief and his lady, about the beginning of June, I spent a few weeks among other friends, then came away by the *Nimrod* steamer from Cork. The scenery of the Lee and the Cove rose around in all its verdant beauty; the calm Atlantic, as we skirted it, stretched out, blue and bright as the heaven it reflected; and then, when evening came on and the sun dipped down among the Wexford mountains, I felt a strange mingling of gladness and sadness for all I was leaving behind me—glad of a clearer acquaintance with much that I had but very faintly, if at all, imagined before, and praying for the dawn of that bright and better day, when man with man, and nation with nation, wherever men can dwell, shall have learnt to “do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God,” and green Erin shall enjoy, with her kindred isles, her full share in the blessings of the world’s new spring.





## Chapter Eleventh.

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### THE TWO MONTGOMERIES.

(JUNE, 1866.)

IN the language of my intense, intellectual and eloquent friend, the Rev. W. H. Wylie, author of "Ayrshire Streams"—Where, "coming down from the lone mossy tarn on the field of Drumclog, in Scotland, at which the counties of Lanark and Ayr unite; from Loudoun's 'bonny woods and braes,' sacred to the memory of Moira, and of that fair but ill-fated daughter of his ancient house, the Lady Flora Hastings, as well as to the sweetly-plaintive muse of poor Robert Tannahill; from Kilmarnock, the little 'Ayrshire Manchester' where Robert Burns found his first friends and his first printer; from Dundonald, favourite seat of the Scottish king Robert II., in whose ruined castle (fine relic though it really is) Samuel Johnson exclaimed to James Boswell 'What a rat-hole for a king to die in!'—the river Irvine, after gathering many other waters of 'stream-loving Coila' in its course, finds its way to the sea right opposite to the Isle of Arran, and gives its own name to the quiet town standing at the head of its estuary—in one of the minor streets of which town is a little house, wherein might recently be heard a weaver's shuttle, while over the lowly door is an inscription in native stone, telling that there James Montgomery the poet was born on the 4th of November, 1771."

Another scene. Where from the dark moors of Derbyshire descend into Yorkshire, and converge at Sheffield, the musical streams of the

Porter, which Ebenezer Elliott calls "Nature's thwarted child," and the Sheaf, which he says "mourns in Eden," there arise picturesque slopes on every hand. These, or several of them, are now in some cases marred but in others much beautified by numerous buildings, standing alone or in clusters, or extending in stately line, and looking down upon a cemetery than which one in all respects more appropriate for a poet it would be difficult in a long journey to find. And it was high on one of those slopes, at a place called the Mount, that James Montgomery spent the last and calmest days of his interesting life; as it is in that cemetery below, where they were deposited in the presence of assembled thousands, that his honoured ashes now sleep.

The career of James Montgomery by which the two remote districts named are linked in the mind was in many particulars a very remarkable one. With a frame by no means robust, a constitutional timidity of a sort that often made him appear one of the most sensitive and weak of men, and a modesty that might easily be mistaken for, if it did not absolutely shrink into shyness, he was yet in some respects, and on great occasions, one of the bravest of men. He dared a good deal for freedom, and was martyred for that temerity. He sang the song of the oppressed, but for many years got little in return save the oppressor's hate. The negro of the West Indies and that poor negro of England, the little chimney sweep, the traditional "climbing boy," had championship, not only of his muse but of his purse and speech. And there is one fine thread in the web of his life of which I doubt much if the world is at all aware. I have heard it said—and in a quarter entitled to some credit—that, notwithstanding his great store of tender love, a delicate sense of justice to the future induced him voluntarily to forego all the comforts and solaces of a lot which the majority of those who knew him would hardly think him otherwise than eminently gifted to enjoy and bless; and hence the reason of his remaining a bachelor for life. Intense above all, perhaps, was his devotion to the cause of missions to the heathen—especially of the Moravian mission. In the Moravian fraternity having been born, and owing to it his education, he cherished a filial love for its institutions generally, but particularly for that one, which was proved by his lending it his exertions at every call.

John Montgomery, his father, a native of Ireland, having joined the Moravian brotherhood settled at Grace Hill, in the county of Antrim, was appointed thence to take charge of one of their little societies at Irvine, where, as we have seen, his second child, the poet, was born. Four years after that the parents returned to Ireland, whence James was, at the age of six years, brought to England, and placed at the

Brethren's celebrated school at Fulneck, near Leeds. I have known several men, some of them not Moravians, who were educated there, the late Mr. William Lang, of Glasgow, among the number ; and when the latter gentleman spoke to me of the place and his early association with it, his eyes were swimming with tears of affection, notwithstanding the strict discipline to which he had been subjected. Nothing was inculcated or sanctioned there that did not tend to the formation and development of a religious character. The literature indulged in must therefore have been very select. But it included the "Pilgrim's Progress," "Robinson Crusoe," and "Cowper's Poems," in addition to the great Book of Scripture, which would be the better read for the scarcity of other books, and never can be well read without opening to the truly poetical mind, at any age, an infinite heaven, not only of love and truth, but of beauty and grandeur, which no other reading *can*, and in which James Montgomery's was the very soul to breathe as in its native air. With such lore, and looking to Cowper as a model, he began to compose at a very early age ; and ere his tenth year had passed he had filled with manuscript a volume echoing the spirit of his readings.

" He struck the lyre's divinest tone,  
And, touching earth, it reached to heaven."

Ten years Montgomery remained at Fulneck, his two brothers being with him part of that time, and his parents in the West Indies, devoted to missionary labour there.

Strangely, as he grew into youthhood, the Brethren, after first hoping to make a teacher of him, thought him better fitted for shop-keeping, and found a place for him in that capacity at Mirfield, when, according to his own account of himself, he was "a slim, carrotty-headed lad of sixteen, misspending his time in the composition of music and blowing his brains out with a hautboy." The life there was altogether unfit for him, and one fine Sunday in 1789, with a change of linen in his hand and three shillings and sixpence in his pocket, he "walked off into the wide world," and in a public-house at Wentworth met with a lad who told him of a situation at Wath, which, with the consent of the Brethren, he took, and, meeting with a good master, remained there a year. Then he went on a literary adventure to London ; made some not very successful attempts at composition while employed at a shop in Pater-noster-row ; after a time returned to Wath, where he was well received by his old friends, and subsequently took the situation of clerk in the office of "The Sheffield Register," published by Mr. Joseph Gales, in a place called the Hartshead in that town. Here was exercise for his literary talent. He wrote tasteful and interesting paragraphs for the



paper; his master admired them, and entrusted more and more of that employment to the writer. By this time the French Revolution had broken out; the "Sheffield Register" was on the side of free discussion; free pamphlets were printed at its office; the government marked its publisher, who sought safety in flight: the paper expired, and, with the assistance of a gentleman named Naylor, Montgomery immediately resuscitated it under the more poetical title of the "Iris." The "Iris" declared its attachment to the constitution, and on its own part avoided extreme politics, but copied from other commentators rather freely. There are now on my table two of its early numbers—one for July 14, 1807, the other for December 20, 1808. I wish it were possible to give a *fac simile* of each—its threepence-halfpenny government stamp and all. It appears to the eye simply a demy sheet, printed in folio, and its price was *sixpence*. When I was myself co-editor of the "Iris," thirty-four years after, it contained about three times the matter for about half the price, and was printed on paper as much finer in texture as is a piece of starched cambric than an old soft calico rag. But though to its very last it retained throughout the country something of the literary prestige derived from its founder, and had always many contributors of high if not the highest talent, there is a charm in those ragged-looking old numbers, with Montgomery's imprint and the Misses Gales' advertisement of their book-shop, that makes them in one sense more sacred than all the rest. In a corner of the elder number, under the engraved device of a poetic wreath with the word "Poetry" in its centre, is "THE SOLITARY REAPER, by WILLIAM WORDSWORTH," printed with long s's, and commencing—

"Behold her, single in the field,  
Yon solitary Highland Lass!  
Reaping and singing by herself;  
Stop here, or gently pass!  
Alone she cuts, and binds the grain,  
And sings a melancholy strain;  
Oh listen! for the vale profound  
Is overflowing with the sound."

Among the news is an "Extract from the seventy-ninth bulletin of the French Army," detailing the battle at Friedland in which Marshall Ney figures very conspicuously: and the next article is "The Fall of the Ministry—from Cobbett's Political Register." Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Wilberforce and Lord Milton figure in a very brief parliamentary summary. The details of the great poll in which Wilberforce was returned for Yorkshire are given in a tabular form, but there is no political "leader;" for as long before as the year 1795 Montgomery had been twice fined and sentenced to imprisonment in York Castle, under the

influence of a frightened, impolitic, and vindictive government, that little knew how much it was doing by such a course to promote democracy in England, but which still had the effect of making a man like James Montgomery, (who from the first was more of a religious poet than a politician), very careful lest he should again come under its penal inflictions. Even from his prison he had felt compelled thus to address the interim editor of his paper, which I think was then conducted with the aid of Mr. John Pye Smith:—"Observe the path of moderation and security. If any riots happen before my return, do not tell any dangerous truths or any wilful falsehoods. The last part of this advice is unnecessary; but you must be particularly on your guard to observe the former." God forbid that England should ever see such times again! So slight were the grounds for the young and unintentionally-offending poet's imprisonment, that Sir Robert Peel felt it his duty in after years to compensate him by advising the grant to him of a handsome annual pension. The paper became more and more of a literary and a philanthropic than of a strictly political organ as time went on; yet was it open to free discussion—Montgomery once saying, "I was not born, I have not lived, I shall not die, a demagogue or a parasite."

The publication of Montgomery's volume under the title of "Prison Amusements" brought but little recompense in cash or fame; but occasional poems, chiefly lyrical, followed, and not only caught the nation's ear but touched its heart with a consciousness that since the works of Cowper there had been nothing uttered more like that gentle but fervent poet's notes, and when "The Wanderer of Switzerland" appeared, it not only became popular but speedily ran through several editions—as did in turn "The West Indies," "The World before the Flood," "Greenland," "The Pelican Island," "Songs of Zion," and "Hymns,"—too easy of access by every reader to need further descant from me, as are his lives of Dante and Ariosto in Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopædia, and his other works. There is a passage in the "World before the Flood" that ever strikes me as exceedingly musical and tender. That it should have been written by anyone who had once been a "carrotty-headed lad, blowing his brains out with a haut-boy," is remarkable enough, but still more remarkable as the strain of a man akin to angels but who never married:—

"I love thee, Twilight; as thy shadows roll,  
The calm of evening steals upon my soul,  
Sublimely tender, solemnly serene,  
Still as the hour, enchanting as the scene.  
I love thee, Twilight! for thy gleams impart  
Their dear, their dying influence to my heart,

When o'er the harp of thought thy passing wind  
 Awakens all the music of the mind,  
 And joy and sorrow, as the spirit burns,  
 And hope and memory sweep the chords by turns,  
 While Contemplation, on seraphic wings,  
 Mounts with the flame of sacrifice, and sings.  
 Twilight! I love thee; let thy glooms increase  
 Till every feeling, every pulse is peace;  
 Slow from the sky the light of day declines,  
 Clearer within the dawn of glory shines,  
 Revealing, in the hour of Nature's rest,  
 A world of wonders in the poet's breast;  
 Deeper, O Twilight! then thy shadows roll,  
 An awful vision opens on my soul.

"On such an evening, so divinely calm,  
 The woods all melody, the breezes balm,  
 Down in a vale, where lucid waters stray'd,  
 And mountain-cedars stretch'd their downward shade,  
 Jubal, the prince of song (in youth unknown),  
 Retired to commune with his harp alone;  
 For still he nursed it, like a secret thought,  
 Long cherish'd and to late perfection wrought,—  
 And still with cunning hand, and curious ear,  
 Enrich'd, ennobled, and enlarged its sphere,  
 Till he had compass'd, in that magic round,  
 A soul of harmony, a heaven of sound.  
 Then sang the minstrel, in his laurel bower,  
 Of Nature's origin, and Music's power :—  
 'He spake, and it was done;—eternal night,  
 At God's command, awaken'd into light;  
 He call'd the elements, Earth, Ocean, Air;  
 He call'd them when they were not, and they were:  
 He look'd through space, and kindling o'er the sky,  
 Sun, moon and stars came forth to meet his eye:  
 His Spirit moved upon the desert earth,  
 And sudden life through all things swarm'd to birth;  
 Man from the dust He raised to rule the whole;  
 He breathed, and man became a living soul;  
 Through Eden's groves the lord of nature trod,  
 Upright and pure, the image of his God.  
 Thus were the heavens and all their host display'd,  
 In wisdom thus were earth's foundations laid;  
 The glorious scene a holy sabbath closed,  
 Amidst His works the Omnipotent reposed,  
 And while he view'd, and bless'd them from His seat,  
 All worlds, all beings, worship'd at his feet;  
 The morning stars in choral concert sang,  
 The rolling deep with hallelujahs rang,  
 Adoring angels from their orbs rejoice,  
 The voice of music was Creation's voice.

" 'Alone along the lyre of Nature sigh'd  
 The master-chord, to which no chord replied;  
 For Man, while bliss and beauty reign'd around,  
 For Man alone, no fellowship was found,—  
 No fond companion, in whose dearer breast,  
 His heart, repining in his own, might rest;  
 For, born to love, the heart delights to roam,  
 A kindred bosom is its happiest home.  
 On Earth's green lap, the father of mankind,  
 In mild dejection, thoughtfully reclined;  
 Soft o'er his eyes a sealing slumber crept,  
 And Fancy soothed him while Reflection slept.  
 Then God, who thus would make His counsel known,—  
 Counsel that will'd not Man to dwell alone,—  
 Created Woman with a smile of grace,  
 And left the smile that made her on her face.  
 The Patriarch's eyelids open'd on his bride,  
 The morn of beauty risen from his side!  
 He gazed with new-born rapture on her charms,  
 And love's first whispers won her to his arms.  
 Then, tuned through all the chords supremely sweet,  
 Exulting Nature found her lyre complete,  
 And from the key of each harmonious sphere,  
 Struck music worthy of her Maker's ear.' "

In 1825 Montgomery disposed of "The Iris," and gave himself up for a few years to writing and lecturing. It was in those years that I first saw and heard him in one of the Exchange-rooms at Nottingham. Having, as a youth, read with delight his "Prose by a Poet," I went expecting to hear something in the same glowing style. His theme was the Moravian Mission. My disappointment on hearing *the speaker* was almost in the ratio of my pleasure in seeing *the man*. There was little of picturesqueness and still less of fluency in his speech; nay, as regards the latter there was at times a sort of hesitancy that was almost painful, for which was, however, great compensation in his manifest sincerity and earnestness. Ebenezer Elliott's assertion that James Montgomery's head was in form but half a turnip was an exaggeration. It was the slightly elongated, cautious, forward-feeling brain that so often, combined with a light complexion, accompanies a nervous and susceptible temperament, and his voice corresponded to it, as he told the simple but pathetic and impressive tale of the origin of the Moravian Mission.

The year 1835 was a memorable one for Montgomery. It was that in which, with the two surviving Misses Gales, he left the old house in the Hartshead, and continued with them in forming a united household at the Mount; and it was about the same period that his pension of one hundred and fifty pounds a year began to be added to his means of

comfort. From this time he lived almost entirely for his friends and correspondents, or for philanthropic and religious endeavours—his name and labours being seldom omitted in anything of a public kind at Sheffield with which his conscience could accord; nor were his exertions confined altogether to the Sheffield platform. Missionary meetings, near and far, he attended; wrote hymns for Sunday schools, and appeals for widows, orphans, and the blacks at home and abroad; nor did he refuse to write an ode for one of the anniversaries of Robert Burns's birthday, as celebrated at Sheffield, of which I gladly here make copy, being one of the finest touches of its kind, as well as one of the finest pieces of poetic justice, ever penned:—

## BURNS.

What bird in beauty, flight, or song,  
Can with the Bard compare,  
Who sang as sweet and soar'd as strong,  
As ever child of air?

His plume, his note, his form, could Burns  
For whim or pleasure change:  
He was not one, but all by turns,  
With transmigration strange.

The Blackbird, oracle of Spring,  
When flow'd his moral lay:  
The Swallow, wheeling on the wing,  
Capriciously at play:

The Humming-bird, from bloom to bloom,  
Inhaling heavenly balm;  
The Raven in the tempest's gloom,  
The Halcyon in the calm:

In "Auld Kirk Alloway" the Owl  
At witching time of night:  
By "Bonny Doon" the earliest fowl  
That carols to the light:

He was the Wren amidst the grove,  
When in his homely vein;  
At Bannockburn the Bird of Jove,  
With thunder in his train:

The Woodlark in his mournful hours;  
The Goldfinch in his mirth;  
The Thrush, a spendthrift of his powers,  
Enrapturing heaven and earth:

The Swan in majesty and grace,  
Contemplative and still;  
But roused—no Falcon in the chase  
Could like his satire kill:

The Linnet in simplicity,  
 In tenderness the Dove;  
 But more than all beside, was he  
 The Nightingale in love!

Oh! had he never stoop'd to shame,  
 Nor lent a charm to vice;  
 How had devotion loved to name  
 That Bird of Paradise!

Peace to the dead! in Scotia's choir  
 Of minstrels great and small,  
 He springs from his spontaneous fire  
 The Phoenix of them all!

Through a word spoken by my friend the late Mr. John Bridgeford—the man who paid me the first half-guinea I ever received for a literary contribution—Montgomery subscribed for two copies of my earliest work; the little volumes were sent to him, and in due time came the following:—

The Mount, Sheffield, Feb. 15, 1841.

Sir,—Soon after receiving the copies of your "Forester's Offering," in the hurry of multiform business among books and letters, which came to me from all quarters for criticisms and acknowledgements, beyond my power to keep pace with them, or satisfy the authors or correspondents,—yours were mislaid; and soon afterwards I went from home for several weeks. A few days ago, however, I lighted on one of the volumes, and hardly laid it out of my hands till I had gone through both prose and rhyme. I was much pleased and even delighted with the bulk of the former (the prose), and the latter (the verse) you may be assured that I regarded as far above common-place, or it would not have held my attention so closely and so long.

Wishing you success, so far as you may hereafter strive to deserve it, I am your friend and servant,

J. MONTGOMERY.

Mr. Spencer T. Hall.

The conscientiousness with which in that letter he tried to guard so young a writer as I then was against sitting down too satisfied with the present, was equally manifest on a subsequent occasion. And it was encouraging at the same time to know that he believed I had something worth cultivating. It was one morning when I was in the office of "The Iris" with Mr. Bridgeford, that his old master came in and spoke to me, on which I thanked him for his encouraging letter. On this he looked at me somewhat intensely as he said in a loud and emphatic manner, "Yes—I have only to add to what I said to you in it—Go on—Go on!"—a piece of advice worth infinitely more to me at that time than any amount of smoother flattery could have been.

Of course, the occasions on which I saw and heard Mr. Montgomery in Sheffield were frequent and interesting, but few of them need to be expatiated upon here. He was homely yet delicate in all his habits,

and even in moderate weather would wear a thick kerchief about his chin, and seldom went out without a top coat and umbrella; so that wherever he was seen passing along the street it was mostly with the air of a pilgrim on his journey. There was always kindness, but with a slight shade of anxiety, in his look; and once, for a moment, there did pass over it a shade of another sort for me. This was after he had visited Scotland in 1841. He had been welcomed in that country, and especially in his native town of Irvine, very enthusiastically, as was natural; glowing reports of his reception and addresses were given in the Scottish papers sent to us; and I wrote a short comment for the "Iris," quoting his own lines on patriotism, and complimenting Scotland on her children, wherever they might go, remaining at heart so warmly Scottish still. To have done this in a Northern paper might have been right enough. But it would perhaps have been better had I remembered that, born of Irish parents, and sojourning in Sheffield from his early days to that time as he had done, having suffered imprisonment for his conscientious labours there, yet still giving it so much of his manhood's mind and heart, it was not well in me thus in a local paper, (and it the very paper he had founded), to make him so much a Scotsman as in that same degree to appear as if less a man of all Britain and of Sheffield in particular. I did not intend that such an effect should be produced; nor can I now see why a man should of necessity be thought to have less love for his native spot because he also dearly loves that upon which Providence in its uses for him may thence have cast him. But there were those who did not reason thus. At all events when next Montgomery called at the office, though he said nothing on the subject, he showed by his look that he had felt a little annoyed, as I likewise felt for having thus given such a man and poet pain.

But there was a public occasion on which I saw him appear more greatly pained. It was when a town's meeting had been summoned to congratulate the Queen and the Prince Consort on the birth of the Princess Royal. The speakers belonged almost exclusively to a class who had little sympathy with Chartism; and the Chartists, therefore, resolving to oppose them, mustered at the town-hall in full force and feather for the fight. Montgomery had been selected to move one of the most important resolutions; but one of the leading opponents, who could just as easily have measured a yard of cloth with a pound-weight as have seen how such a man as the once imprisoned patriot could love alike both Queen and People, taunted him with what to the speaker appeared to be unpardonable inconsistency and retrogression, and the meeting ended in great confusion. Montgomery's face, usually rather



pale, was now in a perfect glow from his excitement, and his expression was that of mingled sorrow and indignation, though I do not remember his uttering an unkindly word. Truth is, he was as unfit for such scenes as was "Pascal for a prize fight or Cowper for a crowd." Few of the young men of genius who went up like rockets at the French revolution, recovered their political fervour after the first fire was spent; and Montgomery, like Southey and Wordsworth, having now reached the cool of his day, had learnt to look on more sides of life than one. Besides, the government of his country had done the same—had repented, and recompensed him. It was as wrong in them to upbraid James Montgomery that day with being a "turn-coat," as it would have been in a Conservative to call the British Executive "turn-coat" for regretting, and so far as possible remedying, the effect of those persecutions in the olden day.

No! that gentle, amiable, earnest protégé of Moravian Christianity was not adapted for an arena where the name of a political theory was unjustly made the sponsor for personal vituperation, in response to what, it must be confessed, sounded very much like loyal formality and talk with but little spirit in it. Yet were there public occasions on which he shone, and comparatively private ones to which his presence lent a remembered charm. My own residence in Sheffield ended in 1844; and the last time I saw him in public was when townspeople of every religious and political creed met to give a farewell entertainment to Sir Arnold Knight—a popular and justly-beloved physician, who had long been Montgomery's near neighbour at the Mount, but who in his advancing years removed from the neighbourhood. The poet's eyes and face, like his speech, were all a-glow; and surrounded as the two old neighbours were by a goodly number of the most intellectual men of the town and its vicinity, it was an event by which it is pleasant to remember not a few of those present. How many of them have since passed altogether from this changing scene! I have always deeply regretted that Ebenezer Elliott was not there.

James Montgomery gently sank to rest on Sunday, April 30th, 1854, being then in the eighty-third year of his age. In the morning he had been found by a servant lying upon his chamber floor, as if under a stroke of paralysis, of which, however, his medical attendant could not perceive the usual concomitant symptoms. He revived, dined, and conversed as usual; but when about the middle of the afternoon, his old friend Miss Gales was sitting by his bedside, he seemed to be in a sleep, during which a slight shade passed over his face, and his spirit was gone to that blessed world about which he had so often and so sweetly sung.

Of all things that happen, few can be more annoying than "mistaken identity;" and we should think but ill of anyone who took advantage of his personal likeness to another for the sake of supplanting that other to his own emolument. Nor is the same less true with regard to names, especially names peculiar or popular. If a man were to announce "a new work by Mr. Smith," it could scarcely be injustice to anyone, considering the number of men who have done as much by their literary labours to ennoble that common name. But had there been only one Mr. Smith—say, Mr. James Smith—already distinguished in some specific walk of literature (in that of religious poetry for instance), and another person whose pen had hitherto not been known to the public at all, were suddenly to announce, "A New Religious Poem, by Mr. Smith," even though his name should be Robert, if that name of Robert were kept back the public would naturally suppose the book to be by the Mr. James Smith already known; and in proportion as they liked James Smith's past productions, they would naturally rush to procure it. Thus Robert Smith would be manifestly obtaining for the time notoriety and money, if not fame, under false pretences. Than such a course, I can hardly imagine one more to be regretted. It is not as if Mr. Smith the second had been, like Mr. Smith the first, *also* named James. Then, certainly, the identity of name might have been very inconvenient to both, and perhaps rather more annoying to James the first than to James the second; but there can be no law against any man's public use of his own name because it happens to be the name of another, even though it should sometimes involve a difficulty. Yet in that instance some invented distinction would be but honourable;\* and to me it has ever seemed unfortunate that the Rev. Robert Montgomery did not, in connection with the announcement of his earliest work, keep up a more deferential distinction between his own name and that of his poetico-religious namesake, James Montgomery, especially considering the similitude, if not identity of their themes—younger readers, to my knowledge, often mistaking one "Mr. Montgomery" for the other. They were not relatives; and as to their persons, having known both, I can truly say that, with the

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\* In my own case, for instance, mistakes often arise from the similarity of my name of S. T. Hall to that of Mr. S. C. Hall, and still more from its semi-identity with that of Mr. Spencer Hall, secretary to the Athenæum Club, between whom and myself there is no relationship,—wherefore I try to keep up a (not always successful) distinction, by the use of an academical prefix and the addition of a literary *sobriquet* given me between thirty and forty years back. But the simple use of Robert Montgomery's christian name alone would have made a sufficient distinction between him and James Montgomery, from the first.—S. T. H.

exception of their being authors, I never in my life knew two men more unlike. In person Robert Montgomery was as well filled up, dark, spruce, curly, brisk, and *debonnaire*, as James was spare, light, quiet, straight-haired (where not bald), diffident, and venerable. I do not make these remarks in animosity to the memory of Robert, who, when we met, treated me with courtesy, but in justice to that of James, and in defence of a general principle.

Robert Montgomery (who should be mentioned if only to keep up the distinction of name and person) was born at Bath in 1807; was a B.A. of Oxford in 1833, took orders in 1835, became minister of Percy-street Episcopal Chapel, London, in 1836, took the degree of M.A. in 1838, removed to Glasgow, where he remained four years, and resumed at Percy-street in 1843. His "Omnipresence of the Deity," a poem, which gained its first run through "the trade" in consequence of the expectation that it was by James Montgomery, had the merit of going through twenty-six editions. He was also very popular as a preacher amongst the lovers of florid rhetoric. I have heard it said that, on once being asked if he knew James Montgomery, he superciliously replied to the effect that there was, he believed, a writer of that name at Sheffield, but that he knew very little about him. This charge, however, one trusts, can hardly be true. He died on the 3rd of December, 1855; and notwithstanding all that has been said against him by Macauley and others, and some degree of vanity evident to nearly all who knew him, he must have had talents as well as persistence to gain the place he did and maintain it to his death. Perchance he may some day be quoted as an example of those who for want of more modesty mar their own true fame.





## Chapter Twelfth.

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### BLOOMFIELD AND CLARE.

(MARCH, 1866.)

“O come, blest Spirit! whatsoe'er thou art,  
Thou kindling warmth that hover'st round my heart,  
Sweet inmate, hail! thou source of sterling joy,  
That poverty itself cannot destroy,  
Be thou my Muse; and, faithful still to me,  
Retrace the paths of wild obscurity.  
—No deeds of arms my humble lines rehearse;  
No Alpine wonders thunder through my verse,  
The roaring cataract, the snow-topt hill,  
Inspiring awe, till breath itself stands still:  
Nature's sublimer scenes ne'er charm'd mine eyes,  
Nor science led me through the boundless skies;  
From meaner objects far my raptures flow;  
O point those raptures! bid my bosom glow!  
And lead my soul to ecstasies of praise  
For all the blessings of my infant days!  
Bear me through regions where gay Fancy dwells;  
But mould to Truth's fair form what Memory tells.”

SUCH was the modest yet glowing invocation with which Robert Bloomfield commenced his poem of “The Farmer's Boy,” while making shoes in a London garret,—an invocation justified by all that afterwards emanated from his gentle, generous, and most loveable soul. But let me write first of Clare, and revert to Bloomfield as we proceed.

The Rural Muse and his long insanity were, in my opinion, about the two best friends under a merciful Heaven by which John Clare was

ever visited. If you doubt it, read his painfully interesting biography by Frederick Martin. Read Clare's poetry too; and, while you feel thankful for your own sake that such a poet ever lived, if you happen to have a child gifted with a similar temperament, go down upon your knees and devoutly pray the Great Giver that He will also favour him with an extra guardian angel to accompany him through life. There is a fiction of English law—a fiction, however, founded in justice—that a man shall not be tried but by his peers; whilst it is well known that no two men are constituted alike, and that the world around us is to everyone, according to his constitution, a different world. How then shall a human alp, starting up from surrounding molehills, with its majestic cranial dome rising into the highest heaven of thought, be rightly comprehended and estimated by such as *never can* be his peers? What chance would the royal harp of David itself have had in a competition with tin horns and kettle-drums; or how could the virtues of the most delicate watch-works be tested by the aid of coarse rasps and sledge-hammers? Yet somewhat analogous to this, among the crowd and in the time in which it was cast in this lower world, was the fate of the fine Æolian spirit of John Clare, distinguished from all others of his name as "the Northamptonshire Peasant."

The son of Parker Clare, of Helpstone, a little village on the border of the eastern Fens—in simple fact, son of the poorest man in the parish, who had been made prematurely decrepid by hard labour, low diet, and severe chronic rheumatism,—and with the scantiest elements of scholastic knowledge imaginable, John Clare started up in the great sea of life, as some of those volcanic isles one reads of start up where not expected, to the great bewilderment of the mariner, who finding no allusion to them in his accustomed chart, interprets their existence or gives them a name in accordance—not necessarily with what they really are, but with his own notion of them, in the circumstances. Hence it was that, with a head almost as noble to look at as that of Shakespere; with a heart as affectionate as that of a true woman, and a soul as sensitive as her tenderest babe, when by the strength of his innate fires he was forced up to public gaze, the poetical phenomenon was interpreted and guaged by everyone according to his own calibre and custom. The literary haberdasher naturally measured him with his wand; the literary sweep treated him to a professional brush; the literary mince-meat man and sausage-maker thought his verses very extraordinary "links;" while the illiterate boor regarded him as a more unfortunate boor, for having more of lightning and less of the clod in his nature than himself. Not a greater mistake did Boswell make in his estimate of Goldsmith, than that made with regard to Clare, by some

of those who glorified themselves as friends and patrons at the expense of his manliest feelings. His genius, instead of being regarded and *honoured* by them, as a beautiful gift from Heaven to his country, for the better opening of the mind of its rural population to the love and wisdom of God in the creation around them, and the conveying into urban life itself the very breath and bloom of nature, was merely referred to by the majority of his earlier critics and patrons as furnishing an apology for their noticing at all one whose original guise was so rustic and so poor; and that, not very seldom, in opposition to his own emphatic protest. Nor did his further and higher development, with a more polished style of composition, much reduce this tendency. It was a start on a wrong line at first; it had become a *custom*; and the critics of that day, who (when they were not tigers and fought with one another) were frequently like sheep, taking the same gap in the same manner as their leader, kept up the suit. No matter how beautifully, or even sublimely, he might write, the same apologetic string was nearly always fiddled upon to the same tune, till people got tired, and, shutting their ears to it for relief, unfortunately thereby shut their ears also to some of the most sweet and original song that had ever been poured forth in the English language—song which, had it been only regarded on its own merits first, would have made all such officious apology (and the not always ungrudged patronage it procured,) as ridiculous as superfluous. But do not let me here be misunderstood. My blessing—every man's blessing—and the blessing of Heaven, be upon everyone who has at once the heart and the purse to aid, in a right noble and generous spirit, the development of struggling genius! Thrice blessed be the memory of all such, from Virgil's *Macænas* down to Capel Lofft, who procured the printing of Bloomfield's "*Farmer's Boy*" after it had been refused insertion in a common magazine. What I mean is, that conceited officiousness which uses the language of condescension in regard to what is at least seven heavens above its petty platform of action, and which while it was pretending to serve John Clare, was marring his destiny as much as it was rasping his nerves,—was causing him to be misunderstood by the world it pretended to be instructing respecting him, and finally with its rudeness (all the while flattering itself with the name of friendship) took on itself an air of indignation, when it found it had missed its aim and got no grateful response from the man whom it was driving into madness as a refuge from its persecutions! Of course there were not wanting some glorious exceptions to this rule—many, indeed,—but there is no disguising that they were exceptions, and that the rule in the case was one of the most inglorious that could have been; and the people, of whatever rank,

with whom Clare was brought most in contact by such means, instead of delicately befriending him, regarded him too often with a vulgar curiosity not unlike that with which (though with less emolument to the object) they in turn regarded Tom Thumb and the Hippopotamus—whichever happened for the moment to be most in fashion. It was through such effete meddlers and the pompous boast they made of what they imagined themselves to be doing for him, that some of his more truly genuine and generous patrons were turned against him, and made to withhold succour to which they would otherwise, no doubt, gladly have made additions; while the world at large had been amused with the belief that he was rendered independent, when in truth, both he and his large family were sometimes so pinched, and his little debts—little in one sense, but great enough in their effect on him—so harassing, that he was kept for years together in a state of anxiety and gloom, just as it was with Robert Bloomfield before him.

Mentioning Bloomfield thus, let me here fling in a few words about him, though I never saw him. You have, of course, at least *heard* something of his “Farmer’s Boy,” and have probably read a few of his “Rural Tales;” but did you ever read his “May Day with the Muses”—by far the best, though perhaps least known, of all his works? If you have, I need not say one word more to you as to his poetical worth. But let us, even though it be but for a moment, give a thought to the man. Country-born (his mother early left a widow, and teaching a little village school, whilst he went out as a herd-boy),

“He roam’d the lonely Crusoe of the fields,”

Until his twelfth year, and then went to London and became a shoemaker, taking into the throbbing thick of the great city his country experiences in his soul, as living, vast, and various, as when his eyes and ears were realising them on his native Suffolk plains. All these experiences, in time, bloomed out in most beautiful verse, and he became famous. But, his reputation being taken for prosperity, the world in general left him to enjoy it as might happen, whilst a number of poor relatives and friends taxed his sympathies to the extreme, and made him at last still poorer than themselves. At the age of fifty-seven, he *died of debt*, at Shefford, in Bedfordshire,—of debt amounting altogether to not much more, perhaps, than twenty pounds,—but as heavy on his inability as if it had been twenty thousand,—and then he was buried in Campton church-yard, about a mile from where he died. Bloomfield’s was one of the sweetest, gentlest and most fervent spirits ever embodied; and his look—his portrait is near me now—was as gentle and pleasing. That tapering under-jaw and small but well-



rounded chin, bespeaking at once affection and purity; that mouth, which even in its silence seems to be uttering kind and sensible things; that regular and "peaceful nose" of a man who could seldom give or take offence; beautifully arched brows, shading those observant and loving eyes; the forehead expanding up towards reason's throne, and out towards the realms of wit, ideality, wonder, and awe; the indications of warm and amiable social feelings behind; and of benevolence, aspiration, justice, and devotion, surmounting all, in the coronal region! The very figure of the man is itself a beautiful poem, of which none but a God could have been the Author! And his works have cheered the hearths and hearts of thousands. Yet Robert Bloomfield went dull of brain, and died, for want of from twenty to thirty pounds! A few years afterwards, Professor Wilson, when writing about Clare, threw in an episode on Bloomfield, as I am doing now; and—heart-of-England man though I be—let me honestly give it here:—

"Our well-beloved brethren, the English—who have a vulgar habit of calling us *the Scotch*—never lose an opportunity of declaiming on the national disgrace incurred by our treatment of Burns. We confess that the people of that day were not blameless—nor was the bard whom now all the nations honour. There was some reason for sorrow, and perhaps for shame; and there was avowed repentance. Scotland stands where it did in the world's esteem. The widow outlived her husband nearly forty years; she wanted nothing, and was happy. The sons are prosperous, or with a competence. All along with that family all has been right. England never had a Burns. We cannot know how she would have treated him had he 'walked in glory and in joy' upon *her* mountain side. But we do know how she treated her Bloomfield. She let him starve. Humanly speaking, we may say that but for his imprisonment—his exclusion from light and air—he would now have been alive. As it was, the patronage he received served but to prolong a feeble, a desponding, a melancholy existence; cheered at times by short visits from the Muse, who was scared from that dim abode, and fain would have wafted him with her to the fresh fields and the breezy downs. But his lot forbade—and generous England. There was some talk of a subscription, and Southey, with hand 'open as the day to melting charity,' was foremost among the poets. But somehow or other it fell through, and was never more heard of—and meanwhile Bloomfield died. Hush then about Burns."

So far Wilson: let me now, myself, for a moment, resume. It was, I think, in the spring of 1853, that professional duty took me into the neighbourhood of Bedford. For the true love I bore to Bloomfield for all his poetry had done for me, I resolved one day to take advantage

of the offered companionship and carriage of a friend, Mr. Usher, of the Orchards, near Blunham, and visit his grave. In passing along Shefford street, we saw a large board upon the shop-front of a mercer, "Bloomfield House." Come—I thought—there is a touch of sentiment at least in the person who owns this; I will go in and speak to him. The mercer, a civil man, told me that the reason for calling the house by Bloomfield's name was simply that he had lodged and died in it, and freely showed me through the rooms he had occupied. Buying a bunch of artificial flowers from him for a keepsake, I asked him to give me, honestly, his own and the town's memory and estimate of Bloomfield and his family. "Why, sir," he replied, "they were *very poor*, and he now and then made a dulcimer to sell, until he got too ill for it." Is that, I enquired, with little or nothing more, what the people of Shefford generally remember of Robert Bloomfield? "Just so," he answered, "he rambled a good deal in the fields, they were very poor, and he died in debt." "Did he die in debt?" I rejoined, probably looking rather wistfully at the speaker. "Yes," said he, speaking very slowly, "he died in debt—but—sometime afterwards the family raised a little money and paid every halfpenny!" Yes—said I, and I know, most likely, how it was done: those poor but honourable people collected and published all his left scraps of writing—good or trifling—published them under the title of his "Literary Remains," and instead of using it themselves, poor as they were, they paid the debts he died of with the money. It was very praiseworthy of them; but you see, after all, Bloomfield's debts were paid by his own productions! Why has the world never been told this before?

From the place where Bloomfield died I went to the place where he is buried. A quiet little country church-yard is that of Campton, and likely to remain quiet from the manner in which its gate is kept locked. On finding it so, I thought that caution might be needful to prevent the many visitors to the poet's grave committing some damage, and said so to the parish-clerk or sexton when he came to let me and my friend through. But this was a mistake. There was no track at all from the gate to Bloomfield's grave. There it was, (his remains and those of Thomas Inskip, a local poet, lying side by side), a few trees waving above. A very plain little head-stone told the simple tale of where and when he was born, and when he died, adding—

"Let his wild native wood-notes tell the rest;"

And our conductor said, though he had been in his office many years, *I was the only stranger who in all that time had visited ROBERT BLOOMFIELD'S grave!* I felt, with shame for my own country-people, that

Professor Wilson was right; and, in the end, the fate of Clare, though somewhat different from Bloomfield's, was yet fearfully akin to it!

Since the foregoing was written I have had an opportunity of knowing two of Bloomfield's children, daughters—one a widow, the other a spinster, and both very aged. They were, in 1867, living on a small pittance, at decent lodgings, in Hoxton-square, London, surrounded by a few choice relics and mementos of the poet. Not least interesting to me was "The Old Oak Table" on which he wrote his "Farmer's Boy," and on which now stood the inkstand given him by the celebrated Dr. Jenner—his painted portrait looking down on both, and representing him with a darker complexion and more energetic expression than from various engravings I had been led to expect. It was a great treat to have the affectionate reminiscences of his daughters *viva voce*; but they had little not already printed, or indicated in print, to tell of him. We read him about as well in *his writings* as anywhere; and they sank too deep into the soul in my younger days to let anything relating to him have a much greater charm for me now,—though it was impossible to feel otherwise than deeply interested in his daughters for their own sake, as well as his. One of them at the period of my visits was a frail and fast-declining invalid; and my last letter to them at the above address was returned from the General Post-office, their new address (if they were living) unknown.

My personal acquaintance with Clare was but brief, and sad; my admiration of his genius and many of his writings commenced early and continues still. It is doubtful if the whole range of modern authorship furnishes a more remarkable and interesting psychological study than this—not a second Bloomfield, as some have called him, nor the English Burns, as he has been designated by others—not an imitator or likeness of any other man—but a bard so true to her as he saw her, that, in reading his poetry, it is sometimes difficult to know where Nature ends and her interpreter begins. When he said that he

"Found his poems in the fields  
And only wrote them down,"

Words more true were perhaps never written, and yet those two lines were penned by him at a retreat for mental invalids.

It was on one of the quietest, sunniest of summer Sundays, after diving the week before into a deep work on natural philosophy, that I first took up some passages of this natural poetry. In the morning I had risen early and strolled far into the country, with "Telemachus" for a companion, in a neighbourhood noted for its natural beauty; had attended my usual place of worship during the forenoon, and in the afternoon had strolled out again through scenes having such descriptive

names as Colwick Grove, Carlton Fields, St. Ann's Well, and Bluebell Hill, to a friendly cottage at Forest-side, where, during tea, I chanced to lay my hand on a review of "The Village Minstrel and other Poems," by John Clare, prefaced by the inevitable mendicant-memoir got up by his publishing friends. It was easy to see that no man who had ever written anything half as interesting had been favoured with less of normal education. There were here and there striking defects of grammar; but owing to the peculiarity of their connection with his descriptions, imaginings, and fancies, which had a beautiful idiosyncratic logic of their own, there was a charm even about *them* for that very reason: they gave a more picturesque individuality to the man and his mind, serving as foils to throw out his excellences in finer relief, to those unconventional readers and thinkers who, enjoying what was *not* faultless, could make a reasonable allowance for *such* faults. In those simple extracts (I wish there were room for them here) I seemed to find nearly all my own sabbath musings made more real and glowing, and in the course of the week read three of Clare's volumes through.

It is somewhat remarkable that it was the poem of "Thomson's Seasons" which awakened John Clare, not to poetry, but to the first expression of it, just as it had done Robert Bloomfield before him, and as it probably had many a one besides. You have heard the story of two great and well-known authors, on a tour, dropping into an obscure cottage in the Highlands and finding the volume of "The Seasons" on the window-sill, having been read and read until its leaves were nearly worn out with thumbing, when one of them, pointing the other to it, said "*That is fame!*" It was this very poem that, when Clare (who had been born a twin) was yet a weakly and ragged urchin, first bewitched him as he got a mere glimpse of it, while it was in the possession of a big, churlish, well-off village boy, who refused to lend it to him, *even for an hour*. But, having learnt that it could be bought at Stamford, seven miles distant, for eighteenpence, he begged and borrowed till he had made up that sum, and started for Stamford one Sunday morning for the book, forgetting (if he had ever known) that the book-shop would be closed on that day. By hard screwing he got twopence more, gave a play-fellow half of it to tend his master's cattle, and bribed him with the other half to keep the secret while he hurried to Stamford again the next morning. He was there before daylight; got the book (to his surprise, for a shilling) as soon as the shop was opened, read it partly on the road as he walked back, then laid him down in Burghley Park and read it again; and getting home at last, was so ravished by the new world the poetry had opened to him, that, poor as he was, he gave his playfellow the sixpence *plus* the cost of the book, and from that hour himself became a poet!

And several things besides he became coincidentally, though some he wished to become he failed in. A relative, who saw his genius and mistook it for learning, induced him to try for the place of a lawyer's clerk, which of course he did not get. He did, however, get work for a time in the Marquis of Exeter's gardens; was afterwards for some time a sort of "ne'er-do-weel," then a militia-man, then a lime-burner at seven shillings a-week, then a lover; and, through all, a reader and poet still. And there was one good man who understood, and gave him cheering words, even then—the Rev. J. Knowles Holland, of Market Deeping, to whom he afterwards dedicated his poem of "The Woodman."

Then came a grand effort (after many of his poems had been burnt by his mother, because she and his poor old father thought it was a bad thing for one like him to attempt writing poetry at all,) to get some of the remainder printed. His discouragements now were great in the extreme. The story has often been told, but by no one so well as by Frederick Martin, as to how one printer, after much parley, would not get out a prospectus without pre-payment, and even then would not undertake the book because only seven subscribers could be obtained; how another (Mr. Drury, of Stamford,) undertook it, and then half repented; how, presently, Taylor and Hessey, the London publishers, undertook it, and Gifford praised it in the "Quarterly," and the pauper-apology was cooked up by another writer for the "Monthly;" how the book went through four editions, while the poor poet was lionised in a way that did him harm by introducing him to new habits that could not (nor was it desirable that some of them should) be afterwards maintained, as subscriptions were got up for him by right-hearted friends in a wrong-headed manner, and were practically not near so successful as they were proclaimed nominally to be; and how, at length, one of his patron-critics warned him that if he did not cease acquaintance with that old friend in his lowest adversity, the dissenting minister, Mr. Holland, it was not to be supposed that his new friends would keep up their acquaintance with *him*! Nor was this all. Some of the poetry had bewitched a beautiful governess at a noble mansion at which Clare had to appear; and she in turn was very near bewitching him, only that he had already committed himself too far with Martha Turner, or as in one of his lyrics he calls her "Patty of the Vale," for his conscience to let him easily forsake her. But let him give the story in his own touching way:—

"A wedding wild on lonely lea  
My evening rambles chanced to see;  
And much the wedding tempted me  
To crop its tender flower;

Exposed to wind and heavy rain,  
 Its head bow'd lowly on the plain;  
 And silently it seem'd in pain  
 Of life's endanger'd hour.

And wilt thou bid my bloom decay,  
 And crop my flower, and me betray,  
 And cast my injured sweets away?—  
 Its silence seemly sigh'd—

'A moment's idol of thy mind!  
 And is a stranger so unkind,  
 To leave a shameful root behind,  
 Bereft of all its pride?'

And so it seemly did complain;  
 And beating fell the heavy rain;  
 And low it droop'd upon the plain,  
 To fate resign'd to fall:

My heart did melt at its decline,  
 And 'Come,' said I, 'thou gem divine,  
 My fate shall stand the storm with thine;'  
 So took the root and all."

Clare went, or was taken, three times up to London; and the first time against his own sense of propriety, was beguiled into appearing in a half-rustic, half-cockney dress, that made him so much of a "guy" he could scarcely abide being seen; and in that, and subsequently in a somewhat different character, he was duly *exhibited* by his patrons to numbers of lords, ladies, literati, and savans, including a few who saw the proud and sensitive but loveable *man* through the rustic poet, got to like him thoroughly for *his own sake*, and remained his sincere friends. It may seem rather invidious perhaps to name them thus, after what was done by the Duke of Devonshire, the Marquis of Exeter, Earl Fitzwilliam, and others; but in the little list to which I allude more particularly just now, one thinks with a feeling amounting to something like affection, in relation to him, of Admiral Lord Radstock and Allan Cunningham,—of Allan especially, whose shrewd but friendly nature Clare, in turn, warmly loved.

After his second visit the Peasant Poet had little liking for London. As with all such men, the "sight" having been seen and the novelty rubbed off,—when prestige could no longer be gained by entertaining him, he was left pretty much to take his chance. One fact is very remarkable: After his first rustic volume, every succeeding one contained something better and better. For its graphic, though homely beauty, and truth to nature, his "Woodman" has been ranked next to Burns's "Cottar's Saturday night;" and his "Shepherd's Calendar"

is a truthful and exquisite history of the seasons ; his poem on "Antiquity" has images and fancies so startling as to remind one of Byron and even of Shakspeare ; his "Adventures of a Grasshopper" is one of the richest and shrewdest allegories ever written for the young, and his rural sonnets improve in beauty and polish, but without losing any of their freshness, to the last : yet singularly enough, each successive volume after the first, was less successful in "the trade" than its predecessors ; and the "Rural Muse," with its accompaniments—the most chaste, and in some respects perhaps the most beautiful of them all—fell, as the phrase goes, "nearly still-born from the press." I bought two or three, and could have bought any number of the neat, uncut volumes, at a bookseller's shop in Stamford, in 1849, at eighteenpence a copy !

While things had been taking this downward turn, and Clare's family had increased to nine, his reliable income had never amounted to more at any time than thirty-six to forty-five pounds a year. People—sometimes impudent and tasteless people—crowded upon him and took up his time ; and his fitness for manual exertion was often sadly marred by illness. His great ambition was to turn his subscribed annuity into a cottage and seven acres of land, that he might live quietly by his own labour on his own little farm, and be independent. But though the world had no objection to making him an idle dependent, it never aided him in that most reasonable direction of all. He never could get the one bit of land he had set his mind on, and what he did get was profitless to him, at the rent. His debts therefore increased ; he became faint for want of common nourishment, always seeing his family fed first ; and when Lord Fitzwilliam, at length awakened by accident to the sad truth, came forth a second time and gave him a cottage to live in, it was too late ; his brain could stand no more ; he was soon afterwards taken to Dr. Allen's establishment for mental invalids at High Beech in Epping Forest, but (though not ill-treated there) ran away, enduring hardships incredible on the road ; and staying a short time at home with his Patty and children, was then removed to the Northampton County Asylum for the remainder of his days. Mr. Martin thinks if they would have let him stay at home it would have been better ; but of this one cannot be sure.

Taken for all in all, Clare's treatment at Northampton Asylum was the most genial he had ever for any long period together received. I saw him there, or taking his walks in the neighbourhood, several times—the first in May, 1843. He wrote much beautiful poetry there, as he had done at High Beech, (where Cyrus Redding visited him and gave some of it to the world.) At Northampton every member of the



staff of management, and many of the poor inmates, as well as a number of the inhabitants of the town, delighted in showing him all possible consideration and kindness. It can do the rest no injustice—though they were all so good to him—to say that Mr. Knight, (who was at one time steward at the Northampton, and is now superintending an asylum near Birmingham,) showed him especial sympathy, and had his fullest confidence in return. But there had been a period of his life when he had brooded (like poor Haydon) on the neglect—and worse than neglect—he had sometimes to endure, and on the way in which even great prize-fighters were petted and nourished, until at length he wished he were one of them; and then imagined he was one; and at last fancied himself anything or anybody rather than poor John Clare. In my first conversation with him he was rather shy, but less so as we talked, and somewhat cordial before we parted. This took place in the Asylum-grounds; and instead of the spare, sensitive person he appears in the portrait of him from Hilton's painting, forming a frontispiece to "The Village Minstrel," I found him rather burly, florid, with light hair and somewhat shaggy eyebrows, and dressed as a plain but respectable farmer, in drab or stone-coloured coat and smalls, with gaiters, and altogether as clean and neat as if he had just been fresh brushed up for market or fair. He had been to see a friend, and get some tobacco, in Northampton town. On my asking him how he was, he said "Why, I'm very well, and stout, but I'm getting tired of waiting here so long, and want to be off home. They won't let me go, however; for, you see, they're feeding me up for a fight; but they can get nobody able to strip to me; so they might as well have done with it, and let me go." "But, Mr. Clare," said I, "are you not more proud of your fame as a poet than your prowess as a prize-fighter?" When, rather abstractedly, as if considering or trying to recollect something, he answered, "Oh, poetry, ah, I know, I once had something to do with poetry, a long while ago: but it was no good. I wish, though, they could get a man with courage enough to fight me." This was just after he had been writing a beautiful and logical poem for my friend Mr. Joseph Stenson, the iron-master; so faithful to him was the muse, so treacherous his ordinary reason.

Next I asked him if he remembered ever receiving from me at High Beech a copy of the "Sheffield Iris" and a letter I had sent him. "Sheffield Iris!" he exclaimed: "oh, of course, I know all about the "Iris." You know I was editor of it, and lived with the Misses Gales, and was sent to York Castle, where I wrote that "Address to the Robin"—thus identifying himself with James Montgomery. On my saying that I was going to London, and would have a pleasure in doing

anything I could for him there, he seemed for a moment a little uneasy, and then replied, "Ah, London; I once was there, but don't like it. There is one good fellow there: if you happen to see him you may remember me to him very kindly—and that's Tom Spring!" Such was the talk of a man who would not have hurt a fly or bruised a flower, much less have been one of the fraternity of Tom Spring, the greatest bruiser, of his day, in England! Another time on my seeing him, after he had just returned from a long and favourite ramble in the fields, he described it all, up to a certain point, with great accuracy and apparent pleasure, in beautiful language, and then broke off into talk it would be wrong to repeat; but more than once saying he should like to go home. The last time I saw Clare was on our accidentally meeting in the street, near All Saints' Church, in Northampton. He seemed very pleased thus to meet me, and I was not less so to see him and find that he remembered me. His face was lit all over with one sunny smile, and I congratulated him on his looking so well; but before we parted he talked again of wanting to go home, as though all his thoughts centred there.

A few years had passed, and I had been staying with some friends at Market Deeping, only a short distance from the villages of Helpstone and Northborough. In the former village I visited the cottage where he was born (at this time used as an infant school), as well as the grave of his parents, Parker and Ann Clare, in the old churchyard. At Northborough, in the pretty cottage which he never loved half so well as the more humble one in which he was born, I spent a kindly hour with some of his family, and saw them again at a lecture I had to deliver, the evening following, at Deeping. Mrs. Clare, still a fine, matronly, blooming woman, and who must have been a very comely girl in her day, was pleased to see and talk with me about her husband. I told her that when I saw him, he alluded to his home in a way that proved his affection for her in spite of his aberration. There were tears in her eyes as I mentioned this; but Mr. Martin alludes regretfully to Patty not having been once to Northampton to see her husband in all the twenty-two years he was there; and to none of the family having been except the youngest son, and he but once. I think it was probably under advice they abstained, from a fear that such an interview might be in some way injurious to him, by tempting him to escape, as he had done from High Beech, when he got home nearly dead after five days and nights' exposure to cold and hunger. At all events one trusts that it was not from indifference; for whatever his temperament, whatever his trials, John Clare had always been an affectionate husband and a most loving father—even though in his

aberration he did often talk of another imaginary wife, "Mary," and equally imaginary children—an hallucination arising probably from his having in younger days had a sweetheart of the name of Mary, but who had now long been dead. That Clare dearly loved his home let some of his own verses witness, where he says :—

"Like a thing of the desert, alone in its glee,  
I make a small home seem an empire to me ;  
Like a bird in the forest, whose world is its nest,  
My home is my all, and the centre of rest.  
Let Ambition stretch over the world at a stride,  
Let the restless go rolling away with the tide,  
I look on life's pleasures as follies at best,  
And, like sunset, feel calm when I'm going to rest.  
  
I sit by the fire, in the dark winter's night,  
While the cat cleans her face with her foot in delight,  
And the winds all a-cold, with rude clatter and din  
Shake the window, like robbers who want to come in ;  
Or else, from the cold to be hid and away,  
By the bright burning fire see my children at play,  
Making houses of cards, or a coach of a chair,  
While I sit enjoying their happiness there.

O the out-of-door blessings of leisure for me !  
Health, riches, and joy !—it includes them all three.  
There peace comes to me—I have faith in her smile—  
She's my playmate in leisure, my comfort in toil ;  
There the short pasture-grass hides the lark on its nest,  
Though scarcely so high as the grasshopper's breast ;  
And there its moss-ball hides the wild honey-bee,  
And there joy in plenty grows riches for me.

So I sit on my bench, or enjoy in the shade  
My toil as a pastime, while using the spade ;  
My fancy is free in her pleasure to stray,  
Making voyages round the whole world in a day.  
I gather home comforts where cares never grew,  
Like manna, the heavens rain down with the dew,  
Till I see the tired hedger bend wearily by,  
Then like a tired bird to my corner I fly."

That he bitterly felt his exile from home, and that it preyed upon his mind, notwithstanding all the kindness with which he was treated at Northampton, is proved in the following, which Frederick Martin says was his last, and he thinks the noblest poem that poor Clare ever wrote. He calls it "Clare's Swan-song," and "fervently hopes it will live as long as the English language." It was not his last ; for I have a copy

of it in manuscript written years before some others of which I have also copies. But it is not likely soon to die. To have been written by one who owed little of his education to any man—whose every faculty, or almost every faculty, except his poetical one, was now deranged, and who was bowing his head with its long, white, flowing hair, as if constantly “looking for his grave”—ought alone, independently of its wonderful poetical power, to make it a treasure to the psychologist and philanthropist as long as there is suffering in the world :—

“ I am ! yet what I am who cares, or knows ?

My friends forsake me like a memory lost.

I am the self-consumer of my woes,

They rise and vanish an oblivious host,

Shadows of life, whose very soul is lost.

And yet I am—I live—though I am toss'd

Into the nothingness of scorn and noise,

Into the living sea of waking dream,

Where there is neither sense of life, nor joys,

But the huge shipwreck of my own esteem

And all that's dear. Even those I loved the best

Are strange—nay, they are stranger than the rest.

I long for scenes where man has never trod,

For scenes where woman never smiled or wept ;

There to abide with my Creator, God,

And sleep as I in childhood sweetly slept,

Full of high thoughts unborn. So let me lie,

The grass below ; above, the vaulted sky.”

John Clare died about noon on the 20th of May, 1864—“ gently, without even a struggle”—his last words being “ I want to go home ; ” and—contrary to the advice of one who, it has been said, suggested his being buried at Northampton as a pauper—“ through the active exertions of some true Christian souls, true friends of poetry,” adds Martin, “ the requisite burial fund was raised in a few days, and the poet's body, having been conveyed to Helpston, was reverently interred there on Wednesday the 25th. There now lies, under the shade of a sycamore tree, with nothing above but the green grass and the eternal vault of heaven, all that earth has to keep of one of the sweetest singers of nature ever born within the fair realm of dear old England—dear old England, so proud of its galaxy of noble poets and so wasteful of their lives.” There is a sad touch of truth in this ; and Mr. Martin's whole book is a brave vindication of the rights of genius. Let us nevertheless enjoy all such consolation as is possible ; and is there none in the following noble flight by John Clare himself ? It occurs in the volume commencing with “ The Rural Muse.” It seems to have been

penned just after the decease of Scott, and relates to an imagined contention between Scott's Fame and Time, when the latter called in the aid of Death to lay his rival low :—

“ But Genius soars above the dead,  
 Too mighty for his power ;  
 And deserts where his journey lead,  
 Spell-bound, are still in flower,  
 By poesy kept for times unborn ;  
 And when those times are gone,  
 The worth of a remoter morn  
 Shall find them shining on.  
 For poesy is verse or prose  
 Not bound to Fashion's thrall ;  
 No matter where true Genius grows,  
 'Tis beautiful in all.  
 Or high or low, its beacon fires  
 Shall rise in every way,  
 Till drowsy Night the blaze admires,  
 And startles into Day—  
 A day that rises like the sun  
 From clouds of spite and thrall,  
 Which gains, before its course be run,  
 A station seen by all.  
 Its voice grows thunder's voice with age,  
 Till Time turns back and looks ;  
 Its breath embalms the flimsy page,  
 And gives a soul to books.  
 Through night at first it will rejoice,  
 And travel into day,  
 Pursuing, with a still small voice,  
 That light that leads the way.  
 The grave its mortal dust may keep,  
 Where tombs and ashes lie ;  
 Death only shall Time's harvest reap,  
 For Genius cannot die.”

A few more words about Robert Bloomfield. It is an odd association of names ; but I often find myself wishing that I may one day meet, in some blessed sphere beyond the grave, and converse with them there—Alfred king of England, Oliver Goldsmith, and Robert Bloomfield—not least the last :—Alfred, because I not only believe him to have been by far the best and greatest king England has ever had, but perhaps one of the wisest, best and greatest Englishmen of any rank whatever ;—Goldsmith, because, with the unsophisticated heart and playfulness of a child he united the brain and thought of a sage, at a time when

pedantry reigned supreme and was worshipped by those who mistook utter indifference or contempt for it for mere *gaucherie*;—and Bloomfield who, painting Nature *as he saw her* and Humanity *as it should be*, awakened my young soul to enjoyments that neither the rant, cant, guile or tyranny of a self-seeking and self-justifying world have ever been able to stifle or scathe. There was a little book in which I read, amid the sorrows of childhood—and childhood has its sorrows, whatever maturity may think—that “God is love, God is light, God is good to all;” and afterwards, when Bloomfield showed me through his poems how to read this truth in the simplest and commonest features of Creation and Providence, I felt a gratitude to him from that hour that all the lore of ages into which I have dipped, all the teachings of modern men I have known, have never weakened. Imagine a “self-taught” man, about twenty years of age, while pegging, stitching and hammering away in a dim London garret, composing lines like these, descriptive of his own vocation and emotions on a winter’s night in his boyhood, and with no ambition regarding them but that “his mother might see them in print:”—

“GILES, ere he sleeps, his little flock must tell.  
From the fire-side with many a shrug he hies,  
Glad if the full-orb’d Moon salute his eyes,  
And through th’ unbroken stillness of the night  
Shed on his path her beams of cheering light.  
With saunt’ring step he climbs the distant stile,  
Whilst all around him wears a placid smile;  
There views the white-robed clouds in clusters driven,  
And all the glorious pageantry of Heaven.  
Low, on the utmost bound’ry of the sight,  
The rising vapours catch the silver light;  
Thence Fancy measures, as they parting fly,  
Which first will throw its shadow on the eye,  
Passing the source of light; and thence away,  
Succeeded quick by brighter still than they.  
Far yet above these wafted clouds are seen  
(In a remoter sky, still more serene,)  
Others, detach’d in ranges through the air,  
Spotless as snow, and countless as they’re fair;  
Scatter’d immensely wide from east to west,  
The beauteous semblance of a Flock at rest.  
These, to the raptur’d mind aloud proclaim  
The MIGHTY SHEPHERD’S everlasting Name.”

Considering the simplicity of the verse, what a fine, fresh touch of nature there is in the following:—

#### MARY’S EVENING SIGH.

“How bright with pearl the western sky!  
How glorious, far and wide,

You lines of golden cloud that lie  
 So peaceful side by side !  
 Their deep'ning tints, the arch of light,  
 All eyes with rapture see ;  
 E'en while I sigh I bless the sight  
 That lures my love from me.

Green hill, that shad'st the valley here,  
 Thou bear'st upon thy brow  
 The only wealth to Mary dear,  
 And all she'll ever know.  
 There, in the crimson light I see,  
 Above the summit rise,  
 My Edward's form ; he looks to me  
 A statue in the skies.

Descend, my love, the hour is come,  
 Why linger on the hill ?  
 The sun hath left my quiet home,  
 But thou can'st see him still ;  
 Yet why a lonely wanderer stray,  
 Alone the joy pursue ?  
 The glories of the closing day  
 Can charm thy Mary too.

Dear Edward, when we strolled along  
 Beneath the waving corn,  
 And both confess'd the power of song,  
 And bless'd the dewy morn ;  
 Your eye o'erflowed, 'How sweet,' you cried,  
 (My presence then could move)  
 'How sweet, with Mary by my side,  
 To gaze, and talk of love !'

Thou art not false ! that cannot be ;  
 Yet I my rivals deem  
 Each woodland charm, the moss, the tree,  
 The silence, and the stream ;  
 Whate'er, my love, detains thee now,  
 I'll yet forgive thy stay ;  
 But with to-morrow's dawn come thou,  
 We'll brush the dews away."

And who will not sympathise and exult with him, when after giving a history of all the seasons as they affect agricultural and pastoral life, he puts the following reverent and rapturous conclusion to his "Farmer's Boy ?"—

"Delightful moments !—Sunshine, Health, and Joy,  
 Play round, and cheer the elevated Boy !  
 'Another Spring !' his heart exulting cries ;  
 'Another YEAR !' with promised blessings rise !—



'ETERNAL POWER ! from whom those blessings flow,  
 'Teach me still more to wonder, more to know :  
 'Seed-time and Harvest let me see again ;  
 'Wander the leaf-strewn wood, the frozen plain :  
 'Let the first flower, corn-waving field, plain, tree,  
 'Here round my home, still lift my soul to THEE ;  
 'And let me ever, midst thy bounties, raise  
 'An humble note of thankfulness and praise ! ' ' '

It is sometimes said, of late, in disparagement of Bloomfield, that though he was formerly much thought of, he is now in most reading circles all but forgotten. But to me this, in reality, seems more to the discredit of readers than of the poet. I grant that he never roars and casts out lurid flames like a volcano, nor cheats you away from the track of common sense by will-o'-wisp fancies that glitter and then leave you in a mist of wonder. Nor does he indulge in subtle metaphysical speculations or arguments, or in mystical inuendos that awaken curiosity without satisfying the heart. There undoubtedly are or have been many self-educated poets of more brilliancy, depth and vigour. But there is a glow of nature in him, and especially of human nature contemplated in its kindlier aspects, seldom surpassed by any other writer,—a *spirit of love*, that kindles or quickens your own, making you feel more directly akin to creation and the Creator. Many think they have read all worth knowing of him when they have hastily glanced over a few passages of his "Farmer's Boy." But this is a mistake. That was one of his very earliest effusions ; and a fair reading of some of his lyrics and tales—especially some of those embodied in his now nearly lost poem entitled "May Day with the Muses"—would help to a far more accurate estimate. Considering how simple is his style, how fresh his feeling, how pure his thoughts, and how all he means comes *right home to the mind* ; to pooh-pooh him in an age of gross sensationalism like the present, is to do an act of injustice to the working people, especially the younger portion of them. I have often read selected passages from Bloomfield to large, popular audiences, but never without reaching their better feelings and affording much innocent delight.



## Chapter Thirteenth.

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COMBE, GREGORY, AND LIEBIG.

(APRIL, 1866.)

It was in the autumn of 1844. Edinburgh was filled and growing busy with the return of professors, students, law-officials, and many who came to the city on their account. ' The watering places were sending back families, too, to their urban or suburban dwellings ; besides which the " British Association for the Advancement of Science " had just closed its meetings at Glasgow, and so contributed for the moment savans of many countries to those pleasant intellectual and half convivial re-unions for which perhaps few cities in the world are more famous than old Dunedin. I had two or three reasons for being there at that juncture ; but one of the chief of them certainly was this :—Having a few years before seen the celebrated experiments in zoo-magnetism (or, as it is more popularly called, mesmerism), by M. La Fontaine ; and having at that time considerable reputation among my friends as an amateur phrenologist, when the news came from America that magnetism had been employed there in demonstration of the distinct mental or emotional function of each portion of the brain, I was called upon to put that discovery to the test of experiment. Not following exactly in the track of pre-experimenters, but rather trying what unsophisticated Nature herself might reveal, I was soon able to develope phenomena so novel to those around me as to be called discoveries, by which it was clear that, if magnetism corroborated the older phreno-

logists at all, it went much further than they had ever gone; in short, illustrated the existence of a far greater number of distinct organs—or, in better words, a far more extensive sub-division of the brain and its functions—than they had ever dreamed of. My assertion of this, and the publication at the same time of considerably subdivided craniological charts from America—one by La Roy Sunderland, the other by that most earnest, original, and masterly physiologist, Dr. J. R. Buchanan, of Cincinnati—awakened, not merely suspicion and jealousy, but positive hostility, especially in Edinburgh, on the part of those who had already foreclosed the question by showing, in their way, how the old number of from thirty-six to forty faculties were sufficient to account for all the manifestations of feeling and thought with which humanity was accredited. This had resolved me, on my visiting Scotland, to show the phenomenal facts on which my own faith was founded, and to ask the celebrated phrenologists there for some better explanation if they could not fall in with that given; and thus it was that with but little introduction save the announcement of my name and purpose, the large saloon at the Waterloo Rooms (ranking then much higher than now as a place for such meetings) was crowded to the full on my first appearance. Said the door-keepers as I passed in, “You have a fine audience, sir.” “Who are here?” I asked, in reply. “Nearly all the professors, and intelligent people of all sorts.” And certainly as I came from one of the back rooms to the platform, the aggregate of intelligent faces that confronted might also have disheartened me, but that I felt old Nature, in all her verity, at my side.

My first prelection was short and simple. It commenced with my saying that a Sherwood Forester had come to the modern Athens, to show over again to the philosophers there what Nature had shown to him—much as Magnus, the shepherd, when he saw the pieces of loadstone, on Mount Ida, adhering to the metallic end of his crook, had gone to the philosophers of his day, not to dogmatise, but rather to seek an explanation. Somewhat so it was with me:—My experiments might show them matters of fact far more eloquent and instructive than my words; and as we proceeded and the several phenomena they had come to witness were evolved, since I would much rather at any time be a learner than a teacher, if any of the more intelligent amongst them could offer any explanation better than my own I should be thankful—the great object of all our investigations being truth. It would probably happen, however, that they would require me to attempt some explanation occasionally, and that I would gladly do to the best of my ability, or give reasons why I could not explain. At all events there was one thing on which they might rely—my readiness at any time to confess

my want of knowledge rather than to abuse the truth by running beyond it. A sound of welcome and approbation came from the whole assembly as these remarks closed ; and a chairman—I think that evening it was venerable Dr. Ritchie—was appointed. A few of the experiments were on persons I had previously operated upon ; yet others, and those perhaps most novel to an Edinburgh audience, were upon persons well known there, but strange to me till that moment ; so that there was little or no cavil about the validity of the cases. What was demonstrated included several of the most striking phenomena called phrenomesmeric, and nearly all the most important features of what some years afterwards came from America in the name of electro-biology, as well as “magnetically induced” somnambulism, somniloquence, and that peculiar extacy which is produced in such cases by the introduction of strains of music ; and though there had been much mesmerism in Edinburgh before, it was evident that most of what its philosophers now saw had, for them, from the very simple but orderly manner in which it was presented, considerable interest. My aim at all times was, in such demonstrations, to make wonderful things plain rather than plain things wonderful ; and a general expression of confidence and encouragement for me was coupled with a vote of thanks to the chairman at the close.

In the course of the lecture I had chanced to allude to something which had been recently published by Dr. Gregory, the professor of chemistry ; and, on descending from the platform, was cordially and respectfully approached by two gentlemen who had been sitting on one of the front benches. The elder of them was tall, and, if not slender, was not stout. His face was rather red than pale, yet would not be considered very ruddy. His mouth, laterally, was rather large, and nose large enough for the admission of any requisite amount of oxygen to his lungs, should the mouth ever need to be closed. It is difficult to say which was the most calm of the two—his look or his voice ; for though he had what would be called a speaking eye, even *its* speech, like that from his lips, was so *deliberate* that an enthusiast would have called it cold, only for the degree of sunshine that lit his brow, as it struck up and out loftily into the regions of comparison, causality, and wit, claiming kinship with a coronal development not less marked, and made the more venerable and impressive by a roof of silvery hair. The other gentleman was of a totally different type : yet (to use a musical illustration) they “chorded well.” He had a somewhat broad-set frame, enveloped in a black suit that fitted rather loosely ; a limp in his step as from chronic lameness ; a massive but kindly face, and bulky brow, with a complexion slightly brown ; a head of long, dark hair, that looked

as if it were oftener roughed up by its owner's fingers in his study than combed down in his toilette, as it fell here and there into close acquaintance with his fine, large, expressive eyes; and a hearty tone of speech that would strike any listener, at his first word, as eminently frank and friendly. These, as I have hinted, drawing near, the one so venerable from his years and silvery hair said, in measured and kindly tones, "Allow me, Mr. Hall, to thank you for your interesting lecture and experiments, and to introduce to you a gentleman to whom you made allusion this evening, Professor Gregory;"—and almost before he had concluded these words, his friend was saying "Yes—we are indeed much obliged to you; this is Mr. Combe."

Assuring them both how glad and proud I was of their company and friendly words, I took the opportunity of adding that one of my objects in coming to Edinburgh was to have my experiments scrutinised with more nicety than merely public demonstrations would admit of, and that I should therefore be happy to afford them any means that might be agreeable to them of testing the phenomena in private. This pleased them much; and it was arranged that our first *séance* should take place at Mr. Combe's, where we met for breakfast—experiments following. The only person present that morning, I think, besides Mr. Combe, Professor Gregory, myself, and the parties to be operated on, was Mrs. Combe—handsome still, though with hair silvery-white, and, in spirit, worthy of being, as she in reality was, a daughter of Mrs. Siddons. It was in many respects an agreeable meeting; but for some reason we did not get on well with the experiments, and it was arranged to meet again for breakfast and a further essay at Professor Gregory's next morning. Mrs. Gregory was, of course, at table; and besides the Professor and Mr. Combe, there was another gentleman I had not expected to see, but was delighted to meet. Quiet, modest, earnest, and cheerful, as we sat side by side and talked (he in English, but with a strong German accent,) was Justus von Liebig, the great chemist, to whom I was there and thus introduced, that morning. My journey to Edinburgh had not been in vain, were it for that opportunity alone; but as soon as breakfast was concluded, we commenced a set of test experiments that occupied between four and five hours, and developed phenomena equally interesting to us all. Liebig had seen nothing of mesmerism before, and, indeed, from all he had heard or thought, had hardly cared to see it. But in the house of his old friend and fellow chemist, Gregory, who had already become a warm advocate of its claims to scientific observation, the question had for him now an entirely new phase and interest. The whole party watched the development of the successive phenomena with unwonted intensity, as we operated on

a young man with a well formed brain, a nervo-sanguine temperament, and a conscientiousness so patent to any observer of character as to make him, in the circumstances, a very desirable case. He is now, I believe, master of Bishop Wainfleet's celebrated school in Lincolnshire, and has justified by his course of life all the confidence I ever reposed in his integrity. Permit me to say here, in my own behalf, that in my work as a zoomagnetic demonstrator I never felt so secure as in the hands of the best informed scrutineers—the men best acquainted with recondite principles and laws; and it is probable that the confidence and calmness I felt that morning from the company I was in, considerably influenced the condition of the young *sujet* (Mr. Holbrook) and made the phrenic manifestations the more definite and clear. We certainly could not have been at it less than four hours, when Liebig, who had been most calm and close in his scrutiny, got up like one who had arrived at an important conclusion, and his face glowed with a peculiar glow as he suddenly and silently left the room. Gregory followed, while Combe staid talking with the patient, who was now recalled to his normal state. What immediately succeeded was most strikingly indicative of the character of the three savans. Liebig was some time before he reappeared; but Gregory, who had been in conversation with him apart, returned with great animation and something of enthusiasm in his manner, exclaiming "*Liebig's convinced!*" When Combe, in a tone and manner cool in proportion to the other's warmth—yet manifestly much interested—merely said, "Is he?" "Yes! (answered Gregory) Liebig's convinced of the validity of the phenomena—though of course he says nothing of any theory." That morning's experiences I have not unfrequently regarded as the zenith of my seven years' ardent pursuit of those magnetic investigations, and Professor Gregory afterwards sent me, unsolicited, a cordial testimony to his own satisfaction in them.

Liebig's stay in Edinburgh was of course very brief—little more than a call upon old friends and pupils on his return from the meetings of the British Association; but Dr. Gregory and Mr. Combe I had the pleasure of meeting afterwards pretty frequently—sometimes at their own houses, the houses of friends, or at my own soirées. A scene full of character occurred at one of the latter. It was my invariable rule to let my audiences appoint their own chairman for each evening, so that they might have the fullest confidence in him and be satisfied with any report he might have to make between me and them. Generally speaking, gentlemen of the highest standing were nominated. At this moment I cannot recall them all, but remember that such persons as Dr. Ritchie, Professor Ferrier, Dr. Robert Chambers, and Dr. John

Murray, were amongst them; while Bishop Gillies, William Tait, and other well-known parties would be on the platform, for the purpose of closer examination. Mrs. Crowe was at every meeting, Mr. John Gray and Mr. Baildon nearly so, and Mr. Theodore Martin (who wrote a beautiful account of one evening's experiments) attended occasionally. But once a foolish, ambitious busy-body—not a Scotchman—taking advantage of my rule, by solicitation got himself proposed as chairman, and made himself very ridiculously conspicuous on the platform. As some one informed me, he was a person who had once been connected with the liquor trade in Liverpool, and had not succeeded; but he now boasted with considerable “haw-haw,” of understanding English law, as he was “studying for the bar.” There was great temptation to fling a pun at him for his silly conduct as he made this boast, and not only interfered unfairly with the experiments, but began to give opinions on them almost before they had commenced. I did say to him that, with all his pretension, there was one practice at the English bar with regard to which he was manifestly out of order—namely, in now preceding the evidence with the verdict; and added that I should feel greatly obliged to the audience, if (were he allowed to continue on the platform) they would elect some GENTLEMAN well known to them to keep order. On this he became a little pompous, and looking at Lord Valentia, who sat with some friends on one of the front seats, said, “Haw—aw, I appeal to Lord Valentia—haw—to say—haw—if I didn't dine—haw—with his lordship, yesterday?” For a moment all was in expectant stillness, when Lord Valentia, colouring to the very ears, and with some hesitancy in his manner, half rose, and said—“Why, yes, he certainly did one day dine with the mess of my regiment, and that—I suppose—constitutes him a gentleman!” It would be difficult to describe the funny hubbub that followed this announcement, as the fellow foppishly and obsequiously thanked his lordship for the ambiguous compliment; and then there rose up, from about the third seat back, a tall figure with a white head, calm as an alp looking down on a storm, when the whole became instantly hushed, as a deferential whisper ran through the crowd—“It's Mr. Combe!” Mr. Combe it certainly was, who in very few words observed that they had come there to see my experiments, not to have their time wasted in such interruption of them, and wished to be allowed to form their own opinions. After this, the gentleman who had dined at one mess and thus got into another—was quiet enough, and the experiments, carefully tested by abler men, went on to a satisfactory conclusion.

During the whole of my stay in Edinburgh, both Mr. Combe and Dr. Gregory, as did many others, treated me with unremitting kindness,



and from first to last showed great interest in my experiments; but I rather think the former believed mesmerism left phrenology much as it found it—because the phrenic results might, according to mesmerists themselves, be produced in different ways—viz., by mental sympathy, in some cases, between the magnetiser and the *sujet*; or again, by what Catlow had designated “suggestive dreaming”—a state in which the *sujet* was stimulated by unintentional suggestions and a preternaturally quick association of ideas; therefore not necessarily alone by what the phreno-mesmerists claimed as a direct magnetic influence on specific portions of the brain, with consequent awaking into activity of the corresponding mental faculties. My own belief was then, and is still, that there is some truth in each of the three hypotheses, while all of them together may not embrace the whole truth. But of all men in the world I should imagine Mr. Combe to have been one of the last at any time to come to a sudden conclusion with regard to *any* question; and Dr. Gregory himself, though a more ardent and enthusiastic man, would naturally be very careful on what evidence he founded and expressed faith in a greater phrenic subdivision. To a mind accustomed to chemical experiment, not only the alembic but the menstruum (figuratively speaking) must be well understood, and all the elements of the question not less so, to justify a verdict involving a reputation,—especially after the fate of Dr. Samuel Brown.

One day Mr. Combe and Professor Gregory came and bestowed a full hour on the measurement and manipulation of my head, sending their notes to Mr. James Simpson for his inferences from them. Guided by these notes, Mr. S. attributed to me a love of experimental philosophy, travelling, and open air exertion—all true enough. But what he added concerning my great courage and expertness in military action, especially in pioneering, made me, as I read it, smile at the way in which my somewhat quakerly education must have cheated physical warfare of an able soldier. Intellectually viewed, my character might be somewhat like that described, for I had been, as by some hidden impulsion, a pioneer for truth's sake from earliest days. There were other particulars, however, in which the delineation was scarcely accurate, even as an analogy. Phrenological delineations by different people sometimes vary in the same way as different photographs—the style depending a little upon the operator's mode, though the great outlines are unmistakeable. The closest to the truth of any delineation I ever got was from a poor but intelligent itinerant, Mr. Lamb. He certainly knew nothing whatever of my antecedents, nor did I give him the slightest clue that I could avoid, by conversation or manner, at our interview; but his written index to my character fitted as accurately as a

key fits its own lock. Talking on this subject some years after with Professor Gregory when we met in London, he said that he and Mr. Combe had slightly differed at the manipulation in Edinburgh, Mr. Combe not attributing sufficient bulk to the temporal muscle; and by this fact Mr. Simpson might have been somewhat misguided in his final estimate. Alas! Combe, Gregory, and Simpson—genial, approbative, philanthropic James Simpson, the advocate—are all departed, or I would tell them, as I tell all the English phrenologists, that, to form a correct estimate of character and avoid many mistakes, it is essential they should recognise a greater number of faculties than their old category embraces. There is one portion of the brain, for instance, often pushing forward the outer angle of the supra-orbital bone: it relates to *motion*, and is large in those who love feats of speed; but phrenologists often mistakenly give it to its neighbour *order*. And so of many others; but this is not the place for their enumeration.

A half-thinking, hastily-judging "world" has decided that Mr. Combe was a great infidel for asserting something tantamount to this—that the natural world is governed by laws which are imperative, and cannot be set aside in compliance with human desires—adding that if a number of persons, however pious, were knowingly to go out in a leaky ship to sea, no prayer of theirs would prevent its sinking. Attached to this judgment is a kindred idea that he must of necessity have been an irreverent man. Than this there could hardly, in my opinion, have been a greater mistake. On my dining at his house one evening, when the party was most varied, and (intellectually regarded) most brilliant, Mr. Combe drew me aside for some private conversation, spoke of the impression my visit to Edinburgh had made upon him, and urged on me the importance of my taking steps to qualify myself thoroughly for medical practice, in which he believed, I was well constituted to succeed. In reply I told him of some solemn impressions I had lately had, that in pursuing the curriculum which would be required with any certainty of a professional title at last, I should have so much to hide that I believed in, as well as so much to assent to that I disagreed with, that a warning in my very soul had been given me against it, which made me feel as if I should lose God's favour by persisting in it, and that the same monition seemed to show me that I had another course, for the present, to pursue. Mr. Combe now looked at me with a most considerate and almost fatherly look, as he said, "I would not advise you to disregard such a monition as that;"—though men with great pretension to orthodoxy have since scoffed at such an experience, and said I was foolish for not pursuing the first course. The law has since, though too late, rendered scruples on that ground needless.

The last time I saw Mr. Combe was on a brief re-visit to Edinburgh—I think in January, 1848, when it was pleasant to find him still as glad to see me as ever. I have several very kindly notes and letters from him on various topics—chiefly personal, few of which, however, would be of much import to the public. They are written in a hand as easy to be read as print—as clear as Dr. Samuel Brown's or Dr. Robert Chambers's—which is saying much. The original of the following I once gave to my friend Mr. D'Ewes Coke, for the sake of the autograph, and quote here for its possible usefulness:—

Edinburgh, 1 April, 1851.

Dear Sir,—In answer to your letter of the 29th March, if you will refer to Dr. Combe's work on Digestion you will gather from its whole scope, that he considered the grand point in dietetics to be the adaptation of the thing eaten, in quality and quantity, to the state of the system of the person who ate it; and he acted on this principle. For example—When there was no inflammatory or pletoric state in his organism, he would eat fish, fowl, beef, mutton, game, or any wholesome food that was presented to him, but always in quantity proportionate to the waste of material going on in the system. If in an inflammatory state he would eat sago, rice, milk, and so forth. In the former state he would drink a glass or two of wine: in the latter, only water. In short the object of his treatise is to show that all ordinary edible substances are very good in certain circumstances, and not adapted to opposite conditions; and that no scale of diet *can* be laid down which will be good for everybody in every state of his organism. He gives rules for finding out what is proper in varying circumstances.

I hope you understand what I write; and I remain, my dear sir, yours faithfully,  
GEO. COMBE.

My recollections of Professor Gregory are altogether genial and grateful. He was disappointed when I resolved on leaving Edinburgh in 1845, and years afterwards favoured my acquisition of a medical degree—being pleased to say in his certificate that he was “convinced” I should “render valuable services to the public as a physician.” While in Edinburgh I had one evening a somewhat remarkable experience commencing at his house. Mrs. Gregory, though as kind a gentlewoman as could be, having observed that my ordinarily quiet and homely aspect changed to one of superior resolution whenever I was engaged in magnetising, thought she would like to try a counter experiment. So, without warning me of her purpose, she asked me if I would magnetise her in the Professor's presence, but secretly determined to counter-influence me in the operation, if possible. Unfortunately she succeeded beyond her wish: instead of continuing operator I unawares became the subject; nor was the influence altogether removed before my departure. For all that night and the next day my state was an abnormal one. I wandered on the Calton Hill and up to Arthur's Seat in the hope that fresh air and change might restore me,

but with little effect. I felt a stranger to myself, and every object had a peculiar and preternatural appearance; nor was it till the third day from that of the experiment that I felt entirely well. On several previous occasions I had suffered from the same cause—once on trying to magnetise a little boy at Leicester, when, though wide awake, I became transfixed and could not rise from my chair, though he seemed unaffected, and could rise freely and walk away. If any of my readers think “there is nothing in mesmerism,” I must leave them to explain such phenomena on some other hypothesis. It is all very well to attribute such effects to imagination; but between merely mental imagery and such physical conditions my own philosophy tells me there is a broad distinction. The last time I met Dr. Gregory was in London, during the Great Exhibition of 1851.

Mr. Combe, one of a family of seventeen, and brother of the distinguished Dr. Andrew Combe, was born in Edinburgh, in 1788, died near London in 1858, and was consequently then seventy years of age, Professor Gregory, the descendant of an unbroken line of men of genius, who began their career in the early part of the 17th century, was born on Christmas-day, 1803, and died on the 24th of April in the same year as Mr. Combe, and was consequently only fifty-five. George Combe will long be distinguished for his maintenance, in his celebrated work “*The Constitution of Man*,” of the doctrine that, by God’s Providence, we are placed in the midst of a material universe ever acting upon us, and governed by perfect order; and that, as we cannot change that universe, we must place ourselves in harmony with it—ascertaining and recognising its laws, and submitting ourselves in willing obedience to their behests. To me this seems to be one side of a sublime material theorem, of which Swedenborg has given the other and spiritual. A third intelligence might do itself no wrong in considering both. William Gregory will have a place in the world’s memory for his industrious chemical researches; his friendliness to those who by more occult pursuits sought in his day to bring into the arena of recognised science a better knowledge of the imponderable forces in nature; his successful competition for the chemical chair at Edinburgh with the young Galileian spirit of Dr. Samuel Brown; his masterly introduction of Liebig and Reichenbach to the British mind, and for qualities and accomplishments which made him a favourite with so many pupils and friends, who will perpetuate through others his teachings to them. Baron Liebig still lives and nobly labours. And for me, I count it one of the great privileges of a by no means scantily privileged existence, to have shaken the hands of all three, in scientific friendship at dear old Edinburgh, on the occasion now recorded.



## Chapter Fourteenth.

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### SCOTCHMEN AT HOME.

(MAY, 1866.)

THE year was just ripening—harvest taking its own from the hands of summer, and putting thereon its grateful mark—when I first entered Scotland from Carlisle. Were you in Carlisle, you would see rising in its principal street the statue of the late Mr. James Steel—one of its honoured citizens. At the time I speak of—1844—not the statue but the living man himself, was in that city, and, as I was leaving it for Scotland, he said—“When you are at Dumfries, call and remember me kindly to Mr. John M'Diarmid: it will be an introduction for you, and I am sure he will give you a welcome, and any local information you may require.” This was the the only introduction from person to person I took across the Border, though doubtless I could have had many a one had I thought of asking for it.

The Sark being passed, I had an opportunity of seeing the renowned blacksmith of Gretna Green—a very decent looking man, in his Sunday clothes, apparently on the look-out for English customers, and more ready for forging the bonds of wedlock than for doing the heavy work of Tubal Cain. It may have been a mistake of mine; but I thought that, on my getting out of the coach, he would have liked me better had there been a lady with me. Old Criffel rose boldly across the Solway, as if to sentinel Caledonia's threshold, and represent there, with

due port, the interior solemnity and grandeur of that noble land of "flood and fell." An overwhelming rush of associations, not fully anticipated, came upon me here—a sort of *resumé* of all the song and story, the philosophy and learning, of Scotland, with which I had been more or less familiar from my early days. I thought of its great historical and poetical names—of Bruce and Wallace, Scott and Burns, probably the most—as well as of the Scotsmen of all sorts I had known in England, and of national traditions and prejudices that had been nursed from age to age. The reaction from these feelings and thoughts was accompanied by a resolve, that all bias I had ever received, favourable or unfavourable, should now be laid aside—that nothing I might have to witness should be prejudged—but that my soul should be left as open as day, for everything I might see or learn to make its legitimate impress upon me, and no more; and this was exactly the mood in which I had to encounter experience number one, as the mail by which I was travelling changed its horses at Annan. In front of the inn there, was loitering a person who seemed to have nothing else to do than answer questions—the very man I wanted; so, leaving the coach and approaching him, I asked if he could tell me the number of the population. With an air of respectful caution (as though he wanted neither to disoblige me nor to commit himself), he answered, while evidently taking all my bearings, "I couldna justly say, sir." "Well," said I, looking on the kirks and houses, "I do not expect you to tell me within twenty or thirty, but will be quite satisfied if you can say within five hundred." At this point his physiognomy assumed a new and curious interest—a sort of subdued eagerness over which was hastily flung another thickness of caution to hide it, as raising his hand to his head and tipping his hat a little aside, he answered my question anent the population, by saying, "Is it onything ye wanted to be doin' in the toon, sir, made ye spier?" As the traces were attached and the coach was now ready, the only chance was for my counter-questioner to retain his information as I did mine; and a short and pleasant ride, where bright water-gleams through the changing woodlands ever and anon gladdened the eye, brought me to Dumfries and its associations with the history of Robert Burns. The Crichton Institution, a famous retreat for mental invalids, being one of the most conspicuous buildings in the neighbouring landscape, had already attracted my attention.

John M'Diarmid, editor and proprietor of the "Dumfries Courier," a man whose heart and head were alike in the practice as well as the poetry of rural life, (and whose paper for that very reason was known as far up as the midland counties of England), had just returned from the famous Burns festival of that year, and was full of the subject, as he

sat down to tea with his family, asking me with great cordiality to join them. The painting (I think, Nasmyth's) from which one of the best known engravings of Burns's portrait was taken, looked down on us from the wall, as M'Diarmid criticised rather closely some of the passages in Professor Wilson's celebrated speech at the meeting—which, indeed, he pronounced more of an essay written for printing than a speech at all. There was a mingling of chat about literary friends of mine in England, and about one of my little books, pleasantly reviewed long before by Willie Smith in the "Courier"—all which being over, Mr. M'Diarmid turned upon me a shrewd but friendly look, as he said, "And, now, may I ask you, Mr. Hall, what has brought you to Dumfries?" "Well," said I, "being on my way to Edinburgh, it occurred to me that I would call here to see the neighbourhood, and give a course of lectures." "Lectures?" he exclaimed, "what will you lecture upon?" "Mesmerism," I answered. "Mesmerism!" quoth he, more startled than before, "and in what place will you lecture?" "That," I rejoined, "is what Mr. Steel thought you would kindly advise me about." "Well," said he at length, after reckoning over with his family all the likely places, "I think ye couldn't do better than have the Theatre; and as soon as we have finished tea, my son John shall accompany you to Dean Hamilton (Dean is a secular title in Scotland) who has the letting of it."

Another half-hour, and I was with Mr. Archibald Hamilton, Dean of Guild—a man to be remembered for many reasons: in truth, an equally remarkable compound of human qualities in one round, jolly little body, one might have gone very much farther than Dumfries without meeting. Let us put some of them down in their order: 1st, caution; 2nd, candour; 3rd, humour; 4th, deliberateness; and, as for kindness—any amount of it, where he had confidence; patience, and trying that of other people, about equal, where he had not; and punctuality most exact and exacting. Such, as I had afterwards reason to believe, was about the measure of the first man with whom I ever transacted business in Scotland. Sitting by him, at the time, was one of whom I remember that he was a great contrast in his physique to the round, jolly dean—more slender and I should think much taller, though as he was sitting on a low seat I could not accurately say; but about his dark, intelligent, expressive eyes, and earnest, thoughtful look altogether, I have no question to this day. God bless him, evermore, for the genial correspondence with which he has since cheered me, as well as for all the true and beautiful thoughts he has given to his country and to mankind! It was Thomas Aird, the poet; but I did not know him then.

Before going further with this little "Tale of the Border," let us have



a quiet word or two on a national question very often and very variously discussed on both sides of it. There can be no doubt that from the most ancient times there was hourly cause for the exercise of caution, suspicion and jealousy among the inhabitants of that harassed region, and not that region alone. In feudal days, when clanship prevailed throughout the north, it was essential to any man's liberty, if not to his existence, to keep a constant and sharp look-out against every possibility of attack or encroachment. Two faculties, therefore, would be universally cultivated more intensely than all the rest—namely, wariness with regard to all strangers, and attachment to those who had once secured confidence. Whether viewed phrenologically or not, it will be evident to every thinker that the cultivation of the same dispositions from age to age must of necessity in time have become constitutional and hereditary. Hence, in the opinion of some, the origin of "Scotch caution," especially in the Border district—hence, too, the reason for the man at Annan, before he would give me information, asking if it was anything I wanted to be doing in the town made me inquire. Mr. M'Diarmid would have confidence in me from the mere fact of Mr. Steel's word of introduction, had he never heard my name before. But Dean Hamilton would have, not only the hereditary and constitutional, but a more special motive for caution on my asking him to let me have the Theatre for a lecture-room. From the fact of Dumfries being the first large town over the Border in that quarter, it would happen that English people connected with theatres or lectures going north would often stay there, and should their hopes of adequate returns for the demonstration of their real or imaginary talents be unsuccessful, their inability to pay expenses would sometimes be matter of course, and painfully annoying to those by whom they had been trusted. It was, therefore, the most natural and proper thing in the world, when young Mr. John had introduced me, and my wish for the Theatre had been stated, for the shrewd Dean to look at me with a look still more inquiring than his words, as he said, "An' what for is it ye want the Theatre, may I ask, sir?"

"For a course of lectures."

The Dean—"Lectures? An' what will ye be lecturing upon?"

"Mesmerism."

"Mesmerism!" exclaimed the Dean. "And have ye brought any introductions wi' ye?"

"None," I replied, "except a kindly word from Mr. Steel, of Carlisle, to Mr. M'Diarmid, to whom, however, my name was already familiar."

"Aye—weel—that's a' richt enough; but hae ye got no introduction

to any person o' scientific note—to Dr. Brown, for instance o' the Crichton Institution, or any other scientific man?"

"Not a line."

"Ah," continued my interlocutor, with a not unkindly, but somewhat disappointed, tone and look, "that is very unfortunate for ye. Ye shouldna hae come to Scotlan' on sic an expedition without introduction. I'm afraid ye'll sadly lose for want o' it."

"Not at all," said I: "my theme and name were always a sufficient introduction for me in England, to say nothing of my seldom lecturing there without being invited; and I am not very far from England yet."

"Ah, weel," rejoined the Dean, "but after all, ye'll soon find out that Scotland isna England; and it would hae been far, far better for ye, had ye had mair introduction to start wi'—to Dr. Brown, for instance, o' the Crichton Institution, or some ither equally scientific man."

What good, quiet, observant Thomas Aird thought of all this it is impossible for me to know, as he never spoke one word during the parley; but growing myself a little impatient, I said—Well, sir, if you'll let me the Theatre, I'll pay you for it, and when my circular is printed one shall be sent to Dr. Brown; if he comes I shall be happy to see him, and if he does not it will make no great difference to me. I never went in my life, with my hat in my hand, to ask any man to attend a lecture of mine."

The Dean, with a slight change of manner—"I didna intend to hurt your feelings, Mr. Hall; I didna doot your respectability; it's no that; but the letting o' the Theatre doesna depend on myself alone; I should hae to see anither party anent it; an'—where are ye staying?—at the King's Arms—verra weel—I'll gie ye yer answer at a quarter-past ten the morn; but I maun ken Dumfries better than you can, and I deeply regret for your ain sake that ye hadna an introduction to some scientific man, an' there's nane could better hae served your purpose than Dr. Brown, o' the Crichton Institution."

"But couldn't you let me have an answer to-night?" I asked.

"What for the night?" replied the Dean.

"Because I wish to be in good time with my advertisement for the newspapers."

"Never fear but ye'll be in good time for the papers; I'll keep my word wi' ye; I couldna see the party I have to consult about it the night, but will let you know at a quarter-past ten the morn, exactly."

"Good night," said I, then a young, very energetic and active man; but I wish you could let me have the answer to-night, for suspense of any sort to me is painful."

"No need for pain at a'" (concluded the short, stout, deliberate Dean), "I'll keep my word wi' ye—good nicht, good nicht, sir, a quarter-past ten the morn—but I wish you'd had an introduction to Dr. Brown, o' the Crichton Institution.

Morning came; and at ten o'clock, growing very impatient, and wanting to make the best of my time, I went to the Dean's house. He was just going out of it, and said, "Why did ye no' believe me? a quarter-past ten was the time I named, an' it wants a quarter to it yet."

"Just so," I replied, "but a quarter of an hour is not much to be on the right side with; and if I can't have an answer soon, I shall trouble myself no more about it."

"Aye, aye," responded the Dean, "I dare say we seem slow people, yet we keep to our word, an' I'll be at the King's Arms wi' ye exactly at the time I named; but I canna help regretting that ye hadna an introduction to Dr. Brown, or some ither scientific man."

Who the Dean had to confer with on the subject, or why at that particular hour, he never told me, nor did I ask. Perhaps it was with John M'Diarmid himself; but as I stood in front of the hotel, wondering whether all this was not downright waste of time, and almost resolving to go and see Burns's grave, and then be off to Edinburgh; exactly at a quarter-past ten—not a second on one side or the other—came pacing over the area the punctual Dean, saying, some yards before reaching me, "Aweel, Mr. Hall, ye'll be welcome to hae the Theatre, but I would ye'd had an introduction to——"

"Shall I pay your charge for it at once," said I, rather proudly.

"No, no," cried he, "I wouldna insult ye by taking your money aforehand, and I hope ye'll hae success; but I still think it would hae been far better had ye but had an introduction to Dr. Brown, o' the Crichton Institution."

The worthy Dean knew Dumfries better than I did. Every precaution was taken for making the announcement of my purpose as effective as possible; but my first audience in the large Theatre, where Burns's prologues and epilogues had once been spoken to crowds, was so chillingly small, that the little room I am now writing in might have held it. Yet some influential people, including members of the press and of the medical profession, and Mr. Biggar, laird of Maryholm, with General Pitman, were there. The lecture struck a chord that vibrated farther, and the second farther still. Between it and the third I was called upon by the Provost of the town with some other genteel people, and at night the Theatre was crowded with bright and interested-looking faces in every part. Some of the aristocracy of the neighbourhood were there; and, not very far asunder, sat the Provost, with John

M'Diarmid, Dean Hamilton, and——Dr. Brown, of the Crichton Institution! The lecture that night was followed, not only by a warm vote of thanks, moved and seconded by Mr. Biggar and one of the medical men, but a formal request that I would give another course. I did so, and never can forget those scenes. Night after night was the Theatre equally crowded to hear me; medical men invited me to see some of the more peculiar and interesting cases under their treatment; the newspapers contained ample and respectful notices of my doings; and the "lads" from one of the printing-offices came to beg that I would let them row me up the Nith, on a sunny evening, to the beautiful ruins of Lincluden. Mr. M'Diarmid advised me to take a pony and ride over by Lochmaben (on an island in which beautiful sheet of water stands one of King Robert Bruce's castles), and join him at Lockerbie lamb fair, where I saw nearly 80,000 sheep in flocks on a hill, and where there were people of all sorts, Scotsmen who had wandered in every clime, one of them having with him a noble-looking lady of colour for his wife.\* Booths, like those on a race-course, were there for every purpose,—including booths for whisky and booths for banking. Shepherds, with plaids and bonnets and long crooks, like those which we English people generally see but in pictures, were there in reality—men of Allan Ramsay's, Burns's, and the Ettrick Shepherd's poetry, talking in their well-known Doric, and acting in all they did like men in simple earnest; while the bright, broad, winding Annan, and the

\* I have good reason for believing that this was the very lady in reference to whom, in his poem of "A Summer Day," Thomas Aird has the following beautiful and touching lines:—

" In life's first glee, and first untutored grace,  
With raven tresses, and with glancing eyes,  
How beautiful those children, lustrous dark,  
Pulling the kingcups in the flowery meadow!  
Born of an Indian mother: She by night,  
An orphan damsel on her native hills,  
Looked down the Khyber Pass, with pity touched  
For the brave strangers that lay slain in heaps,  
Low in that fatal fold and pen of death.  
Sorrow had taught her mercy: Forth she went  
With simple cordials from her lonely cot,  
If she might help to save some wounded foe.  
By cavern went she, and tall ice-glazed rock,  
Casting its spectral shadow on the snow,  
Beneath the hard blue moon. Save her own feet  
Crushing the starry spangles of the frost,  
Sound there was none on all the silent hills;  
And silence filled the valley of the dead.  
Down went the maid aslant. A cliff's recess  
Gave forth a living form. A wounded youth,

Loch, sent back their gleams from below, and Queensbury and fifty other mountains and fells looked down on the moving scene. And there I met with Currie, the sculptor, who took me the day afterwards through his studio and up to the Museum and public gardens overlooking Dumfries, where was his wondrous piece of self-taught handiwork, "Old Mortality and his Pony," in rough stone. Dumfries, thou bonny queen of Scotland's south! it is near twenty-two years since I promised thy brotherly set—so cautious at first but so cordial at last, to visit thee again, though I have never yet been able. Thy Aird, Currie, M'Culloch, and other worthies still live; but John M'Diarmid and Archibald Hamilton sleep near thy Burns—Dean Hamilton! of whom I seldom, if ever, speak and tell this story to a Dumfriesian, without something to this effect being responded, "Ah, poor dear old Archie! one of the drollest, cheeriest, kindest, and warmest-hearted men that ever lived. Never speak disrespectfully of dear old Archie! he felt for you in what he said when he wished you had brought an introduction to Dr. Brown or some other scientific man; and none would be better pleased when he found you successful without it."

My reception at Kilmarnock was different, but not less good; and there it was I found that the further from the Border the less there was of that first suspicion of strangers. Yet at Glasgow I had again a most notable example of blended caution and kindness. William Lang, the successor of Charles Mackay, as editor of the "Glasgow Argus," had

---

One unit relic of that thick battue,  
Escaping death, and mastering his deep hurt,  
From out the bloody Pass had climbed thus far  
The mountain side, and rested there a while.  
The virgin near, up rose he heavily,  
Staggered into the light, and stood before her,  
Bowing for help. She gave him sweet-spiced milk,  
And led him to her home, and hid him there  
Months, till pursuit was o'er, and he was healed,  
And from her mountains he could safely go.  
But grateful Walter loved the Affghan girl,  
And would not go without her: They had taught  
Each other language: Will she go with him  
To the Isles of the West, and be his wife?  
Nor less she loved the fair-haired islander,  
And softly answered, Yes. And she is now  
His Christian wife, wondering and loving much  
In this mild land, honoured and loved by all;  
With such a grace of glad humility  
She does her duties. And, to crown her joy  
Of holy wedded life, her God has given her  
Those beauteous children, with the laughing voices,  
Pulling the kingcups in the flowery meadow.

written a book on Mesmerism, in which was some respectful mention of my name; and I called upon him. My first audiences were as small as those at Dumfries; but Mr. Lang had secured the attendance of a representative of every newspaper. The first reports were fair, and some of them far more commendatory than I had expected. On the strength of these I gave another course. Lectures followed lectures—seventeen in all; and at every lecture after the third, the attendance was crowded. Glasgow, William Lang, Sheriff Steel, David Chambers, James Hedderwick, Baillie Hamilton, and some others! Never while my heart beats will it forget their friendship.

Between Dumfries and Dundee, and in a sojourn of six months, I naturally met with a great variety of interesting character besides that described, if not all so amiable or so bright. But my Scottish experiences taught me one great lesson, and my Irish and Welsh experiences have confirmed it, that there is nothing more preposterous or injurious than to judge any people by too partial or too cursory observation. While staying at Perth I was one evening invited to be the guest of a most interesting and amiable party, when one of its members, a lame gentleman, extensively read, but little travelled, said—"Well, Mr. Hall, I hope you are much enjoying your visit amongst us; would you not like to stay in Scotland altogether?" "No," was my answer, "not altogether. I love Scotland, but never knew the meaning of 'merrie England' till I came and found how solemn you are here." "But," rejoined my friend, playfully, yet earnestly, "you are too much of a cosmopolitan to be biased from the mere love of bias: don't you think that in comparison with the coldness, reserve, and pride of England as a rule, the social warmth and cordiality of our Scottish character is preferable?" Somewhat surprised by the manner in which this home question was put, I said, "Why, what you are now saying of the English is almost word for word what we are accustomed to hear in England of you." The good man expressed his wonder that such a thing was possible. Several months later on, and just after my return to England, some of my old companions said, "Well, Hall, you have been a good while in Scotland." "Yes," said I. "And no doubt," observed my questioners, "you found the Scotch almost universally a cold, cautious, thrifty, avaricious set of people, didn't you?" "Oh yes," was my answer, "and I will give you two examples of it:—The first meal I took in Scotland was by invitation, with a gentleman who had never seen me before; and the last money I paid was to a barber in Kelso, who would not take so much as I offered him; but I cannot tell you of all that passed between!"



## THE AUTHOR'S EARLIER WORKS.

"Go on! go on!"—JAMES MONTGOMERY, the poet, to Spencer T. Hall, on reading his first work, *"The Forester's Offering,"* in 1841.

"A volume of sterling good sense, pure English, and native poetry, appealing not to our charity but to our perception of excellence."—From a Review by WILLIAM NEWMARCH, Esq., F.R.S.

"It has a sparkling richness and graphianness of description, which rivet the attention and delight the mind. . . . The appearance of this work at the present time is a striking and flattering characteristic of the age.—SHEFFIELD IRIS.

"The effusion of a healthful fancy and a kindly heart, worthy of a wide celebrity."—SPECTATOR.

"He possesses a fine natural taste and great ability, and gives utterance to his thoughts with such truthful earnestness, that by this one little work he holds no inconsiderable place in the ranks of living authors."—From a Review by Mr. JOHN FOWLER, the Biographer of Pemberton.

"Mr. Hall is no common observer of things and men—he sees with the eye of a poet and a philosopher—and his descriptions of scenes and characters are worthy of special attention. He has faith in the strength as well as in the beauty of goodness, and all his efforts are directed to the promotion of right feeling among his fellow men. . . . He writes as if his heart were in his pen.—LEEDS TIMES.

"— One of Nature's gentlemen. . . . The confession of his experiences at the end reminds us of Franklin, and has a noble and impressive moral."—THE ATLAS, March 19, 1842.


"He is one of Nature's freemasons, and knows all her secret signs—one of her high priests, who is at home in her innermost shrines, where he pays his vows and calls upon his fellows to pay theirs. He is her poet and sings her praises—and her champion too, who vindicates her right."—TAIT'S MAGAZINE.

Dr. Hall's later works have been spoken of in similar terms by the Press; while the late DR. SAMUEL BROWN, a grandson of the celebrated commentator on the Bible, and himself one of the most distinguished minds of his time, thus wrote in 1852:—"Spencer Hall is not unworthy of his names, like Spenser, a poet, like Hall, addicted to philosophy, like both a christian gentleman. His woodland poems have made him amiably known to all his countrymen as the Sherwood Forester; and his scientific experiences have commended him to the respect of many of the true lovers of science, both at home and abroad. His poems are affectionate, sunny, graceful, true to English nature, and also spiritual in their tendency; his scientific narratives and descriptions are ingenious, vigorous and clear. As a man I know him to be a lover of man, given to self-help, enthusiastic, industrious, dutiful, brave, and altogether honourable."



THIS Work, continued monthly, will be completed in Five or Six Parts. The various Biographies are given not merely in deference to chronological precedence or social rank, but to a rule that, the Author trusts, by affording more variety may also afford more pleasure in the reading, as they appear.

The commencing chapter of Part IV, will be on DR. DICK, "the Christian Philosopher," followed by GEORGE HERBERT, JOHN GRATTON, &c., &c.



PART IV.]

[PRICE 1s.



# MORNING STUDIES

AND


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"Days in Derbyshire," "Mesmeric Experiences,"  
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Among the Memoirs and Verbal Portraits included in this Work, besides the above, are or will be those of ERASMUS DARWIN, M.D. F.R.S.; WILLIAM COBBETT; PROFESSOR WILSON; MARY RUSSELL MITFORD; JOHN HENRY, FIFTH DUKE OF RUTLAND; WILLIAM HUTTON, F.A.S.; EBENEZER ELLIOTT, "the Corn Law Rhymers;" FREDERICK DAVIES, a Hero of Humble Life; JOHN CLARE, "the Northamptonshire Peasant;" ROBERT BLOOMFIELD, "the Farmer's Boy;" BERNARD BARTON, "the Quaker Poet;" NANNY SHACKLOCK, a Village Florence Nightingale; the two MONTGOMERIES; GEORGE COMBE, the Phrenological Writer; WILLIAM GREGORY, Professor of Chemistry, and other Scottish Worthies; BARON LIEBIG; IRISH CHIEF and his People; PHOEBE, Mother of the HOWITTS; GEORGE PURSEGLOVE, "the Poor Man's Poor Friend;" MRS. JERRAM; CLAUDE GAY, and other interesting Characters.

\* \* SECTION II. will contain MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS on various themes. SECTION III. will consist of "LAYS FROM THE LAKES" and other Poems;—and the whole, when complete, will form a Volume which it is hoped may be interesting alike in the private study and the family circle.

*Author's Address*—BURNLEY, LANCASHIRE.



## Chapter Fifteenth.

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THE REV. THOMAS DICK, LL.D.

"THE CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHER."

"ECCE ALTER TIBER!" (behold another Tiber!) cried the old Romans when first they came upon a view of the Tay sweeping so nobly through the meadows, near where, since their time, has stood the fair city of Perth. But travellers say they paid a more flattering compliment to the Tiber than the Tay by that comparison. Certainly as the Tay flows, widening and yet winding as it goes, through lands sacred in history to the memory of William Wallace (and especially as seen from Kinoul Hill) it lights one of the loveliest landscapes on which poet, painter, or patriot, could wish to gaze. The autumn of 1844 had scarcely waned, when, after more than a week in that neighbourhood, I one day took the steam-boat down to "bonny Dundee," where an appointment had been made for my lecturing in the Thistle Hall, which there was a great pleasure to me in the evening in finding well filled for my welcome. The magnetic phenomena I had been developing in Edinburgh had, from reports in the papers, excited an interest throughout the country, which will account for that reception; and an elderly and very thoughtful-looking gentleman, Dr. Dick, was unanimously called to the chair. During the whole of my experiments I had no idea but that the Dr. Dick in question was a respectable local physician, not for an instant dreaming of his being a gentleman of more than national

reputation. That he was a person of quiet, calm, yet acute observation, was evident enough. He never interfered with a single experiment, neither did he permit the most rapid phase of one to escape his eye. His face was much of the same type as Dr. Samuel Brown's; and, allowing for the difference of years, the likeness was striking—the outlines of the face being of that order one may call *pointed*, but not in any single feature unpleasantly projecting. It would have been some relief to me, as the phenomena were evolved, if he had said one word indicative of a bias for or against the course I was taking; for, as not unfrequently professional men, sceptical altogether concerning the claims of the science, would nurse their prejudices during the whole of a series of experiments, and then open out at last with what they intended for a destructive fire, I had more than half an apprehension (supposing my chairman to be possibly a physician of firmly stereotyped opinions) that his reticence was just as likely to be predicative of such an onset as of anything in favour of myself or my views. Yet, as the suspicion crossed me, there did occur the counter-question—*could* a face so candid-looking and benign be that of a man meditating hostility towards any one person or thing on earth? But that point was settled anon. The last experiment was no sooner concluded, and the eyes of the whole audience directed in one intense and expectant gaze towards the venerable chairman, than he arose, and in a voice rather silvery than deep, yet which filled the hall with its musical clearness, said—“Supposing that we had never heard of the Copernican system of astronomy, and some person were at this moment to appear amongst us, telling us, for the first time in our lives, that the earth on which we are so quietly placed is not only turning round its own axis at the rate of a thousand miles, but in its annular course is whirling us through space at that of 68,000 miles an hour; if, on hearing him, we reasoned only in accordance with our ordinary experience instead of our higher knowledge, it would be impossible for us to believe him; but reasoning on the subject in accordance with the highest knowledge we have and the noblest laws of thought, the question loses all its mystery, and we accept the facts, believing them to be incontrovertible. Just so with the phenomena we have been observing this evening, and which I for one have watched most closely. Reasoning about them on the level of our more ordinary observations, they might seem incredible to some; but comparing them with our higher knowledge of things that yet are fully ascertained, I see no more reason for rejecting them, presented to us in the open manner they have been, than for doubting the rotation or the speed of the planetary bodies, or any other of the varied phenomena of nature.” As the large audience



responded to this, and some one told me that my chairman was Dr. Dick, "the Christian Philosopher," one thrill of pleasure was followed by another, when he put his card into my hand, and asked me to pay him a visit at his Observatory, at Broughty Ferry, and dine with him.

It was on a Saturday, at noon, that, in compliance with that invitation, I accompanied Mr. Dick, the philosopher's son, by rail to Broughty Ferry—a place some miles below Dundee, on the Frith of Tay. The autumn day was calm and clear, and the glittering waves, the passing and repassing craft, and the broad expanse of sky, made me feel more than ordinarily glad, as the good old man gave me welcome at his door and introduced me to his wife—his second wife—much younger than him in years, but one of the kindest, most reverential, and deferential of women, to such a man, that his warmest friend could have wished for him. I was also introduced to Mr. Ducker, a considerable traveller, who was staying as a guest; and our little party was altogether a very interesting and happy one to me, nor did it seem less so to any other of its members. There were also two little children there—grandchildren of Dr. Dick, and children of the son who had kindly called to escort me down. Their mother was dead; but I was assured—though the assurance was hardly needed—that Mrs. Dick was as loving to them as a lady could be, doing all in her power to compensate for that sad bereavement.

While we were at dinner, Mr. Ducker, alluding to my experiments of the previous evening, said that, when he was among some aborigines in a remote part of Australia, he was one night asked to go out and see them cure a woman of a serious bodily ailment. A fire was kindled in the plain, round which gathered a number of the natives apart, yet near enough for the fire-light to show her position. While the rest of the natives were dancing round the fire, a man, corresponding in some degree to the doctor or "big mystery man" of the American Indians, went forth and back between the fire and the woman, and as she stood still, made passes from her head to her feet, taking the outline of the body, much in the style of the French mesmerists. At length, after many repetitions of this process, she was said to be transfixed, and when in due time relieved from that condition was "discharged cured." Mr. Ducker added that, at the time this occurred, he felt convinced that there was some imposture in the case, on the part of the woman, the doctor, or both; but from what he had seen of my previous evening's experiments he now felt as fully convinced that the very contrary was much more probable.

After a visit to the Observatory, there were some hours of calm and interesting conversation, in the house—on Dr. Dick's part much in the

spirit of his works. There was one touching episode. Taking me apart into his library the Doctor asked me, with Mrs. Dick's coincident desire, if I would let him see in what degree phrenology would tally with his opinion of her as derived from their life together. Passing my hand over Mrs. Dick's head I was struck with the indications of her good common sense, her devoted affection, her reverence for intellect and love of the approval of all whom she respected—nor less with those of her kindness to all that was gentle, tender, bereft, or in any way needing compassion. The manipulation ended, the lady herself did not wait to hear any remarks, but on my telling Dr. Dick, after her withdrawal, what I thought of her, he burst into tears, and said that every word of it was true—naming many incidents, but chiefly her conduct towards him and his son's motherless children, in confirmation.

That day to me was one of very deep interest, from the fine blending as it passed of the intellectual with the religious and humane, yet with the absence of everything savouring either of cant or pedantry; and when many years afterwards I learnt that (and perhaps at the very time of my visit) in that frugal but hospitable home pecuniary difficulty had been also a guest, I could but wish that the proverbial one half the world which does not know how the other lives, were more generally and favourably known to its counterpart.

Referring at this moment to "Chambers's Edinburgh Cyclopædia," I find it stated that "Thomas Dick, LL.D., a well-known religious philosopher, was born in 1744, near Dundee, educated at the University of Edinburgh, and intended for the ministry in connection with the Secession Church. After a brief pastoral charge, however, he devoted himself to teaching, lecturing, occasional preaching, and authorship. Dr. Dick proved himself to be a truly useful writer; but although his productions obtained a great popularity in England and America, they brought him very little pecuniary return. Towards the close of his life a small pension was granted him in consideration of his literary services. He died at Broughty Ferry, on the 29th of July, 1857, in the 83rd year of his age. His principal works are 'The Christian Philosopher,' 'The Philosophy of Religion,' 'The Philosophy of a Future State,' 'The Solar System,' 'Celestial Scenery,' 'The Sidereal Heavens,' and 'The Practical Astronomer.' Several of Dr. Dick's writings have been translated into other languages, one even into Chinese." So far Chambers; and it is impossible to read this little encyclopædic monument to so useful a man, and think of the amount of instruction conveyed in those works, without also thinking it wrong that such an author could not himself have had more pecuniary profit



from them than he ever obtained. But his life was in the heavens, and "angels' food" seems to have been his only reward. Dr. Dick's work on the "Improvement of Society by the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge," though not named in the list just quoted, is mentioned by my friend Mr. Henry Duncan, of Kendal, himself an educator, sitting at the present time by my side, as one which has most deservedly left a deep effect on the public mind, and there has probably never been a writer doing so much to familiarise the people of his own world with the countless worlds beyond it. In conclusion, let me give my younger readers a glimpse or two of his teaching, in the hope that it may quicken their desire for more. The quotations are from his work on "The Solar System":—

We have endeavoured to prove to the intelligent reader, that the world in which we dwell, with all its continents, islands, oceans, and its numerous population, is continually revolving around its axis to bring about the returns of day and night. It is also flying with a still greater velocity around the sun, to produce the various changes of the seasons. What an august and sublime idea does this suggest for our occasional contemplation! While we are apt to imagine we are sitting in absolute rest in our apartments, we are in reality whirling round towards the east at the rate of hundreds of miles an hour; and are, at the same time, carried through the regions of space with a velocity of sixty-eight thousand miles every hour; so that during every moment, or every pulse that beats within us, we are carried nearly twenty miles from that portion of space we occupied before. When we lie down to sleep in the evening, we are seldom aware that, during our seven hours' repose, we have been carried along through the space of four hundred and seventy thousand miles! When amidst the gloom of winter, we look forward to the cheering scenes of spring, we must be carried forward more than a hundred millions of miles, before we can enjoy the pleasures of that season; and when spring arrives, we must be carried, through the voids of space, hundreds of millions more, before we can enjoy the fruits of harvest. During every breath we draw, and every word we speak, we are carried forward in our course thirty, forty, or fifty miles, unconscious of the rapidity of our flight; but the motion is not the less real, because we do not feel it. What should we think if we beheld one of the largest mountains in Scotland flying through the atmosphere, across the island of Great Britain, with a velocity which would carry it from John-o'-Groats to the Land's End, a distance of seven hundred miles, in seven minutes? It would, doubtless, excite universal wonder and astonishment. But this is not one-tenth part of the velocity with which the great globe of the earth, and all that it contains, flies through the boundless regions of space. Were we placed on a fixed point, a thousand miles distant from the earth, and beheld this mighty globe, with all its magnificent scenery and population, thus winging its flight around the sun, and carrying the moon along with it in its rapid career, such a spectacle would overwhelm us with astonishment inexpressible, and even with emotions of terror, and would present to view a scene of sublimity and grandeur beyond the reach of our present conceptions. To angels, and other superior intelligences, when winging their flight from heaven to earth, and through distant worlds, such august scenes may be frequently presented.

Although the heavens do not in reality move round the earth, as they appear to

do, yet there are thousands of globes in the celestial regions whose real motions are more swift and astonishing than even those to which we have now referred. The planet Venus moves in its orbit with a velocity of eighty thousand miles an hour; Mercury at the rate of one hundred and nine thousand miles an hour; and the planet Jupiter, which is one thousand four hundred times larger than the earth, at the rate of nearly thirty thousand miles an hour, carrying along with it, in its course, four globes, each larger than our moon. Some of the comets have been found to move more than eight hundred thousand miles in the space of an hour; and some of the fixed stars, though apparently at rest, are moving with a velocity of many thousands of miles an hour. In short, we have every reason to believe that there is not a globe in the universe, nor a portion of matter throughout creation, but is in rapid and perpetual motion through the spaces of infinity, supported by the arm of Omnipotence, and fulfilling the designs for which it was created.

The benevolence of the Deity is manifested throughout this system in ordering all the movements and arrangements of the planetary globes, so as to act in subserviency to the comfort and happiness of sentient and intelligent beings. For the wisdom of God is never employed in devising means without an end; the grand end of all his arrangements, so far as our views extend, is the communication of happiness; and it would be inconsistent with the wisdom and other perfections of God not to admit that the same end is kept in view in every part of his dominions, however far removed from the sphere of our observation. We cannot, indeed, explore the minute displays of Divine goodness in the distant regions of the planetary system, but we perceive certain general arrangements which clearly indicate that the happiness of intellectual natures is one of the grand ends of the Divine administration. For example—light is essential to the comfort and happiness of all living beings. Its rays illumine the vast expanse of the heavens, and unveil all the beauties and sublimities of creation around us. Without its influence the universe would be transformed into a desert, and happiness, even in the lowest degree, could scarcely be enjoyed by any sentient or perceptive existence. Now we find, in the arrangements of the solar system, that ample provision has been made for diffusing light in all its varieties over every planet and satellite belonging to this system. All the planets revolve round their axes, in order that every part of their surfaces may enjoy a due proportion of the solar rays: around the more distant planets, an assemblage of moons has been arranged to throw light upon their surfaces in the absence of the sun. And while the satellites perform this office, the primary planets reflect a still greater quantity of light upon the surface of the satellites: and one of these planets is invested with a splendid double ring, of vast dimensions, to reflect the solar rays during night both on the surface of the planet and on the surface of its moons; all which arrangements must necessarily have a respect to the enjoyment of intellectual natures; otherwise they would be means without an end, which would be inconsistent with the wisdom and intelligence of the Deity. If, then, the happiness of various orders of intelligent beings was intended to be promoted by such adaptations and arrangements, we have here presented to our view a most glorious display of the expansive benevolence of that almighty Being who “is good to all,” and whose “tender mercies are over all his works.” If this earth on which we dwell “is full of the goodness of the Lord;” if countless myriads of living beings, from man downwards to the minutest insect, are supported and nourished by the Divine bounty, how wide and expansive must be the emanations of that beneficence which extends its regards to worlds a thousand times more extensive and populous than ours!



## Chapter Sixteenth.

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### JAMES SILK BUCKINGHAM.

(APRIL, 1866.)

WHATEVER during his life envy, jealousy, monopolous interest or satirical hostility may have said to the contrary, there can be little doubt, now he is gone, that the late Mr. James Silk Buckingham was amongst the most useful as well as the most hopeful and industrious men of his time. His career throughout was one remarkable illustration of the well-known line of the old song :—

It's wonderful what we can do if we try ;

For at almost every step he took he was met by some disaster or annoyance, yet kept pressing on with the most dauntless persistence, making the best of the worst of circumstances, and, even when failing in his own personal endeavours, giving such an impulse to the powers of others in whatever cause or course he had engaged, that the end in view was generally attained, and in several most notable instances within the period of his own life. How he felt on so often seeing others exulting on the ramparts against which he had been first to rear the ladder, it is not easy to tell ; but one fact speaks strongly in favour of his good temper—that he never sat down mopishly or morosely on being pushed back, but immediately sprang up and sought solace in some further enterprise that was almost sure to be of use to somebody. Who but an Archi-

medes of the press dare have made a lever of it where Buckingham did, for moving at its very base the gigantic monopoly of the East India Company? It is probable that, after all, the world's martyrs are, as a rule, its greatest heroes; and regarded in this character James Buckingham ought, perhaps, to take rank with some of the bravest heroes of which England in India boasts—as the sequel may show: to say nothing of a hundred questions of more or less importance, with which his name was identified, before or after he had given the first disturbing scotch to that mighty serpent which was enfolding in its coils, and squeezing to its outburst, the very heart of the Indian empire.

Popular biographies tell us that Mr. Buckingham was born at Flushing, near Falmouth, Cornwall, in 1768, and became a sailor at the early age of nine. Before the end of his tenth year he was a prisoner of war, passed several months in confinement at Corunna, and was afterwards marched barefoot for hundreds of miles, through Spain and Portugal to Lisbon. On being released he still devoted himself to the sea, and at the age of twenty-one became commander of a vessel, making several voyages to the West Indies and the two American continents, as well as to the principal ports of the Mediterranean. Having acquainted himself during these arduous experiences with the French, Italian, Greek, and Arabic languages, he thought to settle where they might be of use to him, in mercantile life, at Malta; but the plague having broken out there (1813), he was prohibited from landing, and resolved to try his fortune at Smyrna, yet without success, though he was well received there. He next went to Alexandria and thence to Cairo, where he was welcomed by the British Consul-General, Colonel Missett, and made the friendship of Mahomet Ali, who was at that time ruling Pasha of Egypt. A negotiation with the Pasha for re-opening the ancient canal between the Red Sea and the Mediterranean (with some other important schemes which have since been revived) was rendered abortive, as is supposed, by the Wahabee war, after which he ascended the Nile, beyond the Cataracts, to Nubia, where he was seized with ophthalmic blindness. To add to his distresses, (as a writer in "Lives of the Illustrious" informs us,) having on his return halted at Keneh, with an intention of going thence to Kosseir, he was attacked in the Desert by a band of mutineers of the army of Ibrahim Pasha, who plundered and left him entirely naked on the barren waste, sixty miles from any human habitation, food, or water; and even when at last he reached Kosseir, he was obliged to retrace his steps—the vessel which should have conveyed him forward having been seized by the mutineers! Returning to Cairo, he afterwards "prospected" the

levels of the Isthmus of Suez, and—habited as a native, and speaking the language—visited every part of Lower Egypt and the Delta.

Buckingham's next occupation was that of an endeavour to master the hydrography of the Red Sea (by the wish of some Brito-Egyptian merchants), with the hope of promoting amity and commerce in that direction with India. For this purpose he went by that route, but the merchants at Bombay saw difficulties in the way of the scheme; and, more than that, when he had obtained command of a frigate from the Imaum of Muscat, and was commissioned to China, while rigging the ship he was told by the Bombay government that, as he had not the E. I. Company's licence, he could not be permitted to retain his post nor even continue in India. The licence he might possibly have had, if he had contemplated such a course before leaving England, or even Cairo. In the emergency he was subjected only to the effects of a general and imperative rule—the Secretary on its enforcement complimenting him highly on his intelligence and the probable utility of his views. On his return by the Red Sea, however, he industriously collected the materials for a new hydrographical chart, including all its coasts, and so turned his banishment to the most useful purpose the circumstances would permit.

The Brito-Egyptian merchants not liking defeat, a compact was then made by them, the Pasha, and Mr. Buckingham, whereby the latter was authorised to return to India, as Mahomet Ali's envoy and representative, for which the Company's licence was not required. This seems, on the face of it, to have been one of the most remarkable expeditions ever undertaken. Knowing so much of Mr. Buckingham's fine presence, intelligence, and urbanity, as I did in after years, I could hardly ever converse with him without wishing I had been acquainted with him, and a companion, had it been possible, as, robed and turbaned—with his speaking eye, his fine oval face, his dark, falling beard, and his extraordinary knowledge of various languages—he journeyed away by such historical places as Tyre, Sidon, Acre, and Jaffa, to Jerusalem—traversing nearly the whole of Palestine, reaching Damascus, and being invited thence by "Queen" Hester Stanhope to be her guest on Mount Lebanon. Nor less so as he afterwards visited Baalbec, Tripoli, Antioch, the Orontes, and Aleppo—passing away thence into Mesopotamia, crossing the Euphrates, and so on to Orfah, near Haran, the Ur of the Chaldees, the birth-place of Abraham, and then through the heart of Asia Minor to the Tigris, glancing at the site of ancient Nineveh by the way, and making researches among the ruins of Babylon—identifying the hanging gardens of Semiramis, the palace of Nebuchadnezzar, and the tower of Babel, then resting at Bagdad—

about all which, and much more of the same kind, those who have the love of such reading may indulge it abundantly in his voluminous works.

Proceeding still on his India-ward route, Mr. Buckingham entered Persia, crossed the chain of Mount Zagros, and passed Kermanshah, to Hamadan, the ancient Ecbatana, Ispahan and Persepolis, embarking at Bushir in a ship of war belonging to the E. I. Company, which was bound on an expedition against some Wahabee pirates on the Persian Gulf; and going on shore at one of their ports (Ras-el-Khyma), he acted as Arabian interpreter to Captain Brydges, commander of the squadron, assisted in bombarding the town, and then proceeded to Bombay, which he reached after a romantic journey, that had occupied him twelve months, chiefly among scenes of the most imposing splendour, wildness or ancient renown; but his mission was again unsuccessful, from the Bombay merchants not having confidence in the Egyptian government.

Now, however, the Company's licence reached him, authorising him to remain in their territories, and he regained the appointment to his old ship, the *Humayoon Shah*, in the service of the Imaum of Muscat, his fortunate successor in the interim having cleared £30,000 by successful voyages to China. With this ship he navigated eastern waters till midsummer, 1818, when receiving, at Calcutta, commands from the Imaum to proceed to the coast of Zanzibar, on a slaving expedition, he bravely—all honour to his memory for it!—threw up his engagement and £4,000 a-year, rather than be implicated in that diabolical traffic.

James Buckingham's history after this is pretty well known. As a writer he was perhaps too orientally diffuse in his verbiage to allow of great depth or force of expression. A greater contrast to Thomas Carlyle in mode of thought and expression it would be impossible to imagine; yet showing remarkable sympathy with the advanced spirit of his time, wherever or in whatever character its physiognomy was presented, he not only immediately caught its portent, but gave his hand to it as one of its readiest ministers. Hence he was induced to commence and edit a liberal newspaper, the "*Calcutta Journal*," which instantly became popular, and yielded its founder a net profit of £8,000 a year. The bold advocacy, however, of free trade, free settlement, and a free press, with the abolition of many customs and practices opposed to humanity, after Lord Hastings had returned to England, brought down upon him the censure of the temporary Governor-General, Mr. John Adam; his paper was suppressed, and (just after his amiable wife, who had not been with him for nearly ten years, had

joined him,) he was ordered to quit Calcutta without a trial or even a hearing—his little fortune was sacrificed in attempts to avert that final issue—and he was thus thrown back on the world, almost as poor, save in experience, as when a youth he left his captivity at Corunna! He left his magnificent library in the hope of some day returning, after getting redress at home. But, though strenuous efforts were made by some of the stoutest minds in parliament, redress never came. His library, like his hopes, was wrecked—his all was gone; and it was not till after many dreary years that at last the Company granted him a pension of £200 a year in addition to the government's £200. "Pompey and Cæsar berry much alike." It was the Company, however, not the home government, that ought to have been compelled to render just compensation and not thus make a boon of a debt. The blow to him at Calcutta was altogether a very savage one; but, like all injustice, it recoiled at length on those who gave it. From the hour that Buckingham was driven from that city, the power of the great Indian monopoly, both commercial and governmental, was doomed. It was by no means his case alone which accomplished that doom. But oppression and vindictiveness, by driving him home, made him for a time the representative there of all the wronged he left behind. Their wrongs thence found utterance in voices that never entirely slept; whilst the impolicy which first aroused them was persevered in to the last—not ceasing even after the trade was thrown open, but at length provoking that rebellion which was followed by John Company finally having to make an assignment of his whole estate and effects to John Bull, whose management, it is devoutly hoped, will be productive of better results.

The first time I saw Mr. Buckingham was in a large wood-cut, when I was yet but a little boy. In that picture he was represented as the chief figure in a cavalcade, passing the foot of a fearfully high and overhanging rock, on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. The next time I saw him was seven or eight years afterwards, in his proper person, as the chief speaker at a meeting in the Town Hall of Nottingham, where he was most eloquently and efficiently advocating the reduction of the Company's power and the throwing open of the trade to India and China. He had in the meantime started the "Athenæum" literary journal, which soon passed out of his hands, but has since proved one of the most successful periodicals of its order, and, though greatly changed in its character, continues still. The next time he appeared in Nottingham, it was at the Exchange Hall, as the advocate of temperance. I may be mistaken, but my impression is that it was the first public address of any importance given on that question in



the town, when people listened with positive wonder to a suggestion that they should give the go-bye to beer and spirits, and thought the person who made it less sensible than they had thought him before. Teetotalism *per se* had not then commenced; and I remember that to me and my companions it sounded rather oddly, that those who took the pledge of temperance should eschew spirits, ale, and porter, but reserve the right to a glass of wine at or after dinner if they desired it. Such was the extent to which the distinguished orientalist went on that occasion; but I believe he afterwards went the whole question.

In 1832 the Reform Bill was passed; and the same general election that sent William Cobbett to the House of Commons from Oldham, sent James Silk Buckingham from Sheffield for the avowed purpose of giving him the best stand-point possible from which to assail the East India monopoly, and gain some compensation for his Indian losses; and though he was not able to achieve off-hand that for which he was elected, he did touch a legislative chord that never ceased to vibrate till it had become the key-note to measures by which the last vestige of that monopoly was demolished. His efforts in parliament were, however, not confined to that question. He laboured for the virtual abolition of impressment and the substitution of a general registry for seamen, with other means for their benefit. He introduced the first bill for the establishment of public walks and gardens for the recreation of the working classes in all large towns,—an idea that one trusts may even yet be some day carried out,—and another for establishing popular literary and scientific institutions. Indian and African questions generally had a share of his attention, as had every question that appealed directly or indirectly to philanthropic feeling.

Retiring from parliament in 1837, he visited America, and gave lectures in all the principal states—avowedly in the promotion of “Temperance, Education, Benevolence, and Peace;” and after his return, still continuing a favourite with many of the people of Sheffield, he was often invited down on public occasions—especially when any great philanthropic measure had to be advocated. Being—say from 1840 to the end of 1842—a co-editor of the “Sheffield Iris,” I as a matter of course saw him on some of those occasions; and as he struck me at Nottingham, I thought of him then—and think of him even now—as one of the most fascinating and persuasive public speakers of those days. His *bon homie*, his fluency and gracefulness of manner and utterance, as well as his aptness of illustration, were probably at that time unrivalled in his own range of oratory: and some who went to listen to him for the purpose of finding fault, or, as one man said, to “hear how he could humbug the folks,” would go away confessing how

completely he had conquered them. In America, where orators of all sorts, from all quarters, abound, he was, we are told, a favourite wherever he came. I have sometimes been reminded of him when listening to George Thompson; but the likeness and difference between them were equally great: each had something of his own the other had not; and besides being about the *best-looking* man one might expect to meet with in ten thousand, Buckingham had the unquestionable advantage of those graces which are to some extent acquirable by intercourse with the polished nations with which his peculiar course of life had brought him so much in contact.

On my going to reside in London, where a good portion of my time was passed between the spring of 1845 and the winter of 1848, I saw Mr. Buckingham often. Those were the days in which *Punch* was trying to put him down by ridicule. The public will remember the occasion, perhaps too well. Buckingham's intercourse with people of nearly all countries, and his intimate acquaintance with so many languages, combined with his knowledge of England, of London especially, and its many advantages and disadvantages for foreigners, suggested to him the need of some general but respectable place, where, on terms supposed to be within their compass, savans, litterateurs, artists—people of taste, polite feeling, and refinement, of whatever nation or climate—might resort for refreshment, the opportunity of knowing and becoming known, and, in short, of feeling as much at home in leisure hours when nothing more specific engaged them, as it was possible to make them by such introductive and other arrangements as in the circumstances were advisable. The plan once resolved on, and Mr. and Mrs. Buckingham being so well qualified for its superintendence, a suitable mansion was opened in the West End, the name of the "British and Foreign Institute" was adopted, and with his Royal Highness the late Duke of Cambridge for president, all commenced and was proceeding exceedingly well. Moreover, to give as high a character as possible to the institution and make it intellectually attractive, free tickets of membership were presented to writers of good repute as an inducement for them to attend its periodical assemblies and share whatever advantages it might otherwise have to offer them. But here was a great difficulty and occasion of much subsequent bitterness. There were men about the metropolis (as there always are) who felt their own literary power to be quite equal to that of others more distinguished, and even superior perhaps to that of the majority of such. Nor were they unknown for what they really were in their own peculiar circles—often writing anonymously or under some *nom de plume*, though personally not so conspicuous *yet* as they were destined

one day to be. But it unfortunately happened, as Mr. Buckingham afterwards explained it, that he had denied free tickets to some of these for want of that more intimate knowledge. Douglas Jerrold and Mark Lemon, I think, were amongst them—men of pride and of wondrous satirical power, who never forgave what they regarded as something worse than mere oversight; and bestowing on the British and Foreign Institute the woful nickname of the “British and Foreign *Destitute*,” with “Punch” for their mortar, they assailed it week by week with such a peppering of satirical shot and shell as no club in London could have long withstood; and thus what might have become in time one of the most interesting and beneficial of metropolitan institutions—advantageous from the agreeable intercourse it could have promoted among people of all climes—gradually sank under the mortification, and is now, like some of its assailants, but a memory. Yet, even as with them, there are not wanting many to whom that memory is a pensive pleasure. I was sometimes there, and wish that London had such an institution still. After all that “Punch” had said in disparagement, I was amazed on my first attendance at its *soirées* by the amplitude and variety of the attractions and the amount of rational enjoyment afforded. There was an air of elegance, comfort, and freedom, that must have been very grateful to not a few of the two hundred people of various nations, of London, and of our own provinces, assembled—each person from an ascertained title to that courtesy being properly introduced; and though the number of guests was so great, the whole was as orderly, easy and harmonious, as an “evening at home.” Many highly intelligent people were there in quiet yet unrestrained conversation: and from the O’Connor Don and Mr. Horace Twiss, to the last German arrivals—a pale vocal *artiste* with one of the plainest faces I ever saw, but with one of the sweetest voices I ever heard, and a young violinist, little inferior to Paganini, all seemed satisfied and bent on giving and receiving pleasure. There was one scholarly foreigner who assured me that the hour was a perfect luxury, entirely dispelling for the time that chilling sense of *London loneliness* which sometimes makes the heart of a stranger without relatives there feel as heavy as a stone. For myself, I met with many old acquaintances and an odd little joke. It happened that, at the time, my name was before the world in connection with the recent application of mesmerism to several eminent invalids; and as I stood enjoying some music, a gentleman who was near me said: “I am told there is a great mesmerist here: could you point him out to me?” Feeling rather abashed at being alluded to as “great,” I replied, “Mrs. Howitt, who is coming this way, is one of his friends, and if you ask her I have no doubt she will be able to direct you.” As she did so, my first

impulse was to vanish among the company; but feeling in the second place that such conduct would be neither polite nor kind, I turned to apologise, when the reward was an agreeable and to me instructive conversation.

Once I met Buckingham at the house of Mr. J. Minter Morgan, in Stratton-street, Piccadilly. Mr. Morgan will be remembered as the author of "The Bees," and the promoter of a plan of co-operation which, with all the advantages of Robert Owen's, was to be free from his anti-theological difficulties—a church to be the very head and centre of the scheme. Mr. Morgan was a gentleman of fortune, well read, and travelled, and fond of drawing round him people of advanced or peculiar intelligence. I remember meeting there at different times such persons as Emerson, the Rev. E. R. Larken, Mr. and Mrs. Howitt, Mr. and Mrs. Gaskell, Mrs. Loudon, Mrs. Leman Gillies, Dr. Chapman, and George Searle Phillips, better known by his literary sobriquet of "January Searle." The latter was one evening reading a paper on social science for our interest and Mr. Buckingham's criticism. It was much as if sunshine had been asked to give judgment on lightning: Buckingham's mind and January's had about the same relation each to the other. The former was evidently disappointed, and thought the latter too impulsive; and the latter was as disappointed because the former so thought. The evening was, however, a very interesting one, and concluded with Mr. Morgan's exhibition of an illuminated diagram of a co-operative village which, could it only have been carried into fact, would present, in its way, no bad fore-instalment of the millennium. That a gentleman with his means, surrounded by all that his heart could wish for except the universal happiness of his fellow-creatures, should have devoted the years he did to the illustration of his one benign idea, then die, and be already so little spoken of, to me seems a practical illustration of the difficulty of winning the world to such principles. Yet I shall ever love to think of those evenings at Mr. James Minter Morgan's, and of his beautiful spirit of benignity, his never-failing hope for humanity, and his earnestness. I believe that Mr. Buckingham had also some scheme for a model town, but on a larger scale and somewhat different plan; and this no doubt was one reason why they had become so intimate.

There was another and very different occasion on which I met Mr. Buckingham. It was at a day-lecture I happened to be giving, to an aristocratic and fashionable auditory, at Willis's Rooms, St. James's, when he was voted to the chair, and took a deep interest in some of my mesmeric experiments—saying how some of the phenomena threw illustration on a remarkable experience of his own, when a young man,

at sea. One night the man on watch saw him come from his hammock, go to a desk, and there, with so little light that it barely showed what he was doing, write something on a paper; he then put it in the desk and locked it up, after which he returned to his hammock and staid till the proper hour for waking. Next day the watchman surprised him by some allusion to the occurrence, to his writing at that untimely hour with so little light, and especially to his doing it without an explanatory word to him as watchman. Mr. Buckingham, not remembering having been out of his hammock at all, thought the man must be mistaken; but the latter described the whole proceeding so minutely and was so sure about the paper being written upon and locked up, that it was now resolved to go to the desk and see, when Buckingham was startled to find in his own handwriting a poem that had been suggested by the ringing of the watch-bells of the ship, and which he must evidently have composed and thus written in somnolence without the aid of his normal sight. He afterwards alluded to this incident in his published Autobiography.

Our last interview was at Mr. and Mrs. Buckingham's private apartments at the British and Foreign Institute, where I was invited to make one of a friendly evening party. Their son, Mr. Leicester Stanhope Buckingham, (afterwards so celebrated as a dramatist), Miss Buckingham, Mr. (afterwards Dr.) and Mrs. R. Chambers, and some of my friends, the Howitts and the Woolleys, were also there. It was an occasion not easy to be forgotten by me. We were in a room where, in the oriental costume in which they were taken, the striking portraits of the host and hostess, now giving us good English welcome, reminded us vividly of their foreign travels. The Woolleys were very dear to me because, when I was a rough boy on the border of Sherwood Forest, and they residing in the most patrician mansion near, they had shown me good will and consideration there. The Howitts, too, had been familiar with my father, and marked with much interest my vicissitudes from early days to that hour. The name of Robert Chambers had been associated with my youthful reading; he had since taken an interest in my lectures at Edinburgh, and I had several times met with both him and Mrs. Chambers, as already related, in that historical and classic city; and there was Mr. Buckingham, himself associated with my still earlier reading and with that wood-cut on which my eyes had dwelt with such delight in the book lent me by a dear sister, as I sat by the fire-side of childhood's home and made a reading-desk for it of my mother's knee. And I was, at length, able to afford some interest to these friends, by showing them what Nature had taught me of some of her most recondite and curious laws—in experiments upon a boy

who had been cured of a disorder of the brain by mesmerism, and who now, by Mrs. Chambers taking him out of my hands and operating on him, was made still stronger and healthier than he had ever been before. Such are among the pleasant re-unions that may sometimes occur in life.

I have never, to my knowledge, seen any of Mr. Buckingham's family since. But once, when far from London, desiring his name to a document that might be important to my interests abroad, I sent it to him, with some mention of the object. He very kindly signed and returned it through his daughter. The tremulous autograph is before me now. It was written on his death-bed—perhaps nearly if not positively the last time he ever wrote one, and I value it much; for even in that extremity, as I am assured, it was as cheerfully as kindly given. His eventful, brave and chequered life was closed on the 20th of June, 1855, which, as compared with the date of his birth, would be in his 70th year; and upwards of a hundred volumes of the works he wrote, edited, or was otherwise intimately connected with, remain to tell the tale of his unwearied endurances, aspirations, and labours. If Mr. Buckingham had any faults (as most of us have some), let his enemies tell them. For myself, I know them not, and desire only to speak of him here as I found him. He was a gentleman, abounding greatly with useful and pleasant information, and delighting to communicate it—accomplished, versatile, genial, and a lover of the whole human race.

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Strangely and most sadly, just as the proof of this sheet comes to me from the printer, I hear of the death of Dr. Robert Chambers, at the age of sixty-nine; and before it is returned, of that, at the age of fifty-two, of his brother, Mr. David N. Chambers, to whom, as one of my warm friends in Glasgow, more than twenty-six years ago, I have already alluded. Robert Chambers, as all the world knows, was a person of no ordinary mind, but one of the most gifted and cultivated of men; and in the whole course of life I have scarcely known a more bright, affectionate, frank, heart-in-hand, and altogether friendly man than his brother David. My first introduction to Robert was from him; my first ride to Edinburgh, and first survey of some of its finest points of interest, was in his company; he never missed any of my lectures that he could attend either there or at Glasgow; and in a similar way we have often mated in London, where of late he managed the well-known publishing business in which he was a partner, and where he was also a respected member of the Common Council of the city. On my last visit to London, in 1867, I spent an evening with him and his family in

their suburban home—Captain Mayne Reid being also a guest ; and on my calling to bid him good-bye, a few days after, in Paternoster Row, he presented me for keepsakes with a copy of “The Book of Days” and a framed photograph of his brother William, taken in America, presented by William to Robert, by Robert to himself, and thus by him to me. Bearing the names of all three, it hangs on the wall near me, over the popular engraving of Charles Dickens’s vacant chair, as I write—Charles Dickens, with whom I was also pleasantly and personally acquainted. The night I spent at David’s with Captain Mayne Reid, was after he had been, as a member of the Common Council, on some deputation to the Queen, at Buckingham Palace, and I had been at the funeral of “Artemus Ward.” Topics of the passing time and of “auld langsyne” abounded ; his wife and daughters were happy in his smile ; he kept us all alive by his genuine good-humour, his shrewdness, his fun, and his friendly voice ; and now I learn that he was so affected by the news of his brother Robert’s death as to rupture a blood-vessel through the powerful emotion it excited in his warm and loving heart, and died three days afterwards, on the 20th of this month of March, 1871.—Looking among some old papers, I find the following letter from Robert, which may be the more appropriately given here because of its reference to Mr. Buckingham. The amiable partner to whom he also refers, and of whom I have made mention, was his first wife. Some time afterwards he married again :—

St. Andrews, April 13, 1866.

My dear Sir,—Your letter of the 9th, which reached me yesterday, has given me much pleasure, as informing me that you are well and in domestic circumstances which prove a source of happiness to you. I had in a great measure forgotten the meeting at Mr. Buckingham’s, especially the proceedings regarding the boy who was mesmerised. Any intercourse I ever had with Mr. B. gave me the same impression of him which you have experienced, and I have never been able quite to understand why he was the subject of so much vituperation.

You will be sorry to learn that my amiable partner died upwards of two years ago ; about which time I also lost a beautiful and accomplished daughter. I am now living in comparative retirement, with two unmarried daughters, one of whom is soon, like five of her elder sisters, to leave me, and am doing little with my pen, but am still glad to get cheerful news of any old friend such as yourself.

Believe me, dear Sir, yours very sincerely,

R. CHAMBERS.

The death of Dr. Chambers I felt much, as must many thousands who have read his works and known his family’s history. That of his brother David—with whom I was so much more intimately acquainted—I also feel most deeply and cannot cease to feel.





## Chapter Seventeenth.

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### MY PARENTS.

(JUNE, 1856.)

"DIED, August 20th, (1852), at Brookside Cottage, Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts, Mr. Samuel Hall, the venerable father of 'The Sherwood Forester.' Mr. Hall was, for the most part of his life, a person of remarkable bodily activity and endurance—having one day, when in his sixtieth year, walked nearly sixty miles, between three o'clock in the morning and nine in the evening, on an errand of parental affection, still feeling hale when the task was done; and, at the age of seventy, on a hot summer's day, he walked about seventeen miles in four hours, on another errand of kindness. With so compact a frame, a fine arched nose, an earnest eye, and the index to great firmness in every feature, his bearing and expression would have been strongly military; but having early imbibed and retained the doctrines of Quakerism, that expression was subdued, if not neutralised, by his primitive garb and language, and the habitual tenour of his conversation. All his battles were battles of the mind; and his life, in the main, was a succession of mental and emotional conflicts. He had some natural talent for literature; and, like his grandfather and his son, could rhyme a couplet. He was the author of several tracts—one entitled 'Samuel Hall's Legacy to Professors and to the Profane,' and was not without a turn for philosophical experiment. Had he been trained to some profession for which he was constitutionally fitted he was a man likely to have risen to considerable eminence. So far back as 1799, he had discovered the advantage of pressure upon light soils to the growth of grain and bulbous roots, upon which, after much observation and experiment, he wrote a treatise, and invented a machine for sowing, manuring, and *pressing* turnip-seed in one operation. The discovery was an important one, and has been of great benefit to agriculture; but, from the invention having been early improved upon by others, its originator, as is too often the case, was a loser by it—both of time, money, and peace of mind. Still, in his adversity, Mr. Hall had ever a willing heart and hand for the

more unfortunate still, and his memory will be respected most by those who knew him best. He was greatly pleased with every manifestation of intelligence and improvement in his children, and (while probably in reality not less attached to the rest) would occasionally speak of his eldest son as 'a lad after his own heart.' It was good that the old man should be gathered to his rest in the harvest-time."

Such was the newspaper obituary of one of the most earnest, original, thorough-going, but kind and tender of men—who had never in his life said yes when he meant no, but who was never happier than when engaged in something for others' good. Grave, even to sternness, in some of his moods—so much so that even his mere look would strike a wrong-doer with awe—yet, when his censure was not called for, loving, liberal, and cheerful beyond the majority of men, and a favourite with all who knew him for the amount of his intelligence and his readiness to impart it—he has left an impression on me which is strengthened rather than weakened by time, and in his neighbourhood a name seldom, if ever, alluded to without good feeling and respect.

Samuel Hall was what the world would call a well-connected man. His grandfather, George Hall, was a clever and enterprising Nottinghamshire yeoman and merchant, owning lands and houses, but given to mechanical invention, music, and verse—sometimes also shipping corn to Holland, when England was a corn-exporting country. He aided in their life-start several relatives who were fortunate. A son-in-law of his half-brother was the first of a line of baronets, of whom the third is now enjoying the title; one of his great-nephews married the daughter of another baronet, being thought a fair match for her; and of two of his great grandsons direct, one—a highly talented barrister—married the daughter of Sir Stephen Gazelee, the judge, and was amongst the first-appointed Commissioners of Lunacy, while another became a captain in the royal navy, and a third is in the church. The fortunes of the last named branch, however, owed less of their origin to him than to other sources.

George Hall's third son Samuel (my grandfather) was not so fortunate. He possessed a good farm, and married a bright, active little woman, Dorothy Wilcock, of Cavendish Park, King's Clipston, in Sherwood Forest, which (anciently a royal park) was rented under the Cavendish, and after an exchange of estates, under the Bentinck family. There must have been humane blood in her veins. It is said of her mother that, returning home upon a brood mare from Mansfield, on the day the rebels under Prince Charles Stuart were at Derby, careful of the animal's condition, she was riding it very slowly, when a person passing cried out anxiously, "You must make better haste than that, madam, for the rebels are coming!" "Rebels or no rebels," exclaimed the good woman in reply, "*I must think of my mare;*" and so continued

homeward at the same easy pace, while others, more alarmed, were hiding their property and flying. The red mantle she wore in that ride was kept in the family as a memorial till my own time, and a fine pair of buck's horns she was wont to see daily in the hall at Clipston is now on the wall within a few yards of me, where I am writing of her, on the shores of Windermere. But, notwithstanding that good start and his marriage with that humane and courageous woman's daughter, (whom I can well remember as a gentlewoman of nearly 80, dressed in the earlier style of the reign of George III.), my grandfather somehow, without any very bad habits, got wrong in his affairs, and never got quite right again. Besides his own land at Sutton-in-Ashfield, he held a considerable acreage under the lord of the manor. On one portion of this he built; and at the general enclosure made additions from the neighbouring forest, to his ultimate loss, and (perhaps for want of judicious and sympathetic friends) took to drinking to drown his sorrow—one of the most fatal mistakes it can fall to the lot of man to make. He was dead before my birth; but I have often grieved over his history, which must have been a painful one to him, and cannot but have had some influence on that of his descendants.

Where the town street of Sutton-in-Ashfield ends in what still bears the name of Forest-lane, stands a somewhat large old house, once fronted by a fold of huge wood-framed farm buildings, which were blown down in a midnight storm when I was a little boy; and it was at that house on the 9th of April, 1769, my father, named after his father, Samuel Hall, was born. He was the second son, and, I think, the third or fourth child, of his parents, growing up in great love for all his kin. Between him and his elder brother Timothy was a feeling that grew warmer and closer with length of life, and my second name was given me as one of its memorials. While yet a very little child my father was taken to dwell with his grandparents at Cavendish Lodge, and some of his earliest and cheeriest recollections were of the fine forest scenery around it. It was indeed, in his early days, a most sylvan place—looking out on the grand old woods of Birkland and Bilhagh, so famous in song and story, and down on the ruins of King John's hunting palace, some portions of which still linger on the banks of the clear, bright river Maun, and are perpetuated in several of my friend the late Christopher Thompson's best paintings of Sherwood Forest's best scenery.

From ten to fourteen, my father's time was passed much like that of the farmers' sons around—in alternate lessons at school and errands to the fields, and a more laborious hand at harvest time, or whenever help was wanted in some emergency among the sheep or at the

plough; and being given from the first to observation and thought, he never afterwards forgot what was taught him in that pastoral and agricultural school. It was a thousand pities that such a boy should ever have been sent into sedentary life. But it happened that the family had a relative at Nottingham of the name of Timothy Broadhurst—a bachelor, considerably engaged in the leather and shoe-trade; and reputed wealthy: so, as the elder boy Timothy was destined to inherit the farm, it was resolved that “Sam,” without any question as to his constitutional fitness or otherwise for such a life, should be apprenticed to “Cousin Broadhurst.” Accordingly Sam, who was nothing loth to change the rural quiet of the country for the excitements of a county town, went thither to live, but never settled well to the business, except as a matter of duty; for his heart was not in it; his hand had no affinity for it; and a year before the time his apprenticeship was up, he ran away. He got to Stamford, and thence to Deeping St. James’s, working at his trade for a short time at each place. But though a truant, he was not a reckless one, and on his master at the latter place one day blaming another workman for *not* doing something dishonest which he had advised, the young Sherwood forester plainly told him his mind and left him—proceeding thence directly to London, where he soon found work in the neighbourhood of Gray’s Inn. About that time Robert Bloomfield, “The Farmer’s Boy,” was just learning to make shoes and verses in London; and when in after years listening to my father’s adventures, it was one of my regrets (a very childish one, in the circumstances,) that they never met; for I believe they were once lodging near each other in that enormous metropolitan hive.

In all his restlessness, which was but that of an intelligent and eager soul out of its true arena, my father was often the subject of deep religious impressions and given to equally solemn thought. Hence, one Sunday, while singing at St. Andrew’s Church in Holborn,—a place till then he had regularly attended,—the thought occurred to him that the words he was chanting might be very true in the mouth of King David, when he uttered them, but were very false in his, considering his then state of mind; and, if so to himself, might they not be equally so to others? Whereupon, though he had a beautiful baritone voice, he closed his hymn-book and never sang again in a place of worship. Still he was very uneasy, and longed for religious communion somewhere, so became a seeker from place to place. At length it occurred to him to go to a Quakers’ meeting in the city; but as there was nothing vocal transpiring he staid behind the door outside till the meeting was over, and the same again on several other occasions. At length he one day thought he would go inside, when, as they all sat in

reverent silence, the question arose within him as to what could be its true purport. It was, ostensibly, worship. (This was his course of reasoning.) If in worship, it could only be in the spirit;—but (as he concluded) if in spirit, it must be in truth. He did not stop to ask what spirit. It only, from his own earnest yearnings, occurred to him that it must be in the Holy Spirit; and a sense of his own unworthiness to be thus visited and dwelt in by the living God, so overcame him that he was melted to tears; was thus converted in a silent meeting; but read the “Journals” of John Richardson, James Dickenson and Job Scott, as afterwards the writings of Fox, Barclay, Penn, and others; and from that time never ceased to feel himself a Quaker.

From all I have heard, the young convert's life was now in most respects a very happy one. He read and thought deeply, sought useful knowledge earnestly, and devoted all his leisure time to the cultivation of the superior faculties and to works of mercy. Sometimes he would watch all night in a religious frame of mind by the bedside of an invalid; but when not so occupied, his time was laid out most systematically. His wont was to have his fire ready for lighting, to get up at five o'clock every morning in winter, light it himself, prepare his own coffee, and then devote his time till seven (his hour for commencing business) in reading and meditation. His evening hours, when not spent in the society of religious friends or employed in some specific duty, were passed pretty regularly, after his labour was done, partly in walks about the streets for exercise and observation, and again before going to bed in a season of silent devotion—his sabbaths in attending his usual place of worship and sharing the society of his friends. Such was the self-imposed—or better, self-chosen discipline of many years; and no bad discipline either for a strong-hearted young man. By this time he had become a confidential servant in the house of Mr. Sparks Morline, a leather merchant, somewhere in Westminster; and his master, struck by his gravity, regularity, and general good conduct, one day said to him, “Samuel, how is it? Thy life is very exemplary, and I can bear testimony to thy integrity and consistency. Why dost thou not apply to Friends for membership?” The answer was notable.

“There is (he said) an imperative obstacle in the way, and one that gives me pain whenever I think of it.”

“What is that?” inquired his somewhat startled employer.

“An unkept engagement.”

“Of what kind?” asked Mr. Morline.

“I was (said Samuel) apprenticed to a relative at Nottingham, but left him before the expiration of the contract.”

“Well, canst thou not make him recompense?” asked the master.

"No," was the reply, "he has been some time dead."

"But thou canst do it to his heirs (continued the Friend); thou hast plenty of money, and I will give thee the time."

So Samuel went down to Nottingham, but found that his old master's heir was insolvent, and hidden from the officers of the law. Searching him out in his retreat, however, he told his business, but met with the remark that he was free enough without paying anything. "You see," continued Timothy Broadhurst's heir, "I am not in circumstances to claim anything, and have really no hold upon you if I were."

"I am sorry to find thee in this plight," said my father; "but that does not by any means morally exonerate me; and I would pay thee what would be due to my old master if he were living—hoping that if ever thou art blessed with the means, thou wilt some day deal in the same spirit with thy own creditors."

The man, amazed and deeply interested, asked him what he wished to give, and he answered, the value of a year's services, with interest. After some little difficulty as to the amount strictly due, the heir not wishing to tax too heavily a young man so honest, it was resolved that they should call in a friendly arbitrator to settle the amount, which was paid, and Samuel Hall, with his conscience more lightened than his purse, returned to London, and soon afterwards joined the Society of Friends.

The next thing I learn of him is, that keenly alive to anything unjust, he felt it needful to remonstrate with some of the West End authorities in a case wherein he thought they bore too hardly upon his master for his quakerley scruples against ecclesiastical or military dues—I am not now quite clear as to which; and then, shortly afterwards, he appears, after a seven years' residence in London, commencing a successful business in his native place; a member of the Mansfield Friends' Meeting, and falling in love there with a very superior woman, Sarah Rowntree, whom it is said he was prevented from marrying by the intrigues of another party. But this part of his story I learnt only very recently from an old friend. He never in my hearing made allusion to it himself but once, and then only in such a manner as to give me no adequate idea of its influence on his feelings—though I am now aware that he felt it very deeply at the time. Sometimes he would rise and speak in the meetings at Mansfield, and once in those days he published a little pamphlet, addressed to the professors of religion in his own parish of Sutton.

Meanwhile his business thrived, his house was open to all friends who chose to come; his manners were hospitable and gentlemanly,

though in strictest accordance with old Quaker customs ; his garb was ancient, his hat broad, his intelligence bright, and no man in Sutton, or for many miles round it, was looked up to with more respect than Samuel Hall.

One day, a bonny, merry, warm-hearted girl, Eleanor Spencer, a native of the Peak of Derbyshire, had occasion to wait on the grave Friend with a message from one of his neighbours, Mrs. Burton. The girl before starting told Mrs. Burton, in fun, that when she got there she should certainly laugh at him, and call him Aminadab. But there was no disposition to do anything of the kind when she approached him. In his presence all her levity was allayed, and a feeling of profound respect had taken its place ere she left him. Yet neither of them dreamed at that time that she was one day to be his wife.

Now it unfortunately happened that, connected with the large cotton works outside the town, was a specious man, a distant relative, who, seeing my father's prosperity, said, "Samuel, the world appears to be going very well with you ; you must be doing a very good business." "Yes," was the reply, "I am thankful to say that all his going well with me in that respect." "Yes," rejoined the other ; "but those large premises of ours in the town are doing nothing, and if you will only move to them and launch out further, I shall be glad to join you, and can ensure you a very considerable increase of your income."

"No," said my father, "I am doing well, and am content ; besides, I am not practically acquainted with the branch of trade thou proposest."

"Never heed that," said his relative, "you have got the mind ; competent assistants could bring the needful experience ; and it will be quite a shame to miss the opportunity."

There was a fatal spell in it. Influenced by one friend or other, and by that speculator's persuasions, the contract was made ; and in little more than a year the fellow was gone to America with his servant-girl and an enormous sum in specie, leaving his wife, children, my father, and many another sad sufferer, to the ruinous consequences ; and the promising Friend, in the prime of his days, was the most humbled man in all that country side !

In the meantime the young woman from Mrs. Burton's had been married—married to a man of noble principles, a convert to Quakerism, —and she had borne him two children, a daughter and a son, the latter a little time before he was laid on his death-bed. That was while Samuel Hall was yet in his prosperity ; and glad to show the family respect and lend them substantial aid, he was one evening sitting by the side of his dying friend for some time in religious silence, and then asked if he could do anything for his further solace.



"Samuel," said the invalid, "there is only one burden that presses me to the earth and makes me wish to linger; but it is a very heavy and painful one."

"James," was the ready reply, "if thou art free to name it, and it be in my power to lessen its weight, or even to bear it altogether, let me know."

The eyes of the invalid filled, as he said—"It would be all removed could I only be assured that, when I am gone, my poor wife will not want a friend to comfort her, or the two children a counsellor to instruct them in good principles."

"Thy family shall not want a friend, James," said the other; "I will myself act the part for them about which thou art anxious."

"Thank thee," said James in a tone of affection and gratitude, as the tears gathering before now freely flowed; and in a few days he was gone to his eternal rest.

The flowers of seven summers had bloomed over poor James Bacon's grave in the burying-ground of the Friends at Mansfield, during which Samuel Hall's reverses had lain heavy on his soul. Many who had loved him for what he was, loved him still; but many who had courted him for what he had appeared, turned chill. Yet not so James's widow. She had shown him respect and kindness in many ways, for his adversity had made some manifestation of her gratitude to him possible. So one day he asked her to take a walk with him to where, in the blue distance, they could see her native Derbyshire hills; and while they stood gazing there and thinking of past days, he turned to her and said, "Eleanor, I have found no one in the world who seems to take a more kindly interest in my happiness or sorrow than thyself, and for seven years I have fulfilled the promise of friendship made to James. Let me now be the husband of the widow and the father of the fatherless, and one home shall serve us all: wilt thou be my wife?" It was more than she had ever hoped or dreamed; but gladly consenting, they were soon afterwards married.

In a garden, by the side of a brook, on the outskirts of the town, as I have elsewhere long ere now told the story, was a row of thatched buildings, which in more prosperous days he had let in three small tenements to others. All this he now turned into one; made it, with its garden, as ornamental as possible for so rustic a place; stored it well with books, and keeping still in attachment a few of his more thoughtful friends, went there to dwell, as he hoped while some means of honourably retrieving his fortunes should arise; and there it was, in the midst of all that adversity, intelligence, and love, that I, as the first offspring of that marriage, was born. That dear old home! It

has since been the theme of some of my best-known poems; but there is not now a stick or stone of it standing. It was demolished, so far as this material world is concerned, in the year 1865; and when I was told of it, the sudden news nearly broke my heart. I have myself occupied good houses, and many a time been a cherished guest in the mansions of the wealthy and the great,—and let me speak with no want of true and due respect of them, nor of all the grand, the elegant, the rare, wherever in the wide world I may have enjoyed them,—

Yet, oh, my native cot! where'er I roam—  
 Whatever sounds I hear or sights I see—  
 There is a magic in the name of HOME  
 That "makes my heart, untravelled," cleave to thee:  
 The wimpling streamlet and the whispering tree,  
 The spring before thee and the bower behind,  
 The playground where I left my childish glee,  
 Have each an image graven in the mind,  
 Which, though all else may fade, will ever there be shrined!

With all its rusticity, there was a fine atmosphere of intellectuality and respectability about our cottage-home that, at times, it was very delightful to breathe. The Bible was read there every day, and some other good and entertaining book always lay about for occasional reading. People of quality dropped in sometimes in a friendly way. Conversations on the highest themes were by no means rare. The mother venerated the father's genius and worth, and showed it. We children caught their spirit, and deeply revered them both. In the newspaper obituary already quoted, mention is made of an invention for drilling and pressing turnip-seed on a then new principle. To squeeze from our very penury the means of working out that invention, we were often sadly pinched for food, sometimes not having one sufficient meal for days together. But so respectably was everything conducted by my mother—so much was our keen privation hidden—that a poor but worthy neighbour in difficulties sent in at the time to ask if we could lend him a five-pound note! When the messenger was gone, my mother wept. Were this the place for it, I could write a long history of noble deeds and endurances within those humble walls, but a few must now suffice, as samples.

Though my mother had never been a member of the Society of Friends, she conformed with a willing heart to all her husband's usages, imbibing his sentiments; and happy would she look when, on a Sabbath morning all our little family started on the three miles' walk to the meeting at Mansfield—our venerable father leading the way, as we left the old cottage behind us, sending up a long wreath of blue smoke from its chimney into the calm, bright heaven. And occasionally

some ministering Friend would pay us a visit, when our homely home for that day would be a little heaven below.

A somewhat remarkable occurrence comes to my mind just now, after willingly myself paying church-rates. My father never willingly paid but one, and even that he regretted. Yet few men in the parish were more respected by the clergyman. The churchwardens too were very kind. Singularly, I never knew him distrained upon but once for a church-rate; and *that was when a dissenter was churchwarden*. The rate itself would have been only two shillings, but the attendant expenses ran it up to fourteen. We had notice of the morning the bailiff might be expected; but though my parents were up as usual, not a thing was done in the house beyond kindling the fire. Not a single article of furniture was moved even for cleaning. Soon after seven o'clock Ephraim Sills, the bailiff, appeared. He was a man who had great respect for my parents and did not like his work. As he stood in the door-way, pen, ink, and paper in hand, he was *the quaker* that morning, trembling every limb.

"What shall I do, Mr. Hall?" said he.

"The only advice I can give thee, Ephraim," replied my father, "is that thou shouldst act according to thy own sense of duty, as I am doing according to mine."

"But what must I take? What can you best spare?" he asked.

"It is not a question of sparing, or being spared," was the answer.

"It would be as contrary to my own sense of duty to give thee a suggestion on that point as to have paid the rate at first without causing trouble at all."

Ephraim chanced to take an article that could be as ill spared as anything we had of similar value; and soon after he was gone the usual morning's cleaning was done, the house made cheerful, and breakfast prepared. When it was over, my father, with his fine, deep voice, read the customary portion of Scripture. Then we sat a short time in silence, as usual; after which, as was unusual, he spoke, referring to the event of the morning. He carefully warned us all to avoid any feeling of animosity for what was thus done; talked of suffering for conscience sake, if endured in a right spirit, as more of a privilege than a privation; enjoined us so to live the life of Christ as to be worthy of suffering for His sake, and never to make opposition to anything for opposition's sake alone, but be, do, or suffer whatever might happen to us, in charity to all men. After this brief address, we again sat silent for a few minutes; and the sweet, solemn, feeling of the morning extended not only through that day, but returns to me in some degree at this moment, far beyond the ordinary pale of Quakerism, with the

memory of the inoffensive protest and example of that honest man and woman.

Not always, however, was Samuel Hall quite so passive. At one time he was overseer of the poor, and that in days when people of all classes were sadly tried,—when (as I have heard my mother say) he often groaned in his sleep from the sorrow he had seen by day; and a parish magnate, who felt free to beard the vestry as he chose, one day accused him of neglecting his duty in not summoning before the magistrates a number of poor people who were about as ill able to pay money as the paupers who received it, while he (the accuser) felt himself so far above the law as to be several rates behind in his own payments. Said my father—"Of what use is it summoning poor people who have neither money to pay with nor goods to distrain?"

"Oh, be d—d!" was the reply, "summon them, anyhow, and make them find it; and if you don't, I'll complain to the magistrates.

"Must I summon *all* who are in arrears?" was gravely asked again.

"To be sure!" shouted the harsh man, never thinking that the Quaker dare beard *him*. He, however, received the *first summons*, and never thus treated an overseer afterwards.

On one occasion, passing along a street in the lower part of Nottingham, and coming to a corner where stood a group of gossiping men, he was approached by one who meant to raise a laugh at his expense, staring him impudently in the face and saying, "I say, mes-ter, how long have you worn that big hat?" Pausing for a moment, and looking back at his questioner, he turned the laugh the other way by saying, loud enough to be heard by them all, "I cannot remember exactly, but am afraid not so long as thou'st been a fool!"

If vain of anything it was of his power as a pedestrian. It was very seldom he allowed any person walking the same way to pass him; but one day a stout man, who came almost up with him near the Seven-mile House, between Mansfield and Nottingham, and who had another person upon a pony for a companion, got so annoyed at his inability to go a-head, as to get talking at the Friend somewhat offensively. At length, becoming even more personal than before, he shouted loudly, "If I'd that man's hat, it would make two for me." "No," quietly retorted my father, turning round and looking calmly at the stout quiz, "it would take a larger hat than this to make two for one thick head,"—while the man on the pony made the forest ring again with his laughter and his shout of "Well done, old quaker!"

In truth, with all his gravity he loved a quiet joke. When upwards of seventy years of age he had to go to London, to give evidence touching a railway bill before the House of Lords. Returning by the

coach, and surprised at hearing some young men, who had walked about three miles before mounting it complaining of their hardship, he told them some of his own feats in walking, when one of them asked what sort of health he enjoyed. His answer was, that he had never had the headache in his life, and had not taken a dose of medicine for twenty years. "May I ask," politely rejoined his new companion, "if you *never* ail anything?" "Why, yes," he replied, "as I come to think of it, there is *one* complaint from which I suffer now and then, but never for long." "Pray, sir, what may that be, and what is your remedy?" "Well," he concluded, to the great amusement of the whole party, "it is an affection of the stomach, and my remedy depends a good deal on the season in which it occurs. If it happens in summer, a plate of beans and bacon is generally very effective; but if in the winter, I have sometimes found a good beef-steak answer the purpose."

Still it was not in jocular conversation that his mind was best displayed. His love of agricultural improvements, his fondness for taking levels of the country, his interest in experimental philosophy, and his desire to make all his knowledge of use to the many, had he been brought up to surveying and engineering, would, in my opinion, have made him one of the most useful men of his time, either at home or in the colonies. Nor was he, when the occasion called for it, less ready with his pen. After the death of our loving mother, which occurred when he was about sixty-five years of age, he wrote a beautiful and impressive address to us, under the title of his "Will." It is written in a deeply religious strain, but abounds in sound and honest secular advice as well. As time went on, he also wrote several other characteristic things, from which I would gladly copy here, if space permitted. His "Legacy to Professors and to the Profane," is a serious and impressive exhortation against profane swearing. Sometimes I have thought of gathering up and republishing his various writings, including his early dissertation on the "Culture of Turnips," which was productive of good results at the time it was first published, giving, in fact, the start to a practice which has been of immense benefit to farmers on light soils everywhere. While endeavouring to work out his agricultural discovery, he had occasion sometimes to see the late Duke of Portland, at Welbeck Abbey. On one occasion, by way of test, he had pressed the seed of one row of turnips and left another unpressed by its side. The turnips from the pressed row were immensely larger than the others, and he forwarded two of the most magnificent of them to the Duke, who desired to see him about them, and requested his attendance. One of the Duke's daughters never having seen a quaker introduced to her father, it was arranged that she

should stay in the room of audience till his arrival. As my father entered in his unbending, somewhat dignified but respectful manner, he was rather surprised on seeing a lady there, as well as his two great turnips. The Duke rose to meet him, holding out his hand, and saying, "Mr. Hall, I am glad to see you; I hope you are very well." "Quite well, I thank thee; I trust thou also art well," said my father in his sincere, impressive tone, as the young lady, unable to restrain herself longer, ran out of the room to describe the scene. There was to be a great agricultural meeting at Southwell next day. The Duke invited my father to attend, taking the couple of notable turnips in his carriage, and telling their history at the meeting, where, on his arrival, the grower saw them again. But they were very dear turnips to him and his family. Frank and unsuspecting, he had throughout the course of his experiments and invention of the drill, made a confidant of a man having means at his disposal, and who made an improvement on the models for which he unconsciously got a patent before the first and heavier machine could itself be patented; and thus Samuel Hall's great hope of raising his family out of the cottage by his useful discovery was ended! All his subsequent efforts at retrieval failed for want of adequate means; and, though he was consulted by his neighbours on all possible subjects, and helped many another man and some women, by his advice and pen, on their upward way, it was his own lot thence to remain in obscurity to the last!

A few more anecdotes, illustrative of his brave and manly character, and I have finished.

When in my twelfth year I had a violent attack of erysipelas, which seized an entire hemisphere of my head and threatened death. The young gentleman, Mr. John Carter, (in later years the Dr. Carter of Berners-street, Oxford-street, London,) who, as assistant to a local surgeon, attended me, was one day startled by the semi-scientific answers I made him in reference to some of the symptoms; and, turning round, asked where I had been educated. Being told that I had then had little education except at home, he walked away with my father, saying "it is very extraordinary." My half-sister, who heard them, informed me of what followed. When they were out of my hearing, Mr. Carter said that, if I could have two years' further schooling, he should by the end of that time be in practice for himself, would be glad then to have me as a pupil, and would never lose sight of me till I also should be qualified to practise. The learning (thanks to my good half-sister and to every other source!) was by some means obtained; but by that time Mr. Carter had gone abroad, and all hope of any connection with him had died. Yet not dead was the impulse he had given by his

observations. The feeling that there must be within me some germs of usefulness had been fired. It glowed more warmly from day to day. Visions of the restored position of our family to its old respectability dawned upon me, and that owing, perchance, in the order of Providence, to me. It was my last evening dream, my first morning thought. The reading of the life of Dr. Franklin added fuel to the fire; and I resolved, come what might, to imitate him, by running away. I did so, three times, and the last time for good. It was, as told already in another chapter, in snowy and frosty weather; and while my poor mother hunted for me all night with her lantern in the snow near home, my father started on a long excursion in the hope of finding me afar. At length, the post-mark of a letter, sent to my young friend, James Allin, gave the first true hint of my track; and the good, patriarchal old man, in his broad hat and primitive coat—I pause in my tale from weeping for it now—started at three o'clock on a cold January morning in pursuit, and never rested till he had found me. It was in his sixtieth year, yet he walked nearly sixty miles that day, and when he found me, uttered not one word of reproach, but hastened home to tell my anxious mother of his good fortune. I never went home again but as a beloved and welcome visitor; yet my mother lived to see my first published verses in print, and my father to sit by me whilst I lectured to an approving audience of three thousand people. I was by when our mother died in that old cottage by the brook; and from it, with my surviving brothers and sister, I attended our venerable father's remains to where they were laid by the side of hers, her first husband's and our departed brother's, at Mansfield. It was a sunny day; and when I next stood by his covered grave, a bee was humming there, looking at which I said, "Yes, happy bee, thou mayest fitly hum and bask there; for thou bearest nothing about thee sweeter than the memories blooming round those quiet graves!"

There was a peculiarity in my father's nervous system, or perhaps it might be much deeper—in his soul. He could not bear to see anything killed that he had ever taken an interest in—not even a pig. The mere thought of it would almost make him faint; and in a hundred other instances he was equally tender. But there were times when he would show a more morally brave and masculine spirit than any man in the parish, and he was one of the least credulous persons I ever knew. An old ruined farm-house, turned into a bleaching-house, with a deep, dark gully, and a huge water-wheel groaning in it, was about a mile out of the town, in one of the most lonely and dreary spots of the neighbourhood. This was said to be haunted; and sights were seen there, even in the day-time, enough to make the hair of an atheist



stand on end. The whole parish became alarmed, and my father, for one, thought he would put the tale to an experimental test. After trying without effect if he could perceive any of the reputed phenomena by day, he one night took a candle and a book, and sat alone in that dreariest of all dismal places, hour by hour, unvisited and undisturbed, after which no more ghost stories came from the old bleach-house. Yet, whenever I heard him afterwards allude to that experience, he would gravely add the following narrative:—When a young man, he had a friend of the name of Wood, a Quaker, residing at Papplewick, and in the habit, like himself, of attending Mansfield meeting. But his friend Wood being taken very ill, he one Sunday resolved to go, after the close of the first sitting, and see him. As soon as the meeting was gathered and all besides was solemnly still, my father was startled by what, to him, was a palpable and thundering knocking at the chapel-door. His first impulse was to go and see what was the matter; but as the door-keeper sat quietly and no one else seemed disturbed, the sound not being repeated he kept his seat to the end of the meeting. As soon, however, as the company was breaking up, he spoke to the Friend who had sat next to him about the noise, and was surprised on finding, not only his neighbour but all the rest of the meeting, quite ignorant of any such occurrence,—whereupon he went his way to see his friend at Papplewick, and found that he had died, so far as could be calculated, about the very time he had heard the extraordinary signal at the chapel-door.

In my early years, I was under a contract with a gentleman who went blind, and was thus incapacitated for performing his share of it, by which fact I was *legally* liberated from him. Could my consent, however, be obtained, he might still derive benefit from his part being transferred to and carried out by another. Many advised me to take advantage of my liberty, and gain for myself any emolument resulting. But, on consulting my father, he said, “My boy, if thy master had not lost his sight, he would have had the benefit; and it would be neither generous nor just to take advantage of his misfortune.” I felt the truth of this most strongly, having been thoughtful of it before, and allowed my old master the profit of the transference.

But, farewell, fond theme! When I see these hastily-strung passages in print, a hundred others I ought not to have omitted will rush to mind. It is but an imperfect wreath for the brow of so dear and noble a memory. Yet as my parents forgave their boy so many of his faults on earth, I know that this, now he is a man, will not be unforgiven by them in heaven! Let me conclude with a little poem written about my twentieth year, on re-visiting home a few months after my mother's

death—the scene of it since so changed that it would hardly now be known by a description which at that time was true to the letter :—

#### MY BIRTH-PLACE.

How beautifully the sunlit foliage waves  
Around this white-wall'd Cottage in the vale !  
By its green hedge how light the young brook laves,  
Joyfully laughing at its own sweet tale !  
What fragrance from these elders balms the gale !  
And mark, where that old bowery willow throws  
Its tresses o'er the moss-grey garden rail,  
How the lush woodbine dallies with the rose,  
And many a neighbour-flower in pride and beauty blows !

My earliest Home ! how fondly swells my heart,  
As at thy lowly door I enter now !—  
Ah ! whence this flush, this tremor, and this start  
Of chilly sweat-drops to my heated brow !  
Mother ! my loving Mother ! where art thou ?  
I meet thee not as I was wont—nor hear  
Thy words of welcome sweet—nor feel the glow  
Of thy glad kiss upon my cheek, which there  
Thou heretofore wouldst plant, then water with thy tear !

Thy clock counts out the moments as of yore ;  
Its old shrill call the hearth-fed cricket keeps ;  
The kettle sighs the plaint it sang before ;  
And round the window-frame green ivy creeps,  
And through its diamond pane the red rose peeps,  
As they were train'd in thy flower-loving day ;  
While on the sill the sunshine idly sleeps  
Among these household plants,—for even they,  
Because thou tend'st them not, pine mournfully away.

Then, Mother, why not here ? How brief the tale !  
When winter pass'd in smiles away last year—  
When daisies first began to star the dale,  
And the lark sang that blossom-time was near ;  
While the coy redbreast left its cottage cheer,  
To frisk delighted in the greening lane ;  
Thy glad hopes budded to the bursting here ;  
And in anticipation thou wert fain  
Long years of joy to hail—a bright, unbroken train.

And still when summer's long, luxuriant days  
Our annual village feast brought cheerily on,  
At once on all thy children didst thou gaze,  
And in that gaze feel years of promise won,  
So happy seem'd each daughter and each son,  
Till evening warn'd us peacefully away ;  
But scarcely had the autumnal change begun

Ere hence we pass'd again in sad array,  
A tearful, heart-wrung band, upon thy funeral day!

And now far distant is thy dreamless rest,  
Amongst a green companionship of graves,  
With no memorial, save upon thy breast  
A single flower, that lifts its urn and craves  
Kind Nature's nightly tear for thee,—or waves,  
Wooing the gentle breeze that o'er thee creeps  
In whispers low to linger there, when lavèd  
Sunset with pensive light those kindred heaps,  
Where Memory musing walks—Affection bending weeps!

Yet, oh, how hard to link thy name with death,  
My Mother! Even now I dream thee near:—  
The soft air through the lattice, like thy breath,  
Falls mildly on my cheek; and, hark! I hear  
A step upon the path, then deem thee there;  
But soon that breath fails in a faltering sigh;  
Thy name I name—but thou dost not appear;  
The footfall—distant now I hear it die:  
My dream is done—I wake—and yet I *feel* thee nigh.

But since thou canst not now be *seen* by me,  
My heart shall turn to those dear, sunny days,  
When here I sat, and lean'd upon thy knee,  
O'erjoy'd to learn the legends and the lays  
Of thy dear native mountains, and the ways—  
Romantic as their homes—of mountain men:  
For thou with warmth of native pride wouldst praise  
Those wondrous scenes in moorland, dale, and glen,  
Which oft have fill'd my soul with love and fear since then.

The birds on Bonsall Leas sung in thy song;  
The flowers of Wirksworth Moor bloom'd in thy tale;  
In thy descriptions crags o'er Derwent hung  
In awe, to hear it roar through Matlock Dale;  
Plain, at thy word, I saw the clouds all pale  
Along grey Barrowledge in silence glide;  
And, O! how well in mystery couldst thou veil  
Those deeds of other times that dimly hide  
Where ancient woods frown down from Dunsley's lofty side!

Nor, when were told the wonders of the Peak,  
Would fail for me thy ever-gladdening store  
Of history and song; for oft would break  
Upon my soul, in light renew'd, the lore  
Of MY OWN SHERWOOD, glorious evermore!  
Old Sherwood! Freedom's bowery haunt sublime!  
The outlaw'd Patriot's dear-loved home of yore—  
The homeless Patriot's haunt in modern time—  
Fair Virtue's sweet retreat from Tyranny and Crime!

And Fancy then would climb its fern-clad hills  
 To scan the glowing prospects thence outspread—  
 Its light-curved lakes, whose tributary rills,  
 Now hid—now sparkling—through the Forest sped ;  
 The flocks that on their fertile borders fed ;  
 The wood's wild tresses, waving in the breeze ;  
 The venerable ruin's hoary head,  
 Dim-seen afar, among the dusky trees :  
 And heavenly were the joys I drew from scenes like these !

Oft, too, wouldst thou describe my country's ports,  
 Crowded with gallant ships from every clime ;  
 Her smiling palaces and frowning forts—  
 Whate'er of her was beauteous or sublime,  
 The fruit of modern taste or ancient time—  
 From domes remote that through old woodlands rise,  
 To cities crown'd with spires, that proudly climb  
 And flash the sunlight back through summer skies—  
 Until my young soul swell'd with gladness and surprise.

And much I wish'd, as in my mind would grow  
 A sense of Britain's grandeur and her might,  
 That in her sons a warm desire might glow  
 To use their matchless power and skill aright,  
 And in the ways of Love and Truth delight :  
 For, oh, an early consciousness was mine  
 That power misguided operates but to blight  
 All that is glorious—beautiful—benign—  
 And glooms with woe a world which else in bliss might shine !

But cease this simple chant ; for on me here,  
 Through Memory's vista, dawns life's opening scene !  
 Hope's morn-like streaks upon its sky appear,  
 With sweet Affection's sunny smiles between :—  
 Below is traced all I have ever been :  
 All I have seen, or known, or felt, or done,  
 Lies there mapp'd out to Fancy's eye, serene  
 And clear as though life had not yet outrun  
 The bright and precious scenes in which it was begun !

And not for love alone of song or story,  
 Or youth's delicious dream, or childhood's glee,  
 But of the simpler yet sublimer glory  
 Of Truth's pure teachings, here first known to me,  
 Grows glad my soul, dear native Cot ! in thee :  
 And Thought and Feeling in deep reverence bend,  
 While here I bare my head and bow my knee,  
 To Him from whom all Light and Life extend—  
 Whose throne is in the heart, whose kingdom has no end !



## Chapter Eighteenth.

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### THE SEVENTH EARL OF CARLISLE.

(JUNE, 1866.)

THE genealogical tree of the Howards, with all its engraftments from other families, presents a curious study for those who delight in such lore; and whether in blossom or fruit—in lustre or usefulness—perhaps none of its branches have been more conspicuous than that which bore the subject of our present chapter. While there are men who owe all their honours to ancestry—though, as some one has asked, who shall in this matter compete with the poorest Jew?—there are others whose lives would ennoble their ancestors. In some persons both these patents are united—from my own humble stand-point I have had the privilege of knowing such—and one of them, certainly, was the Earl we are reading of. To regard genealogical distinction with idolatry is a weakness, and in the long run injurious. It often excites emulation, not of good deeds, but of paltry and very false pretensions amongst those who have become ashamed of the honourable industry by which their grandsires won the first honest shilling, the first germ of their fortunes. But, contrarily, to profess contempt for what is truly noble in genealogy is an equal weakness, and generally the result of disappointment, vanity, or envy. Truly, we may say with Pope—

What could ennoble knaves, or fools, or cowards?  
Alas! not all the blood of all the Howards!

But if, on the other hand, it should happen that some of the best blood

of all the Howards could meet in one man with a good share of the best spirit of his age, then must I be of those who believe that such union was personated in George William Frederick, the seventh Earl of Carlisle, who added to his hereditary prestige the undoubted right to be not less distinguished as a gentleman, scholar, and philanthropist, than as a patrician.

Descended on one side from a second son of the fourth Duke of Norfolk by marriage with the Dacres of Gilsland and Naworth in the north, and by his mother from the Dukes of Devonshire, and nearly related to "the Beautiful Duchess of Rutland" of whom mention has been made in a previous memoir, the late Earl of Carlisle was born on the 18th of April, 1802, loved learning from his youth, was educated at Eton, took prizes for poems and obtained high classical honours at Oxford University, and at an early age became an *attaché* to the British embassy at St. Petersburg. After several years passed in a diplomatic service which must have brought him in contact with all the polish and astuteness of courts and courtiers, as well as with much beyond their immediate sphere—cultivating an acquaintance with political science, polite literature, and the more humane philosophies the while—with the title of Viscount Morpeth, under which his political career will be best remembered by all of his own generation, he entered Parliament first for the family borough giving him that title, and subsequently, in 1832, was returned in the Liberal interest for the West Riding of Yorkshire. In 1835 he was returned again, but being immediately appointed Chief Secretary for Ireland, he had to be re-elected, sustaining a contest with the Hon. John Stuart Wortley (afterwards Lord Wharnccliffe), but winning by a very considerable majority.

It was about this time that Lord Morpeth's name first became familiar to me from the following incident. After the election was over, and his lordship was attending some public entertainment at Barnsley, it chanced that Thomas Lister, a young Quaker (who had worked for his return very hard during the contest), was placed near to him at table. Lister, being one of the most original and outspoken young men in the whole Riding, and the author of a number of poetical squibs, which had been fired off pretty briskly during the late proceedings, became an object of no little interest to the triumphant candidate, who, struck with his energy and picturesqueness of thought, asked him what was his occupation. "I go with a cart," said Lister. "A cart!" exclaimed his lordship, "what cart?" "A cart, between the canal wharf and the town," replied Thomas. Leaning back in his characteristic manner, and gazing at the rustic Friend with some intensity, his lordship said, "What a singular genius to be employed as a carter!

Would you not like some occupation more in accordance with your cast of mind?" "Very much," said Lister, "if I could properly obtain it." "Well," was the startling rejoinder, "the postmastership for Barnsley happens at this time to be vacant; and if a sufficient number of the townspeople will recommend you, I shall be happy to nominate you for the situation." Here was a windfall! but there was an unforeseen obstacle to the young poet's enjoying it. The getting up of the recommendation, the nomination, and appointment, were all the work of a few days. But when it came to the acceptance, and it was found that the office could not be entered upon even by a Quaker without an *oath*, Lister resolved still to go with his cart rather than swear, and the appointment was for that reason soon in the hands of another person. This event awakened an unusual interest in various quarters, and brought before the world Thomas Lister's history. When a lad, he had been noted among his teachers and fellow pupils at Ackworth school as one of the most physically courageous, emulative and enterprising of their number. Wrestling, running, leaping and climbing, were among his greatest delights. In athletic contests of any sort he was more given to going beyond than to confining himself within the rules of that fine but then most restrictive institution, and could take a five-barred gate with an easy spring. Love of approbation, or rather of distinction, was one of his ruling faculties, and physical celerity one of his usual methods of displaying it. But the death of his parents, the emigration of several members of his family, and the necessity of employing all his bodily energies, not in pastime but in useful labour, had made him a thoughtful man at twenty, and had disposed him to win attention by intellectual rather than athletic feats. Hence his desire to shine as a poet; and it was just when this habit of rhyming had grown ripe that he became known, in the manner described, to Lord Morpeth. His refusal to take the oath was productive of two results. It caused Lord Morpeth to say that, if Friends had the moral courage to refuse such emoluments rather than make oath, their word might safely be taken on any subject; and it led to the collection and publication of Lister's poems in a volume with the title of "The Rustic Wreath," by which he was soon made master of some hundreds of pounds. It was while the volume was thus bringing him at once such wealth and reputation, that Lister came on a visit to Nottingham, and was my fellow rambler to Clifton Grove and some favourite spots about Sherwood Forest, telling me much of Lord Morpeth, of course, and of many other distinguished people to whom he had thus unexpectedly been made known. From that hour his lordship never relaxed his efforts till the disability of a Friend to



take civil office without an oath was removed; and when the post-office of Barnsley, after some years, was vacant again, Thomas received the appointment, and retained it till his superannuation.

Lord Morpeth was by no means the first of his family friendly to the people called Quakers. There is before me a large folio volume, "A Journal of the Life of Thomas Story," one of their more distinguished ministers in the early part of last century, in which are recorded whole pages of conversations with Charles, the third Earl of Carlisle, on religion and religious toleration. These conversations are worthy of any man's reading; and when, about twenty years back, I asked the late Earl if he had ever seen them, he replied that Mr. Story's book was well known to him—he had read those conversations with much interest, and had not forgotten some of their sentiments when bringing in the bill for relieving the Friends from their disabilities under the laws relating to oaths. His lordship added, "The Earl in question had also the merit—a great one in my eyes—of building Castle Howard."

It has often been asked in what that charm consists by which some men can attach crowds to them as firmly as if they were riveted heart to heart, or blended mind with mind, all through. A mere man of the world will attribute it to suavity and tact. The phrenologist will recognise in it the paramount activity of adhesiveness and its kindred faculties. A poet like Byron would call it "the magic of the mind." Truth is, it may be associated with any or all of these qualities. But wherever its influence is *healthy*, it has more simple, sublime, and universal affinities than they; and, call it by whatever name we may, it is a *spirit of kindness*. It has been charged against the late Lord Carlisle that he never had the courage to say "No." For some men the power to utter that monosyllable may be in their circumstances essential; and we can still love anyone who dare say "No" in a right spirit, from his conviction that it is for good. But may it not be, on the other side, that some men are constituted for living the life of "Yes," and for whom the ready utterance of "No" would be a falsification of the very nature and purpose of their being? The one great thing for every man is that he should be sincere, and if he feels it right to say *no*, why, say it of course; but if he does not feel it right, let him say *yes*, or nothing. If the late Earl never denied others, it must have cost him much self-denial, and perhaps made a balance with that very opposite person, who being asked on his death-bed if he had anything to reproach himself with, languidly and considerably replied, "No—no—I am not aware that I ever denied myself anything!" By whatever faculty or quality it might be, the late lord had the advantage of

being instantly and permanently *liked*, wherever he appeared among the people; nor could this have been from any beauty of person; for a configuration of face more plain than his you would hardly see in a crowd. But when he spoke, there was a pulse of good nature which, throbbing in himself, electrified all who heard him by its vibrations; there was the music of harmonious thought embodied in his words; and when the Hon. John Stuart Wortley (who I believe had been his schoolfellow) rode proudly off the field at Wakefield, after beating him in the great corn-law contest of 1841, as he turned round and gave a last look at the hustings, where the losers still lingered, his eyes were filled with tears. Independently altogether of the question of politics, I for one shared warmly in the popular love of Lord Morpeth. I loved him for what he had done for my friend Lister and the Friends; connected with the "Sheffield Iris," I had worked both hard and honestly in his cause, and could have wept to think of his noble and classic spirit being thus shut out of his accustomed arena. But I ever after liked his triumphant opponent, too, for that one look he gave back, and in which, after the sword of knight of the shire had been bound upon him, and he turned to ride away to the strains of "See the conquering hero comes," he seemed silently to say, "I wish you could also have been with me."

That contest of 1841, which will be ever memorable in England, will be especially so in West Yorkshire. During its progress I saw and heard Lord Morpeth often, but there is no need here to describe each minor occasion. I was on the hustings at Wakefield at the nomination. The candidates were Lord Morpeth, Lord Milton, the Hon. J. Stuart Wortley, and Mr. Beckett Dennison, respectively; and a sight to be remembered was that "gathering of the clans" of industry and wealth, —of land and labour, from every hill and dale of the large and picturesque region of the West Riding. As mass after mass of people, each in itself a host, kept joining the vast concourse with loud huzzas and counter-huzzas, amid loud strains of music from the numerous bands, there was a dash of sublimity about the scene that it is hard in words to paint. The old stereotyped similes of "a forest of banners," "tumultuous throng," "the surging crowd," and so forth, give no idea of it at all adequate or accurate. I doubt if there be in the world a realm in which dominating self-confidence and sturdy independence are united among the great masses more evidently than in West Yorkshire and Lancashire; and it was the impersonation of these, in conjunction with all the ordinary motives of such a gathering, which gave a character to that crowd that makes it in one's memory rather a paragon than a parallel of popular scenes. It was too dignified and well-

behaved to be called a mob, and yet too stirring and lively to be called a deliberative assembly. It made Burke's oft-quoted metaphor of "the swinish multitude" a feeble sarcasm, but at the same time suggested exceeding thankfulness for English love of order and law. And well do I remember Lord Morpeth's significant words, as he commenced to address them, saying that the sight filled him with "mingled feelings of admiration, curiosity, and awe."

The contest over, and Wortley and Dennison at the head of the poll, there was on the Monday following a gathering again on the same ground, to hear its declaration. The morning was gray, the air still and pensive, and after an early hour among the ruins of Sandal Castle, and breakfast with my literary friend Mr. W. H. Leatham, I was on those hustings once more, as once more came the bodies of people with their heralds, bands, and banners—the victors with their blue and the defeated with their yellow colours—one proudly exultant, and the other scarcely less proudly sustaining their defeat. But this time the Blues were considerably the most numerous and loud. The Yellows came less spiritedly and with but little melody in their march. Yet when the whole mass had gathered it was very great. Every speaker was heard with attention, but Lord Morpeth with the deepest, and the following are the closing words of his speech, as reported in the "Leeds Mercury" of July 12th, 1841. I have seldom known any speech make a deeper impression than this on those who listened to its measured cadences:—

After the long period of our connection, which has now lasted through eleven years and five parliaments, after the transactions to which we have been parties and the terms we have been on together, I would fain hope, that before we part you will allow me to say a few words further on matters more pertaining to my own relations with you. I am willing to flatter myself that even with my political opponents I leave behind nothing but political difference, and that we separate without any ground for angry retrospect or personal offence. But as to those with whom I have had the greater happiness of agreeing, now that so many recollections of considerate kindness, of disinterested zeal, of past struggles, and of past victories are rushing at once upon my mind, I feel what language cannot embody, and thanks cannot convey. I have learnt to love even the inanimate features of your lovely landscapes with which I have grown familiar during my repeated canvass—your heath-clad hills, and your wide-spreading valleys; but how much more must my spirit bound in answer to the cheer which roused the mountain echo, or to the welcome which ushered me into the busiest haunts of your living industry! I trust I need not debar myself from the hope that in the varied course of life opportunities may present themselves to me of showing my abiding sense of gratitude for your past favours; and I cannot help declaring, though it may seem to bespeak a more poignant sense of the loss I have sustained, that I do not think I could reconcile myself for the present to occupy any other seat or to represent any other men. And now, gentlemen, that I have to take my leave of you, bear with me if I

adopt for one moment a more solemn tone than I might have otherwise thought it fit to use on such an occasion; but I cannot refrain from putting up one fervid petition that the Disposer of all events, and the Giver of all good, may visit each and all of you with his choicest and most abundant blessings. May He store your garners with increase, and reward your industry with plenty. May he scatter the seeds of order, of temperance, of the domestic and public virtues, far and wide amidst all your dwellings. May He crown each hearth and home with peace, with comfort, with content, and with thanksgiving, and ever supply you with those who can, I will not say more faithfully, but more effectually, serve you! These are my latest words; thanks again—fare you well, and all good be with you! [Prolonged cheering from both sides of the hustings and all parts of the crowd.]

As all the world of politicians knows, his Lordship kept out of parliament till he again represented the same constituency; and the manner in which he signed himself for the last time “Morpeth,” on succeeding to the peerage, is well remembered yet.

It was in the early months of 1843—I think it was '48—that I was riding from Sheffield to York to give a lecture, when at one of the intermediate stations Lord Morpeth took a seat in the same compartment I was in, entered freely into conversation, learnt my object in going to York, and at night came breathless from a ball-room, in the hope of seeing some of my magnetic experiments. They were just concluded. But I was pleased for his sake to resume them; and he seemed as much delighted as astonished by the results. After this I did not see him again till the summer of 1845, when one day, in London, Mr. H. S. Thompson, of Fairfield, came to my apartments in Pall Mall, and said a distinguished party would be glad to see me in the evening, at Nerot's Hotel, in Clifford-street, but no idea was given me as to whom it might be. On being ushered in, I saw standing in conversation, near the door of the room, Drs. Elliotson and Engledue, and Mr. Topham, with Mr. Thompson; and, with their elbows resting on the mantel-piece at the upper end of the large apartment, Lord Morpeth and another person, who proved to be the Marquis of Lorn (now Duke of Argyll.) Moving forward with the intention of paying my respects to Lord Morpeth, he (seeing and knowing me by the reflection in the large mirror over the mantel-piece on which he was leaning), turned round and came with a smile of welcome and out-held hand to meet me half-way down the room, saying in a hearty manner, “Well, Mr. Hall, I am glad to see you once more; how have you been in the long time since we last met?” “Thank you, my lord,” I answered, “generally speaking, pretty well; but I could scarcely have thought you would have so clear a recollection of me.” “But how could it be otherwise?” he rejoined. “Do you think I could ever forget your experiments at York or our previous conversation in the train? I am told that you have lately been observing some fresh phenomena, and thought you would

perhaps have no objection to let us see a repetition of them. They will be quite new to Lord Lorn." Lord Lorn assented, and at the same time observed that he did not believe in mesmerism at all; on which I said that the question had become one, not so much of belief or disbelief, as of what we could really understand of it; some experiments were then given on two young persons who had already proved highly susceptible to the influence; and so the evening passed away.

A few days afterwards, a gentleman, well known for his advocacy of mesmerism, called upon me and said that Lord Morpeth wished some of his relatives to see the same phenomena that had been developed at Nerot's; would I consent to let him have my two *sujets* for the purpose and be content to stay away myself, on the ground that it would be more satisfactory that the experiments should be made by an amateur than by one who was connected with mesmerism as a profession? My reply was that the youths were not my slaves—that they were at liberty to go if they chose—but that no consideration on earth would ever induce me to be a party to any arrangement in which my own calling and integrity were not respected. The truth was that from the manner in which the proposition was made to me, I felt it was so little in Lord Morpeth's usual spirit as to be quite mysterious, and rather painfully so; and a repetition of the conversation only led to the same conclusion again. At this time I was standing at a window which almost overlooked St. James's Palace-gate, when who should be coming from the Palace-yard at quick speed but Lord Morpeth, who in a very few seconds was in the room with us. Sitting down in a low chair, and almost out of breath, he asked if there was any reason for delay, and if I could not go with the gentleman in question to his relatives, as the hour which had been appointed was passing. Said the gentleman, who was still with me, "I have been suggesting to Mr. Hall, that he would perhaps allow me privately to take charge of the experiments without his presence, as, he being professionally connected with mesmerism, it might be more satisfactory to your lordship's friends, should there chance to be any sceptics amongst them." By the effect of this upon Lord Morpeth's countenance, I felt sure at once that he had been no party to such an idea, and said I would not stand in the way of anything being done that might be thought well without me; but since mesmerism to me had all the dignity that could be claimed by any other profession, and my connection with it, in a moral point of view, was perfectly honourable, I should never for a moment connect myself with any arrangement in which my own integrity and respectability were not fully recognised. "Oh," said Lord Morpeth, "I begin to perceive; there is some misunderstanding between you on this point,

and I must be a peacemaker between you, for I see Mr. ——'s reason. You will yourself allow, Mr. Hall, that it is possible for him to feel a little tender, as there can be no doubt that mesmerism has been rather injured by some of its professors." Turning my face full on his lordship's, and speaking with as much earnestness and respect as I was capable of, I said—"No one knows better than you, my lord, how possible it is for some people in the very highest walks of life to disgrace their position by ill conduct, or, on the other hand, how possible it is for others to ennoble the lowest; and I have certainly never done anything to the dishonour of mesmerism." I can never forget the telling effect of that remark. His lordship, leaning low back in his chair as I stood before him, with his hands clasped together, and his earnest eyes looking up at mine in silence for fully half a minute, as though his mind were occupied by some intense and reflective thought, he at length broke out in an equally earnest tone of speech, as he said, "Well, Hall, I believe you are right! but you have no objection to bringing the youths and going with us yourself, have you?" "No, my lord," said I, with emotion, "I will go with you anywhere!" "Come along, then!" he exclaimed, jumping up from his chair; and away we all went to Eaton-place, where I saw no sign of doubt from anyone present as to the genuineness of the experiments. A note came a few days afterwards from his lordship, expressing satisfaction in them and thanking me. A gentleman from Leeds happened to be with me at the moment it came, and asked the loan of it that he might show his wife the autograph, which he, or she, or somebody else, has kept for or from me to this day.

The last time I saw Lord Morpeth in London he gave me a pleasant and friendly hail as he was hurrying through the Park on foot to the House of Commons; and the next and the last time we met was after he had become Earl of Carlisle. It was on the occasion of his laying the foundation-stone of the Burnley Mechanics' Institution, at the *soirée* following which I had also been invited to be a speaker. Under the presidency of Colonel Towneley, Lord Sefton, the Hon. Sir James Scarlett, Sir James Kay-Shuttleworth, Mr. Wilson Patten, Mr. James Heywood, Mr. Pilkington, Mr. Lawrence Heyworth, and several other gentlemen took part in the proceedings. During a procession through the streets from Towneley to the site of the Institution, Lord Carlisle indulged in a genial smile, and gave as a reason that he was amused by the vast numbers among the crowds of lookers-on standing with their hands in their trousers-pockets. I had been unwell just before, and my own speech in the evening must have been a very poor one, considering the occasion and the company; but he gave me words of

cheer. On my return from Ireland in 1849, I wrote, as already elsewhere mentioned, a narrative of my observations, thoughts, and feelings in that land of beauties and anomalies, wit and woe, which he read, as he did several of my other writings, assuring me that he did so with interest. He also read the same *brochure* again on becoming Lord-lieutenant; and it is to this extent that my personal recollections have any right to connection with his name.

Lord Carlisle died on the 4th of November, 1864, having very shortly before resigned the Lord-lieutenancy of Ireland, with which country, as with Yorkshire, his name will ever be more specially connected, though dear to men of thought and feeling throughout the world. Whether as a speaker or writer he would have been an ornament to any of the most classic nations in its most classic age. His poems have the merit of chasteness, elegance, ease, and great beauty of thought. His lecture on Pope will long be remembered for its finely critical as well as bravely eulogistic tone. His "Diary in Turkish and Greek Waters" deserves the popularity it first gained. As a promoter of peace and good will among all nations, ranks and classes of mankind, his name is dear to philanthropy and its objects on many shores—not least those of the American States. In the words of a tribute to him now before me, "May the peerage of England never want men to fill the post so honourably occupied by Lord Carlisle!"







## Chapter Nineteenth.

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### GLIMPSES OF GEORGE HERBERT.

(A LITERARY NOTICE—JAN. 1853.)

SUPPOSING we had been wandering for the greater part of a spring or summer day, among very pleasant suburban scenery, composed of a proportionate variety of hill and dale, wood and water, villa and cot, and all the other fair features of an average English landscape, lit by a cheerful sun, shining in a clear blue heaven;—and supposing that as that sun was westering to the horizon, giving its first vermeil flush to the sky it was leaving and its softening tints of gold to all below;—and that in such an hour we dropped into a retired rural dale, and there found ourselves contemplating some old and picturesque ecclesiastical pile, with its pointed arches, its mullioned windows, its circles and its angles, its fanciful tracery, its emblematical devices, and its many quaintnesses, all richly but pensively illuminated by the beauty of that sweet time:—Just such is the comparison we would imagine to our having, in the summer of the soul, had a free discursion among the common minds of the day, and then, in that subdued and quiet hour, fallen upon the volume of George Herbert's *Life and Poetry* now before us.\* As may be seen by Mr. Gilfillan's interesting sketch, as well as by reference to that fine old book, "*Izaak Walton's Lives*," George

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\* The Poetical Works of GEORGE HERBERT. With Life, Critical Dissertation, and Explanatory Notes, by the Rev. GEORGE GILFILLAN. 1853.

Herbert, "Holy George" as he is sometimes called, was born at Montgomery Castle, in Shropshire, in the spring of 1598, and was the fifth son of a most loving, loveable, and excellent mother. His eldest brother, the celebrated Lord Herbert of Cherbury—so titled for his diplomatic services, by Charles I—seems to have been in many respects a complete negation of himself; for while he (George) was what would be now called a high churchman, his brother wrote a book against revealed religion: so strangely do extremes sometimes meet in one family, as we see in the case of the brothers Newman and other public characters of the present time. From under the maternal eye he was in due time transferred to Westminster School, where, as Walton says, "the beauties of his pretty behaviour and wit shined and became so eminent and lovely in this his innocent age, that he seemed to be marked out for piety, and to become the care of Heaven and of a particular good angel to guide and guard him." Subsequently we find him at Cambridge, obtaining several academical degrees ere twenty-two years of age, manifesting the purity and loftiness of his mind, and diverting himself with music, but somewhat reserved, perhaps proudly shy, among his compeers. While at Cambridge he happened, in the spirit of the times, to please James I. by a complimentary letter he had been deputed to write; and the King complimented him in return with an oratorship; while enjoying which he added the knowledge of several modern languages to his accomplishments, and aimed at becoming a courtier and secretary of state. In the prosecution of this species of ambition, he afterwards resided in London—dressing fashionably, if not foppishly; but his worst faults seem to have been little more than frivolities, if we are to credit Mr. Gilfillan, who says:—

He was, however, subject to infirmities and illnesses of various sorts—now scorched by severe fever, now threatened by consumption, and always worn out by the edge of intense study. His wit, he used to say, was like "a penknife in too narrow a sheath, too sharp for his body." This bred in him a strong desire to leave the University, to decline all study for a season, and to travel in foreign parts. To this, however, his mother, doubtless for satisfactory reasons, was decidedly opposed; and, with a spirit rare in grown-up children, he cheerfully submitted to her pleasure.

Shortly afterwards, the King and some of his principal friends at court having died, he retired into the country and—deeper still—into his own heart; and growing more sensible of the comparative "vanity of earthly things, and of the grandeur and reality of things above," he at length resolved to take orders and enter the Church, which he subsequently did, and about the same time took a wife—his mother having already died without seeing one or the other, though she had much desired both. Being now well and most happily married, he

was, in his thirty-sixth year, inducted to the pleasant parsonage of Bemerton, near Salisbury; and on the night of his induction he told Mr. Woodnot that he was "sure to live well, because the virtuous life of a clergyman is the most powerful eloquence to persuade all that see it to reverence and love, and at least to desire to live like him. And (added he) I will do this because I know we live in an age that hath more need of good examples than precepts." How much are such men wanted in every age! It is a remarkable index to the spirit of our own time, that Mr. Gilfillan (himself a Scotch Presbyterian) should bear the following testimony to the character and elaborate practices of George Herbert, the great archetype of true old English parsons:—

And now began a career of labour, so short, so sweet, and so splendid in its holy lustre, that we can best compare it to an autumnal day in the close of October, when the union of the softest of suns and the meekest of earths is as brief as it is bright and perfect, reminding us of that beautiful strain of the Poet himself—

" Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,  
The bridal of the earth and sky;  
Sweet dew shall weep thy fall to-night;  
For thou must die."

He commenced his ministerial work, as at Layton, by repairing the church, the chancel, and the parsonage. He began, too, immediately to care for the poor, to visit the sick, and, in the grand, simple, immortal language of Burke, "*to remember the forgotten.*" He next bound himself by a set of written resolutions, which we find now condensed in his little book called "*The Country Parson*," to perform his duties in regular system and series. His first text was, "Keep thy heart with all diligence;" and it soon became apparent that he meant it to apply to himself as well as his parishioners. His first sermon was elaborate, flowered with many of his after "*Temple*" ornaments, and delivered with much eloquence. But he soon found out that a rich feather does not always imply a strong wing, and that the force of a shaft is not always in proportion to the plumage which surrounds it. He became, as all true preachers become at length, much more practical and simple; he tried, too, to get his audience to *realise* the meaning of the English Church service; and, as it was said of Augustus, that he found Rome brick and left it marble, so let Herbert have this praise, that he found religion in his parish an empty form, and left it an earnest reality. He gave his people a reason for every ceremony and form of their ritual,—he did something far more than this, he convinced them that *his* soul and heart were thoroughly in the service. He commenced the practice of chatechising his flock every Sunday afternoon, and generally secured a full and attentive audience. His love for order and decorum led him to reprove nothing more severely than indecency of behaviour during the time of public worship. Along with his wife, and three nieces of his, and all his family, he went twice every day to church prayers, at the hours of ten and four, and "then and there lifted up pure and charitable hands to God in the midst of the congregation." This could not fail of producing an impression upon the neighbourhood; a great quiet revival of religion was the result. Most of his parishioners, and many gentlemen from the neighbourhood, constantly attended his chapel during week-days. Not a few let their plough rest in mid furrow, when *Mr. Herbert's Saints' Bell* rung to

prayers, and they are said to have found or fancied that when resumed it moved more briskly to the tune of the good man's blessing.

In Herbert's short but intense pastoral life, he did his duty manfully and christianly, according to his own best idea of what was manly and christian-like, and died in 1633, equally revered and beloved. No doubt there are many who would regard him, both in his life and poetry, as a man too mindful of church externals. But in this there is at least the noble defence for him—that there was not in any of its rites, to *him*, one empty formality. To him the whole Church was a beautiful and living bride of God, and every limb and lineament had its own vital office in relation to the whole body. Agreement and unity were therefore typified in all he saw, whether in the Church, the Universe, or in Man. Thus to such a mind all things were indicators one of another, as were altogether of God's great love and wisdom. And why not? Was he not a poet, with an affinity in all things for rhythm and rhyme—to whom the leaving out of a proper figure in a landscape, or a dot on paper even—still more a single dot or symbol in the church service—would have given pain? Unpoetical people can have no adequate appreciation of this peculiar quality, of which James Montgomery afforded so fine an example. Before Chantrey shone as a sculptor he had not unsuccessfully tried his hand at painting; and in one of his pictures, intended to illustrate Rhodes's "Scenery of the Peak," he had sketched a solitary place—on the Wye, in Miller's Dale. When done, the painter, as was the case with most who saw it, felt a want in it which his own genius failed at the moment to supply. At length, on his friend the poet coming into the studio, Chantrey said—"Tell me, Montgomery, what it is that's wanted to complete that picture. Everybody can see a want, but nobody suggests a remedy." "Why," said Montgomery, "the painting is that of a solitude, and you want to make the solitude *felt*. Perhaps if you were to place the figure of a lonely man at this point (indicating the spot with his finger or cane) it would be accomplished." This was immediately done; and when long years had passed away, and Chantrey was dead, in a critique on his life and labours it was remarked that had he persevered in painting he might have shone therein as in sculpture, and the conception of that very figure in such a position was instanced as a proof of his remarkable sense of propriety and fine taste! Now this faculty, as I take it—this exquisite sense of the harmonious relation of external forms and internal principles—has seldom been more indicated in any man than in George Herbert: hence his ideal of an external church corresponding to the perfection of the human form, and that form "a living temple of the Holy Ghost." In his great and varied poem of "The Temple" this

is illustrated a hundred times, and is touched upon if not illustrated in the following on Man:—

My God, I heard this day,  
That none doth build a stately habitation  
But he that means to dwell therein.  
What house more stately hath there been,  
Or can be, than is Man? to whose creation  
All things are in decay.

Man is all symmetry,  
Full of proportions, one limb to another,  
And to all the world besides:  
Each part may call the farthest, brother:  
For head with foot hath private amity,  
And both with moons and tides.

Nothing hath got so far,  
But Man hath caught and kept it, as his prey.  
His eyes dismount the highest star.  
He is in little all the sphere:  
Herbs gladly cure our flesh, because that they  
Find their acquaintance there.

For us the winds do blow;  
The earth doth rest, heaven move, and fountains flow.  
Nothing we see, but means our good,  
As our *delight*, or as our *treasure*:  
The whole is, either our cupboard of *food*,  
Or cabinet of *pleasure*.

The stars have us to bed;  
Night draws the curtain, which the Sun withdraws:  
Music and light attend our head.  
All things unto our *flesh* are kind  
In their *descent and being*; to our *mind*  
In their *ascent and cause*.

More servants wait on Man,  
Than he'll take notice of: in every path  
He treads down that which doth befriend him  
When sickness makes him pale and wan.  
Oh, mighty love! Man is one world, and hath  
Another to attend him.

Since then, my God, thou hast  
So brave a Palace built; O dwell in it,  
That it may dwell with thee at last!  
Till then, afford us so much wit,  
That, as the world serves us, we may serve thee,  
And both thy servants be.

Such his idea of the relations of the human structure. Mark, too,

his acquaintance with its internal heritage and working. He is speaking of griefs :—

We are the earth ; and they,  
Like moles within us, heave and cast about :  
And till they foot and clutch their prey,  
They never cool, much less give out.  
No smith can make such locks, but they have keys ;  
Closets are halls to them ; and hearts, highways.

Only an open breast  
Doth shut them out, so that they cannot enter ;  
Or, if they enter, cannot rest,  
But quickly seek some new adventure.  
Smooth open hearts no fastening have ; but fiction  
Doth give a hold and handle to affliction.

Wherefore my faults and sins,  
Lord, I acknowledge ; take thy plagues away :  
For since confession pardon wins,  
I challenge here the brightest day,  
The clearest diamond : let them do their best,  
They shall be thick and cloudy to my breast.

Gladly could we cull many more passages from this fine old author ; for, in the multitude of new books, the value of old ones is often strangely overlooked. But one extract more must suffice. Like what is already given, it displays profound knowledge of human nature and some of its most important requirements :—

Oh, what a sight were Man, if his attires  
Did alter with his mind ;  
And, like a dolphin's skin, his clothes combined  
With his desires !

Surely if each one saw another's heart,  
There would be no commerce,  
No sale or bargain pass : all would disperse,  
And live apart.

Lord, mend or rather make us : one creation  
Will not suffice our turn :  
Except thou make us daily, we shall spurn  
Our own salvation.



## Chapter Twentieth.

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### JOHN GRATTON, THE QUAKER PREACHER, AND HIS TIMES.

(JULY, 1860.)

FROM what has been said in previous chapters and will follow in this and others, the reader may not unnaturally infer that I have some innate regard for Quakers or Quakerism, and perhaps a candid word or two on the subject may not be here out of place. I have not the least pretension to being one of the sect; it would be as unfair to those within it as to myself were it supposed that I had; but I hold it impossible for any person with a mental constitution like mine—touched from earliest childhood with a love of Good, and of whatever spirit beauteous nature may be the garb, in a home where books and conversation habitually referred to inmost truth, and where it was daily brought out in the actions and ordinary phraseology of life—ever, without total depravity, to grow altogether indifferent to such influences. And as the last person of whom I should expect any virtue would be a hard, self-seeking or self-satisfied man of the world, pluming himself on being a Friend from the mere accident of birth in the society or dry external conformity to its rules and customs; so, contrarily, I have ever found the genuine Friend, whether such from birth or by late conviction, one of the most tender, self-devoted, honourable, and estimable of Christians. Besides reading how the Spirit of the Lord



had often manifested itself to such in their silent hours of abstraction from the ordinary fret and glare of the world, I had once myself an experience not easily to be forgotten. It was when I was yet a little child that one sabbath day, rummaging in a large chest, I fell upon an illustrated copy of the Bible, which had been published in "numbers." After looking over the engravings, I came to the Apocrypha—chapters of which till then I had not known the existence. Through these I read, as they were very entertaining, and longed for more; but nothing more of that kind appearing, being in a reading mood, I went on through the early chapters of the New Testament, when my soul became so enlivened and enlightened by the love of God in Christ Jesus, that my whole being seemed changed; and, young as I was, existence had realised a charm of which I had no previous idea. Here, then, was quakerism, or something like it, to start with: so that when I read the experiences of the early apostles of that people and heard my father reason in favour of their doctrines, instead of thinking them novel, I rather wondered that all mankind did not realise and profess them. Still, whenever

" Upon the breeze the hallow'd sound  
Of Sunday bells was borne,—  
That sound which ne'er a Christian hears,  
And hearing, feels forlorn," \*

While people passed quietly and reverently by to their various places of worship, from some of which would steal on the ear the softened strains of sabbath psalms, I loved all that too, and had little disposition to think harshly of others' modes of approaching the Great Supreme.

And as time passed on I was thrown strangely in contact with extreme thinkers on all possible subjects, learning to see glimpses of truth in the excogitations of most, but sad to find how little patience one set of shibbolethists sometimes had with another—men quarrelling about the difference in their rhind, when on getting down to the pith of them one could find little difference at all. Hence, though loving men like John Gratton, whose biography will now be given, I learnt to see a true and tender Christian also—a true disciple of a True Master—in "holy George Herbert," whose entire mind, after his conversion, was occupied in assimilating the outer to the inner life.

Derbyshire has sometimes produced men almost as unique and picturesque as its scenery; and just as we would take a long journey, to get an hour's quiet enjoyment in a romantic retreat like Lathkil Dale, so would it be pleasant to find a track through two centuries, that

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\* Lord John Manners.

would bring one in contact at last with men like John Gratton, the Quaker Apostle of the Peak. His "Journal" almost does this; and it not only gives us a very interesting self-drawn portrait of a very remarkable man, but many most graphic, and sometimes thrilling touches of the times and scenes in which he lived and laboured. Without reference to its polemical features, it would be excellent reading for the lover of history and of bold and broad human character; but for those who would wish to contemplate Quakerism in its birth-struggle, and in its primitive integrity, before it had overcome public prejudice, or was in likelihood of becoming respectable on 'Change—when those who preached its doctrines were fined twenty pounds a-time for doing so, and the hearers five shillings each for attending, with a chance of long imprisonment besides—it is about as good a little book as could be taken up for the purpose. I do not wish, in saying this, to be understood as eulogising *all* the old patriarch's peculiar views, or the epithets, some of them sounding rather like nick-names—for it was an age in which most sects gave each other nick-names—which he now and then bestowed upon other professors and their places of worship. But for its originality, simple honesty, quaintness and picturesqueness, as well as moral bravery and aspiration after truth, at a time in which religion, when not fretful, was all but fast asleep, it is a Life that might be studied by people of any sect with advantage even in our own day.

John Gratton appears to have been born in the year 1641, or 1642, somewhere about six miles from Monyash,\* and those readers who happen to know much of the wild and solemn scenery of that pastoral region, will the better understand him, as he so quaintly yet tenderly writes—"When it first pleased the Lord to visit me, and to cause his light to shine in me, (which is now my life,) I was but a child, and was keeping my father's sheep." He then goes on to describe the reproofs of "the inward monitor" for sin, and its encouragements to virtue, until he could not rest short of "the peace that passeth understanding," cost him whatever it might. He found it not in "play amongst vain boys, playing at cards, shooting at butts, or ringing of bells;" nor even was he quite at home among either the orthodox or the puritans of his own locality, for he says, "I then read much, and conferred with many about religion, and ran to and fro, to hear them that were accounted great preachers, but neglected the Great Teacher in my own heart, and esteemed the priests that were then in place, in Oliver Cromwell's time, and went constantly to hear them, but often

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\* A primitive village, south-west of Bakewell and north of Youlgreave.

came home full of sorrow." To him many of them seemed like men, as he says, "seeking the living amongst the dead, and among dead ordinances, dead faiths, dead observations, and dead professions." Still, he was by no means satisfied with himself; for, he adds, "I mourned deeply, and was ready to think my heart was not right in the sight of God, and I prayed much in the stable, and in barns, and in bed, and on the high moor. And one day, being on the top of a hill, in the snow, I cried aloud in strong cries to the Lord, being all alone, and desired him to show me my own heart; and the Lord was pleased to hear and answer my prayer at that time, for I plainly saw it to be deceitful, and not a good, humble, pure heart, and I was pleased that I saw it and knew what it was, but sorry it was so very bad."

He had now deep tribulation and sorrow, within and without, for King Charles the Second had come to the crown, and the Act of Uniformity being passed, he says—"The Presbyterian priests whom I had so much esteemed and admired, made their farewell sermons and left us, which caused me to weep bitterly." He thought they were but cowardly Christians to be silent at man's command; nor did he think better of the dominant party who ordered them to be silent, or pay a heavy penalty for speech. He next sought solace amongst some people at Chesterfield, but complains much of their timidity. A singular picture of the times is given in the following passage; it reminds us forcibly of the hunted Scottish Covenanters:—

When we went to meetings, we were cautioned to go as privately as might be; so that they went several ways, one under one hedge-side, and another under another, that we might not be taken notice of, to meet as we could. Then when we came to the meeting-places, scouts or watchers were set to see, and to give notice, that if a magistrate came, we might all run away, and break up our meeting. This seemed a wrong thing to me, and it displeased me; for I saw that they were not like the disciples of Christ, who were not afraid or ashamed to own Christ before men. It did not tend to spread the Gospel, if they preached it. So I got no true peace of God among them, nor enjoyment of the Lord in my poor soul.

It was impossible for anyone to live long in such a state without the love of God being manifest to him, wherefore he writes:—

Now it pleased the Lord to open and shew me many things, and he opened the Holy Scriptures to me sometimes, and I was mightily afraid of sinning against the Lord, so that I walked carefully. And it grieved me to see people live badly, and that they could not believe one another what they said when they bought and sold; and when I heard a man swear, I trembled. Sometimes I felt something in my inner parts that was very precious and sweet to me, yet I did not clearly understand what it was, or what it should be; but if at any time I did or said anything amiss, then I soon lost the sight and feeling of it; oh! it hath been gone in a moment.

On one occasion we find him reading and then weeping under a wall

in a field ; after which he was ill, and near to death. "But," says he, "after I was pretty well again, I went to the moor to pull heath ; and being alone, as my manner was, I was very full of exercise, and began to think, that that which I had sometimes felt so sweet and precious, and sometimes as a swift witness, a reprover, a just judge, and a condemner of all unrighteousness, was the Holy Spirit of God ; and remembered that I had often been visited by it, and yet did not know it. For I did not think I was worthy to have the Holy Spirit given me, but that it would be presumption in me to expect it, yet now it came into my mind to think much of it, and of its operations and workings in me ; so that it darted into my mind that it was really the Spirit of Truth."

Thus far I have confined myself as closely as possible, and with but little comment, to the simple shepherd's own narrative. But it now occurs to me to point out the fact, that while this process was going on in his mind, in the fields and on the moors of Derbyshire, it was going on not less vigorously in the minds of some thousands similarly circumstanced throughout the kingdom,—each one thinking himself almost alone in such experience, yet longing for communion with others of like spirit. Most of all was it working in the more beautiful, sublime, or pastoral districts—as in Yorkshire, Lancashire, Westmoreland, Cumberland, and Northumberland, but not without something of it in the large cities and towns as well. So that when George Fox, whose early experience was almost precisely analogous to that of Gratton, went forth to proclaim the doctrine of the Universal, Omniscient, and Omnipotent, though silent Teacher, he found people everywhere who seemed as if they had been waiting for him, and who joined him and his friends as soon as the identity of their views and aspirations became known. For some time they knew each other only by the name of Friends ; but a barrister in Derby having given them the nickname of Quakers, the world caught it up, and they have borne it ever since. At first, honest John was rather shy of them from some ill reports which had been spread ; but walking, as he tells us, in a wood, one Sabbath day, he had "a vision," in which their true character was shown him, and in which it appeared to him that the Lord owned them, and that he must join them, though they were "a people of all others that endured the greatest sufferings, and were by all the rest hated, reviled, and scorned." It is impossible in the short space of this chapter, to follow him through all his preliminary buffetings, trials, and encouragements ; but we find him at length not only one of the most devout, but most earnest and influential preachers of the despised yet growing sect, though not without some curious temptations and drawbacks on its threshold.

Curious, too, it is to read some of the incidental experiences of such a man in such times,—as how he one day went to see his sister “dipped in a river called Wye;” how a Baptist meeting fell to be held in its turn, at the house “of an elder, one Humphrey Chapman,” who refused to have it, for fear of the fine of twenty pounds; how it was then offered to another, “one Brume,” who was “not only an elder, but a preacher,” and had been “dipping” two men, but he also refused; whilst another, William Blackshaw, more brave, ran the risk, though it was not “his turn.” How, then a dispute arose amongst them, as to where it should be next. “Some were for meeting in the bottom of a valley, to save the fine of a house; and as for the time, some were for meeting early, to have done by that time the priest and people came from the steeple-house for dinner; but some were for beginning then: yet there was one,” says John, “that I loved best, desired that they might meet as they had done formerly.” At this time he was living at Monyash, and occasionally “went two miles to see a woman at Over-Haddon who pretended to live without meat.” Sometimes we find him disputing with followers of Lodovick Muggleton, a pretended prophet, who “cursed” him for the same. At other times he is in much suffering because his wife is opposed to his opening views, though they became united on that point ere long and lived in the most perfect harmony.

Another trial of his principle existed in the certainty that if he were faithful to it, in such a day of persecution, he must be ready to give up all he had in the world, and go to prison, and perhaps thereby bring his wife and children to poverty. He remained faithful, however, and lived to enjoy his reward.

Unfortunately, the printer has made so many mistakes in the names of places, that when we are told it was at “Exton” Gratton was first powerfully influenced in a silent meeting, I think it must have been a place of some other name—probably Elton. It was at the house of a widow Farnay. The company all sat in solemn stillness; John was convinced of the “presence and power of God,” and that the people were “spiritual worshippers,” and though the tongue was silent there was *spiritual music*. “And I was sensible (he says) that they felt and tasted of the Lord’s goodness at that time, as I did. And though few words were spoken, there arose a sweet melody, that went through the meeting,” and “more true comfort, refreshment, and satisfaction did I meet with from the Lord in that meeting, than ever I had in any meeting in my life before.” After this he often felt his “peace flow as a river;” but his inward conflicts less severe, his outward trials began to multiply. “For,” says he, “when I came home, my poor wife was

sore grieved that I went among Friends, and the people of our town (Monyash) began to rage: some disputed with me, some cursed me, as I heard, some pleaded for me, some derided and mocked me, calling after me Quaker, Quaker; but when I heard them thus call after me, my heart was filled with joy, that I was reproached for Christ's sake."

One great "exercise" was owing to John's dislike to take on him the simple habit and manners of his new associates. He wanted to be fair at the same time to them and to the world. But he goes on to write—"After some time, as I was riding on the road, and waiting, the word of the Lord arose in great power, livingly in my heart, saying, 'Speak truth to thy neighbour, be not double-tongued, respect no man's person.'" He obeyed, and felt approved, and how he became a preacher let his own simple language tell:—

So being come to see, in the light of the Lord, through all these things to my satisfaction, I went cheerfully to Friends' meetings, and was edified and comforted. And the third meeting I was at, the power of the Lord came upon me, and I was pressed in spirit to declare of his goodness, but it was hard to give up; yet I durst not disobey, so I stood up and spoke to the congregation, (abundance of Friends and others being met,) what was given me to understand concerning the creation of man, his dominion, work, state of innocency, fall, and restoration by the promised seed, Jesus Christ, the Saviour of mankind; all which were to the great joy of Friends, and reaching of the people.

The shepherd's eloquence, though learned on the lonely heath, among the mountain snows, or in the deep shades of the silent woods, as we have seen, must indeed have been "reaching," for we find him shortly afterwards at Tideswell, a town where he had been known all his life, rivetting the people by an address of *four hours*, and with such effect, and such a changed appearance in himself, that there arose a questioning among them as to whether it could really be John Gratton or no, to whom they were listening. It is a sign of the times that, having at that meeting convinced a particular woman, her husband, who was a Muggletonian, wrote to his prophet to curse him, which was done accordingly by letter! The "First-day," (Sunday,) following, he was moved to "declare the truth" at Matlock, "where the informers and officers had made sad spoil by taking away Friends' goods;" but they and the others came to the meeting notwithstanding.

The book abounds with such local and personal allusions as the following:—

Now I was much concerned in preaching the Gospel of our Lord, and went to and fro to meetings, and many people were convinced in divers places,—as in Darley Dale, Matlock-side, Ashover parish, Brampton, Scarsdale, and in the High Peak; many and precious meetings we had, as at Matlock, Ashford, Baslow, Bradow, Tideswell, Longston, and elsewhere, as we got liberty at houses, and meetings were

settled, and many of mine own kindred were convinced, and died in the truth. I have ground to hope my aged grandfather, who was about ninety years old, was convinced, and glad of the truth in his old age, telling my mother, "This is it that I have been seeking for all my days." After some time, I went to Derby, and got some meetings there, and at Little Chester. And many Baptists were convinced in Chester.

He also mentions many meetings in Nottinghamshire, in Sherwood Forest, and the Vale of Belvoir, to which came priests, (as he always calls the clergy,) to dispute with him, and informers and constables, desirous of finding occasion to arrest him, but many of them retired "smitten with the truth." One day his father came to rebuke him for leaving his wife and home so much to travel in this way. There happened to be a meeting at his own house that day; and there is something very affecting, and significant of his character and powers, in the result. He says:—

When the meeting was gathered, after some time I spoke; and there were some of the chiefest of the town, whose tears I saw run down their cheeks, and my dear father was so broken, that he cried aloud in great joy of heart whilst he trembled. At which I was silent a little, and my father came to me before all the people, weeping, and took me in his arms, kissing me, now his design of chiding me fell. The next day we walked alone, and had much discourse, till he fell to weeping again, and desired me to forbear, and say no more, after which we parted: he loved me much, yet he never came into open obedience to the truth. After this I stayed at home some time, and oh! the peace that flowed in my heart!

On "the 3rd of the 8th month, 1673," he sent forth an affectionate "Epistle to Friends," advising them "so to mind the Lord, as to be kept in such an innocent life as would let their hearts be clean habitations for the Holy Spirit to dwell in;" and in his journal he says, "at this time truth prospered in the Peak country of Derbyshire, and the word of God grew and was multiplied, the word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, who is the Lord of all."

After this, we find him again in Nottinghamshire, at Great Markham, "where (he says) they stoned us as we rode through the streets, and brought a fool to the meeting, furnished with rotten eggs, as I supposed, for he came and stood just before my face, and flung them towards me, but did not hit me with any of them." On another occasion at Markham, "the priest" brought the officers to break up the meeting, but they were so affected by his preaching that they staid without disturbing him.

What a capital painting might be made from the following description:—

Now I ran to and fro, and had many meetings, both in the High Peak, Scarsdale,



Staffordshire, Cheshire, Lancashire, and Yorkshire. Truth prospered gloriously; and there was great conviction at Bradow, and thereabouts in the Peak; and one Jonathan Fisher and his wife, with divers others, were convinced. We appointed meetings there, but such a multitude came, that the house could not contain them. Wherefore I went into the street under a great tree, in the market place, that was walled about, and I got upon the top of the wall, and spoke to the people, but a company of rude fellows set on to stone us, and the stones flew about my head, and rattled in the tree, yet hit me not; but a woman that happened to sit near me, a great stone hit her and wounded her, and the people came and carried her into a house, but she recovered after some time. At last a man came, blaming them who threw stones at us, and got into the crowd; but after he had stood awhile, he stooped to take up a stone to fling at me, as was supposed, and one of his neighbours standing by, who for some time had been very attentive, seeing the man that had blamed others going to throw a stone, he up with his fist, and struck him on the ear, that he let the stone fall, and did not fling it at me. The man, who struck the other, was convinced that day, and became an honest man, and so continued till his death, for aught I know. At last Henry Jackson and Henry Roebuck came to the meeting, and got on the top of the wall also; and as Henry Jackson was declaring, a parcel of young lusty men came and cast off their upper coats, and thrust Friends violently off the wall. Henry Jackson was heavy, and they were very hard set to get him down, but they did. I went down and spake to one of them, asking him why he was so uncivil. He answered, if they let us alone, all the town would be Quakers.

But I went to a place of the wall that was just before the greatest part of the crowd, and getting up, kneeled down on the top of the wall before their faces, and all fear of stones or men was gone, and I prayed to the Lord by the help of his Holy Spirit, with a loud voice, and the Lord's power came over all, and the people fell in their minds, and were still, and became like another people; and Henry Jackson had good service amongst them after, and our meeting ended in great sweetness; and as we rode out of the town, some blessed us, and seemed very friendly, and loving, and never disturbed me after.

That there must have been something exceedingly melting, as well as impressive in his preaching, to produce the effects he did in those hard and rough times, will be clear from a passage in another part of his book. Probably there is no district where any civil man having a religious duty to perform, would, in our own day, meet with more kindness than at Wirksworth, and in its neighbourhood. Religion, in other forms than that of Quakerism, has done good work there; and it is likely one might now sometimes attend the market without hearing a single rude expression from anybody. But it was not so once; and such men as John Gratton may have done much to bring about the change. He says:—

Another day I was at Wirksworth market, and the people swore so dreadfully, that it was to me as if sparks of fire had flown about, at which my spirit was sore grieved; and the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, "Go to the market-cross, and declare against the wickedness of the people." But I was loth to go, for I knew the people (many of them) to be a rude, wicked, drunken, swearing people;

besides, I did not know but they might pull me in pieces, and therefore I took my horse and went home. But, oh! I was followed with sharp reproofs and righteous judgments from the Lord, with which I was in deep sorrow, and I looked for the renewing of that concern no more.

But the next time I went, when I was in the market again, an exercise fell heavy upon me to go and warn the people. Now I went, not standing to consult any more, and in the heavenly power of God declared the truth, and bore my testimony against their great wickedness, insomuch that the people were much reached, and wept aloud, and no man had power to hurt me, though I stopped twice and sate down, and waited still for the fresh motion of life, and the Lord enabled me to stand up again. When I had eased my spirit, I came away in peace and great joy, and after I came to my inn, some followed me, but it rose in my heart to go out of town, which I did; but after I was gone, I heard one justice Loe came to the town, and sent to fetch me before him, intending to have sent me to prison, but the Lord delivered and saved me out of the hands of wicked men (for this justice was a great persecutor of Friends). Thus the Lord was with me, and kept me wherever I went; oh! let my soul livingly praise his holy name.

Often as we see the authorities unfavourable to the then new and peculiar sect, it was not always so; for though a Quaker, Hugh Masland, was cast into prison at Derby, for holding a meeting at Baslow, when two informers went to "Justice Eyre, of Highlow," for a warrant to take up more, he frightened and sent them away. At another time "Justice Ashton, of Ashford,—a moderate and peaceful justice," positively shielded them—as also did the great Earl of Devonshire. Still the book abounds with pictures of clerical, legal, and popular persecution; but when one comes to consider what hard words the persecuted frequently used in reference to what they were pleased to term "hireling priests" and all who sided with them, it is no wonder that great rancour was frequently provoked, where it might perhaps with a little moderation have been left latent, or altogether dissipated.

In process of time, we trace the Derbyshire peasant to London, and in repeated visits to all parts of the United Kingdom, after which we find him in his own county again, undergoing a strange probation. For notwithstanding the friendship which Sir Henry Every and other worthies showed him, he was not only frequently distrained upon, but thrown into Derby jail at last, into an old chamber, for which he "borrowed a bed and some other odd things," where he staid, with an occasional parole of honour, about five years and a half, often speaking to the people through his prison bars, and making friends of his keepers by the kindness but frankness and bravery of his spirit. In one place he says:—

I had a fire, and though I could see the stars at night through the holes in the tiles, yet I lay warm enough. I had my health and was well content, and thought in my mind, that this was but small suffering to what I might go through before I died. So I gave up all into the Lord's hand, soul, body, and spirit, wife, children,

and all I had, saying in my heart, sickness or health, life or death, the will of the Lord be done. Oh! how good the Lord was to me, and I lay quiet, and slept sweetly.

While in prison he had sometime for companion a Catholic priest, who was also in for conscience sake, and with whom he carried on no little disputation, but in a kindly spirit. He also converted the jailer's son to Quakerism, made an impression on his jailer, wrote a little book entitled "The Prisoner's Vindication," had religious meetings within the limits of the prison, was allowed as we have said, to go home on parole, and see his family; and at length by order of King James the Second, was, as were many hundreds more about that time, discharged in open court, on the 23rd of January, 1686.

Travelling in those days must have been very difficult—when it took upwards of a fortnight to get from Edinburgh to London, and when men going to London from the Midland Counties, thought it needful to make their wills before starting. Especially must it have been fatiguing and hazardous to have gone rapidly among the mountains and lakes of the north, and the marshes of the east. Yet here is one of a dozen similar passages that might be quoted in relation to as many remote districts, after this humble man from Monyash had gained his liberation:—

Now I visited friends in Lancashire, as at Manchester, Warrington, Sankey, Ormskirk, Coppleshire, and Penketh, where was a large lively meeting: I lodged at Roger Haydock's, and at Copple at John Haydock's, and at Liverpool at Robert Haydock's, and Lancaster at Robert Lawson's, and went to Swarthmore, to Kendal, and divers other meetings in Westmoreland, and back to Lancaster again; from thence to Bentham, and so to John Moore's; thence to Samuel Watson's, and Kettlewell; thence to William Ellis's; thence to Skipton, to John Hall's, and so into Craven, and to George Myer's house. Thence I went to several towns in the Dales, where I found divers of my countrymen gone into those parts: and I was at the Lady Lambert's; and then I travelled to Drawel, to John Blakelin's, at Sedberg, and went to a meeting at Scarsdale, and there were twelve convinced that day: and so to Counterset, to Richard Robinson's, and down the country to Robert Lodge's, to York, Leeds, and Halifax, and to John Winn's, at Bradford, and to Sikehouse meeting, and down by Ouse, to Pomfret, and so to and fro in several places; for I did not then keep a journal of all places or passages as I might have done. And I was twice at Hull, and Brigg, and at Winteringham, and Gainsborough, and the Isle of Axholm, at Epworth, and Thorn, and back to Pomfret, Sheffield, Hansworth Woodhouse, and Barlborough Hall,\* Dronfield, Whittington, and at Chesterfield very often; and the Lord was with me in his great love and mercy, else my travels had been tiresome and unpleasant, but the Lord helped me many a time; yea, the living know it, and met with Him to their comfort, else meeting with me could have done little, for the work, was the Lord's, and he

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\* Sir John Rhodes, Bart., of Barlborough, was himself a convert to Quakerism, and very hospitable to his humbler brethren.

wrought in us, and for us, of his own good pleasure : glory, honour, and praise, is wholly due to him. After this I went into Cheshire, and went to most meetings in that county. After that I travelled in several counties in England, both East, West, and South ; as Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire, Essex, Middlesex, Surrey, Kent, Sussex, Hampshire, Berkshire, Wiltshire, Dorsetshire, Somersetshire, Bristol, and from thence through other counties northward ; as Worcestershire, and Staffordshire, in my return home, and found friends in great love and unity, and many were convinced, truth prospered, and we were sweetly refreshed and comforted together.

He went also into Wales, Scotland, and Ireland. Yet with all his trials and devotion to his unpaid ministerial work, he seems never to have been reduced to poverty. After being discharged from prison he laboured more industriously than ever, in almost all parts of the kingdom, for the diffusion of the Quaker doctrines, with great success. We find him at one time preaching at Eastwood, and charged by the clergyman of that place with stealing his sheep (meaning his hearers.) That clergyman was the paternal ancestor of the Howitts, famous Quakers of later days ; and Gratton while thus employed was lodging at Heanor, at the house of Francis Tantom, their maternal ancestor. So strangely do things come about in the course of time !

At length, after burying his wife, to whom he had been ever affectionately attached, and selling his property at Monyash, in the year 1707, he went for a time to London and its neighbourhood, but finally retired to the house of his daughter, Phoebe Bateman, at Farnsfield, in Nottinghamshire, where he closed his noble life-struggle for *the Truth as he understood it*, in the month of January, 1711-12, at peace with God and all mankind.

Whatever may be thought of the peculiar tenets of John Gratton and his confreres, in the troublous days in which he lived, or of the methods by which those tenets were promulgated and maintained, it is impossible to contemplate such a life as his without some degree of admiration. Whether as the shepherd-boy among his native hills, hungering and thirsting after righteousness until he could not help "crying mightily to the Lord" for aid in those wild solitudes ; as the unflinching champion on the wall, overcoming volleys of abuse and stones by spiritual power alone ; as the prisoner in Derby jail, "sleeping sweetly" amidst his wrongs, or as going forth again boldly as soon as liberated to proclaim the right ; and finishing only when his duty, according to his own sense of it was done, in obedience to the will of God ; it is hardly possible to regard his disinterested labours without wonder, or his memory without love. It is to men like him we owe much of our own religious liberty ; and whatever their creed, we owe them also a place of sacred regard among our literary shrines.

## THE AUTHOR'S EARLIER WORKS.

"Go on! go on!"—JAMES MONTGOMERY, the poet, to Spencer T. Hall, on reading his first work, *"The Forester's Offering,"* in 1841.

"A volume of sterling good sense, pure English, and native poetry, appealing not to our charity but to our perception of excellence."—From a Review by WILLIAM NEWMARCH, Esq., F.R.S.

"It has a sparkling richness and graphicness of description, which rivet the attention and delight the mind. . . . The appearance of this work at the present time is a striking and flattering characteristic of the age.—SHEFFIELD IRIS.

"The effusion of a healthful fancy and a kindly heart, worthy of a wide celebrity."—SPECTATOR.

"He possesses a fine natural taste and great ability, and gives utterance to his thoughts with such truthful earnestness, that by this one little work he holds no inconsiderable place in the ranks of living authors."—From a Review by Mr. JOHN FOWLER, the Biographer of Pemberton.

"Mr. Hall is no common observer of things and men—he sees with the eye of a poet and a philosopher—and his descriptions of scenes and characters are worthy of special attention. He has faith in the strength as well as in the beauty of goodness, and all his efforts are directed to the promotion of right feeling among his fellow men. . . . He writes as if his heart were in his pen.—LEEDS TIMES.

"— One of Nature's gentlemen. . . . The confession of his experiences at the end reminds us of Franklin, and has a noble and impressive moral."—THE ATLAS, March 19, 1842.


"He is one of Nature's freemasons, and knows all her secret signs—one of her high priests, who is at home in her innermost shrines, where he pays his vows and calls upon his fellows to pay theirs. He is her poet and sings her praises—and her champion too, who vindicates her right."—TAIT'S MAGAZINE.

Dr. Hall's later works have been spoken of in similar terms by the Press; while the late Dr. SAMUEL BROWN, a grandson of the celebrated commentator on the Bible, and himself one of the most distinguished minds of his time, thus wrote in 1852:—"Spencer Hall is not unworthy of his names, like Spenser, a poet, like Hall, addicted to philosophy, like both a christian gentleman. His woodland poems have made him amiably known to all his countrymen as the Sherwood Forester; and his scientific experiences have commended him to the respect of many of the true lovers of science, both at home and abroad. His poems are affectionate, sunny, graceful, true to English nature, and also spiritual in their tendency; his scientific narratives and descriptions are ingenious, vigorous and clear. As a man I know him to be a lover of man, given to self-help, enthusiastic, industrious, dutiful, brave, and altogether honourable."




THIS Work, continued monthly, will be completed in Six Parts. The various Biographies are given not merely in deference to chronological precedence or social rank, but to a rule that, the Author trusts, by affording more variety may also afford more pleasure in the reading, as they appear.

The commencing chapter of Part IV, will be on BERNARD BARTON, "the Quaker Poet," followed by Sketches of other Worthies, and by Papers on Miscellaneous Subjects.



PART V.]

[PRICE 1s.



# MORNING STUDIES

AND


## EVENING PASTIMES:

MEMOIRS AND VERBAL PORTRAITS, MISCELLANEOUS  
PAPERS, AND POEMS.


BY DR. SPENCER T. HALL,

"THE SHERWOOD FORESTER."

Author of "The Forester's Offering," "The Peak and the Plain,"  
"Days in Derbyshire," "Mesmeric Experiences,"  
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Among the Memoirs and Verbal Portraits included in this Work, besides the above, are or will be those of ERASMUS DARWIN, M.D. F.R.S.; WILLIAM COBBETT; PROFESSOR WILSON; MARY RUSSELL MITFORD; JOHN HENRY, FIFTH DUKE OF RUTLAND; WILLIAM HUTTON, F.A.S.; EBENEZER ELLIOTT, "the Corn Law Rhymer;" FREDERICK DAVIES, a Hero of Humble Life; JOHN CLARE, "the Northamptonshire Peasant;" ROBERT BLOOMFIELD, "the Farmer's Boy;" BERNARD BARTON, "the Quaker Poet;" NANNY SHACKLOCK, a Village Florence Nightingale; the two MONTGOMERIES; GEORGE COMBE, the Phrenological Writer; WILLIAM GREGORY, Professor of Chemistry, and other Scottish Worthies; BARON LIEBIG; IRISH CHIEF and his People; PHŒBE, Mother of the HOWITTS; GEORGE PURSEGLOVE, "the Poor Man's Poor Friend;" MRS. JERRAM; CLAUDE GAY, and other interesting Characters.

\* \* SECTION II. will contain MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS on various themes. SECTION III. will consist of "LAYS FROM THE LAKES" and other Poems; —and the whole, when complete, will form a Volume which it is hoped may be interesting alike in the private study and the family circle.

*Author's Address*—BURNLEY, LANCASHIRE.



## Chapter Twenty-First.

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BERNARD BARTON,

"THE QUAKER POET."

(MAY, 1866.)

WHAT a wonderful and curious arena is the human mind ! At this late hour of the night, when those who are nearest and dearest are all at rest, when all around is husht and all within is calm, what scenes, that take up large space in the world of matter and sense, occupy the soul without needing space at all ! and what forms of departed friends come in all their vividness and variety of character, to people those scenes with their pensive memories ! If a hundred photographs lay one upon another before me on this table, the uppermost would hide all below it from sight ;—but a thousand mentagraphs may occupy the memory, and not one of them obscure another. Nay, sometimes the thought of one of them will rapidly kindle all the rest into instant vivacity, by that talismanic law—the law of association : so great is the distinction between the worlds of matter and spirit ; so opaque is one, so transparent the other ; yet, though so transparent and so incapable of being weighed, or crushed, or in any way destroyed, so substantially real in all the essentials of form, colour, motion, expression, and even sound ! For to this moment can memory call up some of the earliest words of affection to which we listened, in all their beautiful meaning

and melody, as well as the faces and manners of those who uttered them! Nor is this all. Though there may be times when it is difficult to prevent a sudden rush of associations which, while it crowds the mind overwhelms the heart, there are other times when, according to the occasion, we have power to *select* the one, or two, or more friends or acquaintance with whom it is pleasant thus to hold re-communication for the hour. Come forward, dear old Bernard Barton! and take thy place in this fireside chair, and tell me again, as was thy wont, of the friends and incidents thou didst love and treasure in the days that are no more. Chat with me now as thou didst oft at Woodbridge *viva voce*, or as in those many letters of which the following, if not the best, happens to be a ready sample at hand:—

Woodbridge, 2nd Month, 21st, 1847.

My dear Friend,—I should be very much ashamed of having suffered thy letter to remain till now unacknowledged had I not been particularly engaged, and from time to time, when a leisure quarter of an hour could be stolen, glad to give it to complete rest and relaxation. It is no joke in one's 64th year to be desk-bound ten and sometimes twelve hours *per diem*. I have stood this now for near forty years, and my very recreations being also of a sedentary kind, keeping up the same mental wear and tear, though on different objects, no wonder the machine is well nigh worn out, and that I feel, in a bodily sense, often very good-for-nothing-ish. . . Yet one hopes by and by to get into a world where pocket and purse are of less import than in this; and, were it not so, querulous repining can never do any good. A pound of sorrow or care never yet paid an ounce of debt; and if poetry has made me no richer, bating Peel's considerate pension which secures me bread and cheese when I can clerk it no longer, it has added largely to my mental resources, and procured me a few friends, who contribute to my purer happiness more than wealth could. . . Thou wilt have heard, doubtless, of the death of J. J. Gurney; of Norwich. I have put forth a little memorial of him in verse, and would send thee a copy; but I got nothing for the MS. but a few copies, which exhaled like dew before the sun; and as I had to pay 8d. each with the copies I sent away, for postage, or make the receiver pay 16d. when it might be bought for a shilling, I grew tired of this sort of gratuitous distribution. But I think it very likely, with thy outgoings and incomings among "Friends," a copy of it may fall into thy way some-how or some-where; and if it should, I shall be glad to know how thou likest it. I have bestowed more pains and more thought on this trifle than on any poem I ever wrote, for *its subject's* sake, and from an idea that it might circulate pretty widely, both among Friends and others; but I could not drive a bargain or think of pecuniary profit in connection with an act of duty and labour of love; so I only considered how it might have the best chance of extensive circulation among Friends, and gave up all idea of emolument to secure this. Such a very slight affair as a poem of 24 Spenserian stanzas, and a page or two of introductory verse to the Widow, is not likely to get noticed in reviews, or be dandled into any popularity by periodicals, even were the theme one to prepossess these awarders of fame. I should scarce think that Gilpin would throw away many copies on such; but, though only out a week, it has already brought me I think near 30 letters from Friends, and others out of our pale, as kind and commendatory as I had any reason to expect—perhaps more so—for a tribute to the memory of a

Quaker preacher by a Quaker poet is not everybody's reading: so I make the best of my quiet recompense in verdicts by the post, to atone for the absence of *any* from the press. I did not write it in the hope of fame, profit, *praise, or thanks*; so if the harvest of these be humble, I shall not be ~~halked or overly~~ cast down. . . I shall be glad at any or all times to *hear of or from* thee.—Thine truly, B. B.

*I have somewhere* by me a good number of such kindly, confiding, free-and-easy letters from this "Busy Bee," as his old friends were wont to style him from his almost invariable conclusion of his epistles to them with his initials only. Here is part of another; and I think Mr. Armistead's book to which it alludes, proved to be somewhat of a favourite with many readers:—

Woodbridge, 9 | 23 | 1847.

My dear Hall,—A pleasant note of Martha Perry's received only a day or two prior to thy own prepared me for thy report of thyself. Thy little poem I read with interest—it is simple and touching. I have done little in *our vocation* myself of late, from real want of time. I am desk-bound, figure-ridden, and for ought I see shall be so till I drop from my perch or stool, and die in my clerly harness. I have, however, within the past week got up a little tribute to a valued and dear Friend here, the wife of our friend William Norton, at the Abbey, who has been snatched from us after an illness of only a week, which makes a sad loss in our little Quaker world here. I know I shall miss and mourn her. I have also concocted at the request of Wilson Armistead, of Leeds, whom I never saw or before heard of, some dozen or fourteen verses to open a big book he is getting up, to be entitled "A Tribute to the Negro." Knowing no more of the book than I do of the Sybil's volumes of old, or the old woman who offered them for sale and kept raising her price for the remaining quantum as she lessened its bulk, I almost wish my unknown friend would act on some such system; for a volume of from four to five hundred pages is somewhat ominous: but he may yet condense. The world is too busy in getting and spending pelf to buy big books or to read them—at least, such is my notion. I could not, however, well decline furnishing a few opening verses, so replied to his letter by return of post, assuring him of my willingness to do all in my power to promote his views, but begging him to reflect a little before he ventured on a large or costly tome. . . . I shall be glad to hear from thee again whenever thou art equal to half an hour's scribble, and sincerely hope it may be in thy power to send a bright account of thyself. . . . Thou art a younger man than I; so keep up heart and hope. "Hope on! hope ever."—Thine affectionately,  
B. B.

Bernard Barton was born at Carlisle, January the 31st, 1784. His great-grandfather was a "Cumberland statesman," John Barton, of Ive Gill, about seven miles from Carlisle, and altogether a fine, simple, patriarchal character, drawing support for himself and family, in those primitive days, out of the produce of his little estate, which was in itself of the estimated annual value of £2 15s., but with the addition of the labour connected with it was made sufficient for all family purposes—and more; for that man (he was a churchman) was the chief means of building the little chapel still standing in the dale. His great-grandson, the poet, was justly proud of such an ancestor. The

next of the line (our Bernard's grandfather, and whose name was Bernard,) went and set up a manufactory in Carlisle, and had a medal from the Royal Society for the invention of a piece of machinery, which Pennant thus quaintly describes, as a then novelty:—"Saw at Mr. Bernard Barton's a pleasing sight of twelve girls spinning at once at a horizontal wheel, which set twelve bobbins in motion; yet so contrived that, should any accident happen to one, the motion of that might be stopped without any impediment to the others." The inventor's son liked the manufactory he inherited, and the ledger connected with its operations, much less than he did Locke, Addison, or Pope. He changed his business, left the Church of England, became a member of the Society of Friends, and married a Cheshire lady of the same persuasion, Mary Done, who bore him several children, of whom three only lived to maturity—two daughters, and the subject of our sketch, one of the daughters, whose name in marriage was Maria Hack, being well known as the author of several useful children's books. John Barton removed to London while his son was yet a little child, and, his first wife having died a few days after that child's birth, he married again a Friend of the name of Elizabeth Horne, who proved to be not only a good wife to him, but so good a mother to his little bereft one that the boy never felt she was not his real mother. I much regret not having room here to quote all he says in her praise. John Barton did not live to see the only child—a son—of his second marriage born. Bernard was in due time sent to a Friends' school of some repute at Ipswich, spending his holidays with his good stepmother at Tottenham: and when fourteen years of age was apprenticed to Samuel Jesup, a shopkeeper at Halstead, in Essex. There he staid behind the counter eight years. In 1806 he went to Woodbridge, a year afterwards marrying his former master's niece, Lucy Jesup, and going into partnership with his brother as a coal and corn merchant. But, as his own mother had died in giving him birth, so did his loved and affectionate wife die, a year after his marriage, in giving birth to a daughter. Tiring, now, of the scene of his sorrow, and feeling (like his father) more affinity for literature than for the ledger, he quitted Suffolk for the time and engaged himself as private tutor in the family of Mr. Waterhouse, a merchant in Liverpool, where he formed a friendship with the Roscoes; but at the end of a year returned to Woodbridge, where he took the situation of clerk in the banking-house of Messrs. Alexander—continuing at his work there, as hinted to me in his letter just quoted, for forty years, nor relinquishing the office-stool till within two days of his death. He had a presentiment that he should die in "clerly harness," as he more than once told me, and so it came to pass at last.

From childhood Bernard Barton was fond of books, and grew in a natural sort of way into communion and friendship with such as wrote them. His publication of "Metrical Effusions" in 1812 brought him into a correspondence with Southey which continued long. It was about that time too that the Ettrick Shepherd's "Queen's Wake" came into notice, and very deservedly won speedy attention from most lovers of poetry. Bernard addressed to the Shepherd some complimentary verses on its advent that led to a result at which it is impossible not to smile—bringing grateful letters from Hogg, who coupled with his thanks some mention of a high-flown tragedy he had just written, and which he asked the grave young Quaker to use his influence, since "justice could not be done it in Edinburgh," to get presented on the London stage! Bernard, finding himself quite at sea in such a matter, called in the counsel of Mr. Capel Lofft, who succeeded in dissuading Hogg from trying the London managers at all. This was probably our friend's nearest approach to any connection with theatres; though when, in 1822, some Englishmen were performing in Paris, and one of them of the name of Barton appeared on the stage, several of the audience called out to know if he was "Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet!"

Besides all he wrote for magazines, annuals, and albums—which could not have been little, for he had the heart to please everybody—between 1818 and 1828, Barton must have published not less than six volumes of verse, and that without having neglected a single duty at the bank. In addition to this, he carried on a constant and most extensive correspondence, chiefly with literary and philanthropic people. Like the man who, not having time to write a short letter, wrote a long one, Bernard, to whom writing seemed as natural and needful as breathing, gave himself no time to condense. Hence, while some of his effusions are very beautiful, and all of them innocent, many of them are tame. Yet, to *him*, there was mercy in this fact. Let us look at the matter pathologically. In all the forty years he was in that banking office he had a slowly but constantly growing disease of the heart. And if one only thinks (considering the close and concentrated attention required by the bank books) how needful it was for the faculties to have some frequent spring in a contrary direction, if only for the mind's relief, was it not a great blessing to him and to all who loved him, that he could thus, as soon as his daily duty was done, rise into a childlike though reverent playfulness of thought, and ventilate his soul in an atmosphere which would have been rendered useless to him if he had still endeavoured in it to make a condensing machine of his already tasked brain? But, whatever their diffuseness, their sim-



plicity or tameness, there is one charming quality pervading nearly the whole of Bernard Barton's verses—a *cheerful morality*, which has had this effect on me, for one—that, whatever mood I may have been in, however disappointed, chagrined, or depressed, on taking up one of his volumes and reading, I never laid it down without a feeling of freer breathing, refreshment, and consolation. And this I take to be no bad test of the real worth of any author. If in a state of gloom I take up Byron, he gives me at best, with all his magnificence, but a lurid light—the belching fire of a volcano, perchance, or the flash we never see but in the company of a thunder cloud. But if, instead, I happen to open one of Bernard's "tomes," as he sometimes calls them, I may see an immense proportion of rhythmical common-place; I may be reminded of fifty truisms learnt in my school-books forty or fifty years ago; but I am carried back by them forty or fifty years, as by a bridge, over all the trials and sorrows of that chequered interval, and, when laying down the book, feel myself in restoring contact with the simplicity, innocence, and freshness of my childhood once more. Such is sometimes the use of the most homely verse.

" 'Tis not a poem's length alone,  
Nor its elaborate art,  
That can most worthily make known  
The feelings of the heart."

Frequently during the three last years of his life I was with Bernard Barton at his own house contiguous to the bank, or met him at the house of a good and gifted mutual friend, Mrs. Knight, the "A. K." of his and Charles Lamb's cheery correspondence. I found him always what he had once, in writing to some friend, described himself, when he said—"My temperament is, as far as a man can judge of himself, eminently social. I am wont to live out of myself, and to cling to anything or anybody loveable within my reach." In person, slightly disposed to stoutness but scarcely reaching it, and dressed in the most moderate and unaffected style of his sect, with a face in which friendliness, affection, shrewdness, and quiet but unmistakeable fun, were most genially blended, he was a man of whose company it was impossible not to feel glad. By the fireside of a neighbour, at his own table, or at the Friends' meeting where I have been with him, and where even his silence had a touch of character about it, this was alike the case. He was addicted, however, to a peculiar grunt (it did not amount to a groan) which might seem like an eccentricity to a stranger, but which I have no doubt was occasioned by that disease of the heart of which so few were aware, and which was one day to snatch him so suddenly from mortal sight. He loved everything kindly, rational, or



innocently droll, and had the faculty of inspiring even his dullest companions with the same love. There was far more humour in his talk than in his writings; but now and then you meet with a rich flavour of it in his letters. Among his correspondents were Southey, Scott, Wordsworth, Byron, Charles Lamb, Charles Lloyd, Allan Cunningham, John Mitford, Airey the Astronomer Royal, the Rev. George Crabbe, and other men of the first mark, many of whom were intimate friends; and many of the letters passing between them and him are as racy as they are candid, genial, and sensible. Let us snatch a few brief passages from two or three of them, just by way of example:—

Keswick, 27 Jan., 1822.

I am much pleased with the "Poet's Lot"—no, not with his lot, but with the verses in which he describes it. But let me ask you—are you not pursuing your studies intemperately, and to the danger of your health? To be writing long after midnight and "with a miserable head-ache" is what no man can do with impunity; and what no pressure of business, no ardour of composition, has ever made me do. I beseech you, remember the fate of Kirke White;—and remember if you sacrifice your health (not to say your life) in the same manner, you will be held up to your own community as a warning—not as an example for imitation. The spirit which disturbed poor Scott of Amwell in his last illness will fasten upon your name; and your fate will be instanced to prove the inconsistency of your pursuits with that sobriety and evenness of mind which Quakerism requires, and is intended to produce. . . . You will take this as it is meant, I am sure. . . . My friend, go early to bed;—and if you eat suppers read afterwards, but never compose, that you may lie down with a quiet intellect. There is an intellectual as well as a religious peace of mind;—and without the former, be assured there can be no health for a poet. God bless you.—Yours very truly,

R. SOUTHEY.

Mark the contrast between Southey and Charles Lamb, with shrewd and patient Bernard suffering and smiling between them! Here is an extract from an ironical, bantering letter of Lamb's:—

You are too much apprehensive about your complaint. I know many that are always ailing of it, and live on to a good old age. I know a merry fellow (you partly know him) who, when his medical adviser told him he had drunk away all *that part*, congratulated himself (now his liver was gone) that he should be the longest liver of the two. The best way in these cases is to keep yourself as ignorant as you can—as the world was before Galen—of the entire inner constructions of the animal man; not to be conscious of a midriff; to hold kidneys (save of sheep and swine) to be an agreeable fiction; not to know whereabouts the gall grows; to account the circulation of the blood a mere idle whim of Harvey's; to acknowledge no mechanism not visible. For, once fix the seat of your disorder, and your fancies flux into it like so many bad humours. Those medical gentry choose each his favourite part; one takes the lungs—another the aforesaid liver, and refers to that whatever in the animal economy is amiss. Above all, use exercise. . . . Continue to keep a good conscience, and avoid tamperings with hard terms of art—viscosity, schirrosity, and those bugbears by which simple patients are scared into their graves. Believe the general sense of the mercantile world, which holds that deaks are not deadly. It is the mind, good B. B., and not the limbs, that taints by long

sitting. Think of the patience of tailors—think how long the Lord Chancellor sits—think of the brooding hen.

There is a vein of good sense, as well as courtesy, in the following passages from a letter of Lord Byron, written from St. James's-street, London, June 1, 1812:—

Waving your obliging expressions as to my own productions, for which I thank you very sincerely, and assure you I think not lightly of the praise of one whose approbation is valuable, will you allow me to talk to you candidly, not critically, on the subject of yours? . . . I think more highly of your poetical talents than it would perhaps gratify you to hear expressed, for I believe, from what I observe of your mind, that you are above flattery. To come to the point, you deserve success; but we knew before Addison wrote his "Cato" that desert does not always command it. But suppose it attained—

You know what ills the author's life assail,  
Toil, envy, want, the patron, and the jail.

Do not renounce writing; but never trust entirely to authorship. If you have a profession, retain it, it will be like Prior's fellowship, a last and sure resource. . . . A truly well-constituted mind will ever be independent. That you may be so is my sincere wish; and if others think as well of your poetry as I do, you will have no cause to complain of your readers.—Believe me your obliged and faithful servant,

BYRON.

Others than Byron gave Bernard Barton the same or similar advice. Sir Walter Scott gave it to everybody—save a Tennyson, a Dickens, or some such man, who may appear about once or twice in a century to kindle the popular heart—when he said, "Literature is a good staff, but a sorry crutch"—not a thing to be leaned upon with the whole weight; and Bernard chose that wiser part, sticking close (though better had it not been quite so close) to daily duty. Yet did he contrive some gratifying indulgence of his tastes. His little house was stored with books, and almost lined with pictures, many of them keepsakes, and there, with his intelligent daughter (named after her mother, Lucy), and occasionally visiting-friends, or dropping-in neighbours, of taste—with a holiday hour now and then in which to take breath and revel in the beauty of the country, his life, on the whole, was anything but a cheerless one. He had a warm appreciation of art; a warmer of nature; but of human nature the warmest—yet deeply loved and revered things divine. For children he had an intense affection, and a tender pity for all that was poor and oppressed.

In an age when mincing of language was becoming very common among some of his confreres, it was a treat to hear the laureate of Quakerism speak out boldly in the phraseology of Fox, Barclay, and Penn. He never indulged in that most ungrammatical, milk-and-waterish style of talk in which "*how-does-thee-do?*" and "*thee knows*"

so unpleasantly prevail. "*Dost thou*" and "*thou knowest*," (which always sounded politely from a genuine Friend), were forms of speech he was never afraid to use. And though it is doubtful if there was in his day a man of any faith more tolerant of all who differed from him, it is equally doubtful if there was one more sincere in his own. He could afford to say playful things about some of the peculiarities of his sect; but, if playful, they were not the less respectful, and he was at heart, as well as in his speech, notwithstanding all his intercourse with writers of every school and talkers of every type, a Friend indeed, without truckling or flinching. There is a great change going on of late among his people, in which it is to be hoped that true plainness may be retained while much formality is dispensed with. But as a protest for two centuries against frivolities in fashion and over-obsequiousness in speech, there can be little doubt that (as in some still more important matters) Quakerism has had a useful mission. In days of too much talk, it sometimes requires great bravery in a man to be still when he has nothing worth the hearing to say. And in this kind of bravery, who so heroic as the ancient Friend? It would perhaps be well could we have a little more of it, and a little less loud talk, in the present day. No doubt, idle silence is as possible as idle speech, and perhaps as reprehensible. But, as "all forms of worship wake *some* thoughts divine," it would be well perhaps for many who think there may be "nothing in it," to try what *occasional silent waiting in a profound and reverent consciousness of the immediate presence of God's Holy Spirit in the soul* might bring to pass. In Bernard's own words:—

If this our Lord himself withdrew,  
Stealing at times away,  
Ev'n from the loved, the chosen few,  
In solitude to pray,  
How should his followers, frail and weak,  
Such seasons of retirement seek!  
  
Seldom amid the strife and din  
Of sublunary things,  
Can spirits keep their watch within,  
Or plume their heaven-ward wings:  
He must dwell deep in wisdom's heart  
Can thus fulfil true wisdom's part.

Of all men in the world, Barton must have been one of the last to enter from choice into a quarrel. Yet well did he prove to me how he could take up cudgels for an injured friend, when there was occasion. On my once giving some lectures in favour of vital magnetism at Ipswich, I was opposed by a man who believed he had already put it down by publicly going through a sham of some of its phenomena, where-

upon I argued that he had no more put down its honest pretensions by that course than he would have invalidated a genuine bank-note by forging an imitation of it. This made him wroth, and an article by him in an adverse newspaper the next week represented all who demonstrated mesmerism as impostors, on which, one morning, just afterwards, appeared to my no little surprise, the following, addressed to me by name, in two of the Suffolk county journals :—

I wot not, reck not, of the Art  
By thee, my friend, profest,  
But I believe thy head and heart  
Are worthy of the best.

Hence, when I witness jeer or jibe  
On thy professions cast,  
And hear thee with the *impostor* tribe  
Attempted to be class'd ;

I cannot well forbear, in sooth,  
One tribute, owing birth  
Not less unto thy mortal truth,  
Than intellectual worth !

Thy "ism" may be, or false, or true,  
But, whichsoe'er it prove,  
In thy upright and simple view  
'Tis held with faith and love !

And thou hast found it in the still  
And quiet depths of thought,  
And deemest it for many an ill  
With healing virtue fraught.

Then HOLD IT in that guileless faith,  
Which thy defence shall be  
'Gainst all that either scorn or scathe  
Can heap on IT or THEE !

Woodbridge, 12th Month 19th, 1846.

BERNARD BARTON.

The assailant, under the *sobriquet* of *Suffolk Punch*, fell foul, the week following, on Bernard Barton himself, abusing him in some puerile rhymes because he happened to be in the receipt of a literary pension. Bernard rejoined :—

Poor silly *Suffolk Punch* ! to me  
'Tis plain thou hast not got the key  
To what I wrote ; nor canst thou see  
The reason why I wrote it ;  
So Hall and I may rest content  
That thy most mournful merriment  
Should in the *Chronicle* find vent,  
And with good humour note it.

As for my pension—rail away;  
 He laughs who wins, old proverbs say:  
 My self-respect remains my stay,  
 Thy satire never troubling it.  
 'Twas won by no servility;  
 The Queen conferr'd it generously;  
 And verse like thine might justify  
 Her Majesty in doubling it!

I will take, with the reader's permission, this opportunity of adding that, while many years ago relinquishing all *public exhibitions* of mesmeric phenomena from a moral feeling that *then* it was my duty to do so, my honesty and earnestness, so long as I remained in the work, were entire, as is my conviction of the validity of the phenomena *now*. This is not the place for their history. But it will be readily understood how grateful I must at that juncture have felt for so spontaneous an expression of confidence from so worthy and genuine a writer as dear old Bernard Barton.

Forgetting such personal matters, however, I would gladly end this little memoir by saying less about myself and more about him alone, did not the amount of paper I have already enscrribled, and the morning light peeping in at my window, bid me awake from the affectionate reverie. I could (for the good his friendship did me alone, and still more for the pleasure he gave to thousands besides,) love to spin a kindly yarn about him as long as from Windermere to Woodbridge, at which latter place he suddenly died in the presence of his daughter, at the age of sixty-five, at half-past eight o'clock on the evening of the 19th of February, 1849, after conversing in his usual genial mood with a friend,—leaving in various forms, from the elaborate Spenserian to the simple couplet, volumes of encouragement like the following, for those who still remain :—

The night seems darkest ere the dawn of day  
 Rises with light and gladness on its wings;  
 And every breaker that the ocean flings  
 To shore before the tempest dies away,  
 Some sign of wreck, or token of dismay,  
 Awakening thoughts of death and ruin, brings.  
 But he whose spirit resolutely clings  
 To his best hopes, on these his mind can stay.  
 Faith, humble faith, can doubt and fear defy;  
 For every wound it bears a healing balm,  
 Turns sorrow's moan into thanksgiving's psalm;  
 And those who trust in God when storms are high,  
 And waves are rough, and starless is the sky,  
 Shall sing His praise in the Eternal Calm.



## Chapter Twenty-Second.

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### SELF-DEVOTED MEN.

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#### GEORGE PURSEGLOVE.

You have possibly heard of the saying of William Cobbett, that "no man ever saw a Quaker drawing a truck and a Jew pushing behind." You may also have heard the joke that, if all mankind were Quakers, there would be no macadamised roads, as no person of that faith was ever seen breaking stones. Or, in short and seriously, that nobody ever knew a Friend so poor as to be compelled to do one or the other. But, without stopping to discuss the reason of this, let me say that, whatever degree of truth there may be in such remarks, I have known many very hard-working Friends, and many—not all accredited members perhaps, but certainly Friends in faith and practice—who were very poor and very honest; yet none, from all I ever heard of him, surpassing George Purseglove and a favourite neighbour of his, in that honest poverty and the industry allied to it. He first came to live in my native place from somewhere in Derbyshire, bringing with him one of the tenderest, purest and simplest of hearts,—or, if not, religion soon made it so. It is true he had little learning, if we mean only what generally bears that name; but he knew how to do unto others what he would they should do unto him; and though only a poor stocking-

weaver, he never lacked the will or the way to relieve what that humane Hindoo merchant, the other day, in his scanty English, called "a co-creature in distress." And he preferred a clear conscience to all honorary distinction; for he could give up social influence itself when once he doubted if it were precisely of the best leaven. Yet does a man ever really lose influence by doing a strictly conscientious thing? I doubt it. I believe with Gray that there are flowers of human character blushing comparatively unseen; yet I do not with him believe that their sweetness is ever *wasted*, but rather with gifted Edward Hind, of Nottingham, when he says—

Ev'n as a stone into some water cast  
The circle makes encircling all at last,  
So a good impulse which at home has birth  
Expands and spreads till it encircles earth—  
To caste, to creed, to country unconfined—  
Like God's great heaven, embracing all mankind!

so probable is it that the simplest act of love or duty, touching invisible and infinite psychical chords, may electrify the universe. Is it possible, for instance, to suppose that all the acts of Jesus which never found a literary record have ceased, or will ever cease, to influence the destinies of men? If, as the materialists tell us, the shooting of a boy's marble here disturbs Saturn's ring, because of the kinship of all the atoms abounding in space; how much more striking must be the analogy to that doctrine in the world of Spiritual Life! Every heart beats in concert or in discord with every other heart of man; and

"One touch of nature makes the whole world kin."

But it is probable that George Purseglove was very innocent of all such calculations as these. Whatever he did was done for its own sake, much by the same rule that the birds sing, the flowers bloom, the stars shine, and a thousand other useful and beautiful things perform their functions according to their power, without stopping to ask either for leave or approbation. In other words, his acts were the normal offspring of a heart in harmony with the Saviour's. Therefore it happened that, in days when the National Church was rather drowsy, seeing the good done by some Methodists surpassing that done by others who despised and scoffed at them, he became not only one of the most earnest members of the persecuted sect, but a sort of leader.

As the Methodists were then too poor to build a chapel in Sutton, they met at the house of a single-minded carpenter, named Richard Hallam. But Richard becoming ultimately a convert to Quakerism, told the little community, in a kindly way, that though they were



welcome to meet under his roof till they could accommodate themselves better, he could not conscientiously profess to be one with them as before, because of the change that had occurred in his belief. "Nay, nay," said honest George, on hearing this, "we must not stay here, my brethren; for when one of the best of the flock has thus found a way out of the fold, there is great danger of others following through the same gap!" Whereupon his advice was instantly taken, and the body sought, *en masse*, another fold. But George, instead of bigotedly trying to justify the step he had thus taken and preserve his leadership right or wrong, began to ask himself if Richard might not possibly, after all, have some reason on his side, then thought he had, and in conclusion was himself the first of all that had "swarmed" to turn Quaker too, thenceforth going, with several others, weekly, to the meeting of that sect at Mansfield! This naturally gave pain to his old friends, one of whom, Francis Shacklock, husband of the good woman hereinafter portrayed, and who had often been loud with him in prayer and exhortation, said one day, on meeting him in the street, "George, I wonder at thee, so earnest as thou'st been in the service of the Lord, that thou canst find in thy heart to go all the way to Mansfield every Sunday and there sit *dumb* before him?" "Francis," was George's reply, "I'm not sure that He is so fond of noise as some of us, in our more imperfect experience, thought Him!" The Wesleyans of those days were louder than in ours, and Francis remained a thorough one to the last.

How tender was George's conscience will be illustrated by the following incident:—As already intimated, he had begun to attend the meetings at Mansfield; and his little cottage at Sutton, being heated by a very small but common grate, he thought he would find out how a room so large as the chapel could be so comfortably warmed without a visible fire; and arriving one morning before the hour of meeting, he went down into the vault beneath to see the apparatus. There, by the side of a stove, was a heap of chips and shavings, laid to be burnt, and amongst the rubbish a few such bobbins as are used by stocking-weavers. Shocked at such waste, he put the bobbins in his pocket, and in the course of the week had them covered with cotton. But on the next Sunday morning, a Friend, dressed all in drab, though not known to have spoken publicly on any other occasion, arose in the meeting, and saying, in the most solemn and sententious manner, "Touch not, take not, handle not that which is not thine own," sank down again on his seat without another word. Such a warning was, of course, well calculated to put every one present upon a process of self-examination; and poor George, remembering nothing

he had ever pilfered except the waste-bobbins, had the cotton unwound from them before daylight the next morning; and on the following Sabbath, they were replaced on the spot whence they had been so unwittingly taken!

But the finest feature of George's character is not yet drawn—that in which he was wont to show so nobly the occasional heroism of “the poor man's poor friend.”—Amongst those who walked to these meetings with him—three miles and a half, in all weathers—was his neighbour before-mentioned, who was, like himself, a humble stocking-weaver; and many a time would they meet too in the course of the week, to instruct, encourage, and solace each other by conversation. Now it happened that the neighbour in question had only two shirts; and one of them being in the wash, and his wife at the same time being taken suddenly ill, he had for some reason pulled the other off his back for her use; and, though the weather was very cold, he had then to go to Kirkby, which was two miles distant, without one. In this plight he happened, at starting, to call upon George, who was at work in his stocking-frame; when George, suddenly turning round to him, exclaimed—“My friend! what art thou doing—going thus to Kirkby in this sharp frost, and without a shirt?” “Hey, man!” replied the other, buttoning his scanty vest a little closer, “I did not mean thee to see that!” “May be not,” was the answer; “but I cannot see thee do so, when I have a shirt to spare in the house. Stay here, while I go up stairs and fetch it for thee.” So saying, he went up stairs, and presently coming down again with a shirt in his hand, advised his friend to put it on as soon as possible and hurry away on his errand, which was gladly done.

Hours passed quickly, and the good man having been to Kirkby, stood again by the side of the frame: *and now he discovered that George himself was without a shirt!* Surprised and pained, “Dear George,” he cried, “why whatever hast thou been doing? *Thou hast been taking the very shirt off thy own back for me!*”—“Well,” replied George, with a quiet smile, “I laid a little more coal on the fire, and worked a little harder with the frame, to keep myself warm; and it was far better than for thee to go to Kirkby in such weather without a shirt.” And such was the brotherly regard of these humble christians, that I have no doubt the other would have done the same for George in a change of cases.

I could relate several more anecdotes of this worthy, equally characteristic, would space allow; but as those given illustrate the philosophy of his whole life, they may at present suffice.

And now let us note the character of his death—his only lament

being, that he had not lived *better*! His last illness was long and painful; and, as it drew to a conclusion, he lay a short time in a trance so deep that some thought him already gone. But at length he opened his eyes, to take a last momentary glance at the friends he was leaving for a brief period behind him; and saying, with much sweetness of tone, "How beautiful is Heaven!" closed them again, in peace, to open no more in the flesh, but went thither; while some one standing by, said—"Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord!"

This, as my mother painted it to me when I was a boy, is an outline of the life and character of George Purseglove, of Sutton-in-Ashfield. The picture is one of memory, not of invention, and I have endeavoured to copy it faithfully. May some of its features be found in our own!

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#### CLAUDE GAY.

THE life of George Purseglove reminds me of that of another remarkable self-denying and self-devoted man, as his story was several times told me by my father. Claude Gay was of a noble family in France, in which country he was born some time in the early part of the eighteenth century. While yet young he was in the habit of retiring to worship in solitude, but was at length joined by one or two others—often in silent devotion. Some one having told the little party that there was in England a book called "The Baptist's Apology," they sent for it; but the English bookseller knowing nothing of it, forwarded them "Barclay's Apology," setting forth the principles and practice of the Quakers, by the reading of which they became confirmed in their own. Claude's father, displeased that his son should thus deviate from the religious customs of his country, had him sent to prison, where, to render the time less tedious, he employed himself in learning to mend and make clothes. Being ultimately liberated, he made his way to London, worked at the trade he had thus learnt, and attended the meetings of the Friends, who were so struck by his sincerity, uprightness, and general demeanour, that they soon owned him as a member, and finding for him an experienced foreman, started him in respectable business as a clothier. In that calling, and with so good a connection, there appeared for him every chance of prosperity, but for his generosity constantly going beyond his means. Truthful himself, and knowing adversity, he had the misfortune to believe all others who seemed in adversity to be as truthful. Hence, whenever a poor customer buying a suit of outer clothing tried to cheapen it to his own price by saying that was all the money he had, Claude's feelings were

so worked upon that he would instantly rejoin—"Poor *ting!* what then art thou to do for shirt, shoes, and stockings?" and on such occasions would frequently return more than his right profit on the bargain. Thus, in time, he was so unable to meet the calls of his creditors that friends had to help him; and on their remonstrating with him for so giving away that which belonged to others, he replied, "I wish you rich Friends would do it yourselves, and save me de trouble."

After various settlements of this kind without any change in Claude's mode of trade, his wealthy assistants concluded that it would be cheaper to maintain him out of business than in it, and so induced him to retire. In this new state of life he was marvellously careful to make little serve for all his wants. One day, on seeing a friend, he boasted of having had a capital dinner for a farthing. The friend, astonished, asked him how it was possible; when he explained that, having bought a halfpenny-worth of potatoes, he got one half of them boiled where a bit of salt was given him. The truth was that, though so unable to keep his own, he did not, after all, like to be a burden to others. He made returns to his friends by teaching the French language to their children; and in some instances he took moderate payment for such services. It was in these circumstances that he once had on a hat much the worse for wear, when some person gave him an order to call on a hatter for a new one. But instead of getting it, he still wore the old one, till his benefactor had the new one put in his way and forced upon him. Going home with the new one on his head and the old one in his hand, he was met by a bareheaded man, who said, "Master, you have two hats, and I've none; I wish you would bestow one upon me." After a pause and some scrutinising observation, Claude said, "I think the *old* one will not do thee much good, so take the *new* one," and gave it to him! Nor was it at all uncommon for him to act in this way when people seemed to require more than himself such things as he could part with. Once a woman solicited his charity, when he told her he had nothing; but finding a halfpenny in his pocket as he stepped further on, and not being able to meet her again, he became absorbed in grief, and calling on a friend, was compelled to tell the truth that it was owing to his having denied the woman's quest.

As Claude became aged and enfeebled, and was one day passing along Stepney Fields, a stout ruffian stopped him and demanded his watch and money, upon which Claude told him if he would have the watch he must take it himself, saying, "I will not be concerned in de robbery," when the fellow knocked or pushed him down. On this the poor old man remonstrated with him upon his cowardliness, and told

him that he would some day repent it. Shortly afterwards a man was taken up for stealing, and among some pawn-tickets found on him was one suspected to be for Claude Gay's watch; but when asked at the police-office to "swear" to it, Claude replied, "We must not swear at all." He was then asked if he could say positively that it was his, but only answered "One watch may be like another," and declined to prosecute. Still, he and some friends went to Newgate to look at the man, who, when he saw Claude, shrank from him as far as he could. But Claude followed and reasoned with him until he shed tears; then, turning to the crowd of prisoners, he cried out, "Let him that stole steal no more!"—preaching for some time, in his broken English, with such effect, that it was thought there was not a dry cheek amongst them; and he left the prison thankful that the stealing of his watch had led to such a satisfactory opportunity. I have heard my father say that his power in preaching and in supplication was wonderful, even when so deficient in his English that he could not remember the words *sheep* and *lambs*, but with his benign and expressive face uplifted towards heaven, would say to the Great Shepherd, in a mingling of the two languages, "Bless thy great *moutons* and thy little *moutons*," in tones that thrilled the heart of every hearer.

At last, as Claude lay on his death-bed, some visiting friends ventured to ask him how he would like his funeral to be conducted, when, (French to the last,) he cheerfully exclaimed—"What! you think I's going, and I'm ready,"—very soon afterwards passing to his great reward.

It is not that I think all men should deal precisely on Claude Gay's plan that I have quoted him with some admiration. It is no doubt well that humanity should have such examples. But were none more given than he to accumulating, there could be no capital for carrying on great works. Had there been in the past no peerage, we should have had few palaces and little artistry. Were there no conservators, there would soon be no dispensers. Blessed are they who can honestly get and discreetly use. I have had personal acquaintance with some who knew how to acquire with equity and to dispense generously. Dickens's Brothers Cheeryble are not merely imaginary characters. Considering the cold, hard social Siberia to which many noble natures become exiled, it is well that a George Purseglove or a Claude Gay should figure here and there in the scene, that we may know how possible it is for self-sacrifice to make a little heaven of the humblest sphere. Yet the following faithful vignette, sketched many years ago in Lincolnshire, shows my belief that good men are not necessarily confined to the lowest level:—

### The Rectory.

How pleasant here in those calm days  
When Autumn in the landscape lingers ;  
When skies are melted by her gaze,  
And leaves turned golden by her fingers ;  
When morning dews are loth to go,  
And noontide sounds are few and tender ;  
And the far western uplands grow  
More bold in evening's glowing splendour !  
Lo ! where old trees yon lordly seat  
Half screen from these fraternal neighbours—  
The Church and Rectory, quaint and neat,  
Where the good Pastor lives and labours :  
Sure, love and peace and hope dwell here,  
Though haply not unmix'd with sorrow ;  
For hearts that dwell in that glad sphere  
From woes beyond it oft will borrow.  
Come but with me in winter time,  
When all the scene has lost its glory,  
Save where the woodlands rise sublime  
And silent in their mantles hoary ;  
When earth is shrouded by the snow ;  
When heaven by one vast cloud is hidden ;  
When thy own spirit's fire burns low,  
And thou to hope hast been forbidden !  
Come *then* ! and thou shalt solace share,  
Within that pastoral home so pleasant,  
That soon will banish wintry care  
And to thy soul make summer present !  
For here,—though priests be sometimes found  
Who little zest from love will borrow,—  
Is one whose parish has no bound,  
Except the bound of human sorrow !

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ROBERT OWEN.

It was in the autumn of 1848, when I happened to be in Birmingham on a visit, that late one evening a gentleman came to me with much civility but little formality, which latter, had it been there,

would have seemed strangely out of place. He was slender in frame, neither tall nor small, with a pale complexion, a calm expression, and in dress not much unlike any respectable Primitive Methodist preacher of the time—very plain, but altogether decent. He said, as he took off his slightly-broad-brimmed hat and advanced, "Perhaps you don't know me, but I hope I am not intruding; my name is Robert Owen." "So far from your intruding, I am glad to see you," said I; and asking him to a seat, added that I had seen him once before, on a public platform, at Sheffield, but should hardly have known him again unnamed. Our talk was chiefly about some of my scientific investigations; and, alluding to phrenology, he asked me if I would give him my opinion of his own head. I was struck by its peculiar configuration—one hemisphere being very markedly larger than the other; on my telling which, and asking him if he had ever heard any reason given for it, he looked at me with a good-natured smile and said he had never heard it remarked upon before, and the only reason he could give was that the lesser half might perhaps belong to the old world going out, and the larger to the "new moral world" which he believed was beginning to grow. Robert Owen's head phrenologically viewed, indicated considerable love of approbation, self-esteem, firmness, and emulation, combined with kindly social affections, hope, and self-devotion. There was nothing gross either in his configuration or expression. His love of children, or whatever might from its helplessness need protection, must have been very great. The upper part of his brow was larger than the lower; and I should think he would have more power to conceive and contrive than to carry out his plans, whatever they might be. There was little indication of passion in his appearance or tone. His brain taken altogether was not a very lofty one; but the base was much less developed as a mass than the higher portions. I believe him to have been a very honest man—true in his actions to his own best impulses—but comparatively lacking those faculties which enable anyone to admit what cannot be directly perceived; and that he was permitted in the order of Providence to shame some so-called christians into HUMANITY, regarding which, so far as they went, many of his ideas were superior to general practice. There is no doubt that true Christianity embraces all the good of Owen's philosophy without its crotchets; and infinite good besides, of which any merely human scheme whatever must fall short. Yet anyone who calmly views the question as it stood when he appeared,—when hundreds of thousands of people were congratulating themselves on the prospect of getting to heaven because of their assent to certain abstract doctrines, which they could define to a hair, while sadly de-



ficient in practice and regardless of commercial morality, good will and honourable conduct in all who did not utter their shibboleths, it was one of the finest rebukes the great Father of us all could give, in permitting such a man to rise and say, "What is your vaunted christianity worth in comparison with the mere humanity I profess, unless you can make it the ground of a better practice than mine?" Ignoring theology altogether, and substituting but a very crude remedy for some of the evils which the divorce court has so sadly proved to abound, it was utterly impossible but that he should for the time be opposed on all sides, or that his opponents should not exaggerate or distort his views, which are touched upon here as they appeared to me in our conversation that evening and again as, by invitation, he took breakfast with me next morning, on one of which occasions I put to him this question:—"Is it true, Mr. Owen, as some of your opponents say—for I have not read much of what you have written except in their quotations—that you assert the unreasonableness of men believing anything on testimony merely?"

"I never," he replied, "asserted anything of the kind. What I have taught is this, that no man believes, or ought to be expected to believe, anything that is not borne out to him by reasonable evidence."

"Then," I asked, "will you tell me: supposing I have a friend in whose integrity and judgment I have the fullest confidence—so much so, that if I could not believe him on his word, I should have no right to expect any other person to believe me, and he stated something as matter of fact, which he had heard from another on the same terms and with just the same guarantee, and the third party had similarly heard it from a preceding one, and so back to the tenth, or even twentieth—would you say that I ought not to believe upon such evidence?"

"If (rejoined Mr. Owen) you relied upon such a chain of testimony, *that to you would be evidence, and you could not help but believe accordingly*; but to another person who could not see it in that light it might not be evidence, and then he would not, nor could he, believe it. All I assert (he concluded) is, that no man, whatever he may assent to, ever really believes anything *but upon what to him is evidence.*"

These conversations gave me an impression of Mr. Owen more favourable than I had received from seeing and hearing him on the public platform, on an occasion when he appeared to me very egotistical and dogmatical; and, since alluding to him at all, I have a great desire to avoid doing him the least wrong. I had often heard men of infinitely inferior life and character speak of him with contempt; but a dear friend of mine, a clergyman, who would scorn to lend himself to anything wrong, is one among many who have not thought it beneath

them to take here and there a leaf from his book, on the principle of proving all things and holding fast that which is good—safe in knowing that nothing can be good which does not chord with the divine key-note of the Gospel.

Robert Owen, born in the year 1771, married the daughter of honest and generous David Dale, founder, in company with Sir Richard Arkwright, of the celebrated New Lanark Cotton Mills. David Dale was what is commonly called a self-made man, and wealthy; but could not enjoy his wealth without those who earned it having some enjoyment of it too. Hence, in conjunction with his son-in-law, who became his partner, the establishment of a social system connected with the works such as Britain, or perhaps any other country, had never before seen, in which everything was embraced that could conduce to the comfort of the aged, the education of the young, and the physical happiness and mental elevation of all. Mr. Dale was a religious man, of simple habits, and of but little ambition. Robert Owen conceived the idea of bettering the world of industry at large, by carrying into universal practice the New Lanark system, with modifications agreeable to his own peculiar opinions, in the assertion and maintenance of which he was imperturbably confident—so much so that his good old father-in-law one day said to him, "Thou needest to be very right, for thou art very positive." There is little need for me to tell here, even if I could, all Mr. Owen did in furtherance of his views, which to him seemed so rational (and, if carried out, so promotive of happiness,) that he wondered how any sensible persons could resist them. One of his aims was to bring over to them powerful monarchs, thinking that, if one of these could agree with him and adopt his social plan as a great national experiment, should it succeed its fruits would be so glorious that all selfish competition would soon be given up in imitation of it, and a "new moral world," as he called it, be established. He was on friendly terms with many persons of high rank, including the father of our present Sovereign, Queen Victoria; and the Queen herself, in his old age, to the astonishment of many opposed to him, gave him courteous and even friendly audience. I have not the date of his death at hand. Before it occurred, he had become a believer in modern spiritualism. I believe he is survived by his two sons—the Hon. Robert Dale Owen, at one time ambassador from the United States to the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and David Dale Owen, also a citizen of the United States, well known by their geological and other scientific works, including a description, on the part of Robert, of some early and important experiments in neurology by my distinguished friend, Dr. J. R. Buchanan, of the Eclectic Medical College of Cincinnati.

## THE WHITEHEADS.

IN some families good nature and intelligence seem components of the very blood, running from sire to son, and vivifying all around. Where this law operates, circumstances themselves appear to give way to it; the homeliest lot and the hardest toil have a touch of gentility in them; *politesse du cœur*, in whatever garb, is irresistible; and just as one is gratefully conscious of the neighbourhood of violets, even though they bloom but in the obscurity of a hawthorn-shade, we feel glad to be neighbours of people like old Matthew Whitehead and his family as I knew them in my younger days.

What was it? Their house had nothing material to distinguish it externally in the row in Windmill-lane, of which it was one. There were other houses as quiet, occupied by other people as decently clad. Yet it is not from any disparagement of the rest, but simply matter of fact, to say, that you could never pass Matthew Whitehead's—after once knowing the in-dwellers—without a feeling akin to that with which you would pass some known seat of philanthropy and learning. There was a little well of the waters of life inside, giving a freshness and healthy moral flavour to all that was said or done there; and it often overflowed its rim in such a way, that whatever came thereout bore that character, and was a refreshing to all whose spheres it reached.

There was another branch of the family in the growing township of Sutton-in-Ashfield which had something of the same quality. The grandfather, who had been schoolmaster at Langwith, was a mathematician and contributor to the almanacs. Next, John, who was in his day at once a stocking-weaver and Baptist minister; then Joseph, whose biography was written by the Rev. Thomas Roome, as that of "A Self-instructed Philosopher," who solved most abstruse mathematical problems while at work in his stocking-frame; scanned the remote heavens night by night with his telescope; made a complete orrery from Ferguson's printed description, without having himself ever seen one; and died while yet young, perhaps a martyr to his studies. But this branch of the family must not be confounded with that of Matthew Whitehead, to whom the present memoir more particularly relates.

Yet Matthew Whitehead's family, (though nearly allied to one of the most respectable mercantile families of that day,) were also early taught to weave stockings. Matthew himself was in person remarkable at once for shortness and breadth of body, dexterity and sturdiness, asthmatic chest but powerful voice. Above all was he remarkable for mechanical genius, general intelligence, and benevolence. No man in the neighbourhood better understood the anatomy and physiology of

a stocking-frame or a clock, or could more readily take one to pieces, clean, repair, and put it together again, than he. He proved that he could also have been just as clever in building, or gardening, or anything else that might have fallen in the way of his duty, had it so happened. And, to this hour, it is to me marvellous how much he contrived to do of these things in his leisure hours, for poor people, without fee or reward save the luxury of doing it. Much of the time that his neighbours passed in political or polemical gossip—and there was no lack of either in Windmill-lane—he would pass in setting right the clocks or looms of those who had small skill and less means of payment. Yet was he very sociable, and never happier than when in conversation on peculiar topics; and there was a fine air of originality, sometimes of piquancy, in his talk. I remember once his having been to hear a noted preacher in favour of a doctrine with which he had no sympathy. On his returning, we asked him what he thought of the sermon. “Why,” he replied, “what could you expect of a man who tried to make good hose with bad cotton?” But his ready-wittedness seemed to find much better exercise in action than in talk. Hence, on opening his door one cold winter-morning, when all the landscape was clad in snow and not a single dark object was to be seen except a shivering negro, who had just left a common lodging-house without breakfast, and was on his way to the next village, Matthew invited him in. His good and kindly wife, whom all who knew her called, with a tone of respectful familiarity, “Nanny Whitehead,” was preparing the family breakfast of milk-porridge and bread. Nine empty basins were on the table awaiting its preparation; but when it was poured into them Matthew asked her to place a tenth. This done, he went to the workshop door and gave the customary call to “breakfast,” when the young people, rushing in, were startled by the sight of the black stranger at the fireside. With scarcely a word Matthew now went to his own basin, and pointing to the poor, hungry guest, put for him one spoonful into the basin that was empty. The hint was caught in a moment, and suit was followed by each in turn; but when they had all contributed, the tenth basin was not yet filled; whereupon they each contributed half-a-spoonful more; and the grateful black added to their pleasure by getting as good a meal as the rest. Some coppers were then collected for him in like manner, and the stranger went on his way rejoicing.

Besides such occasional practical beneficence, Matthew luxuriated in an equally benign religious faith, which he wished others to entertain. To this end he would sometimes go to a printer with a piece of manuscript and a small sum of money in his hand, saying—“I should not like you to hurt yourself by working at too low a charge; but, some

day when you are not otherwise busy, put this writing in print, and throw off as many slips as you can easily afford for this small sum of money." When the work was done, he never failed to add something more to the printer's charge, and then gave the excerpts away where he thought they would do most good.

One of Matthew's greatest enjoyments in life was the contemplation, on a calm night, of the moon and the starry heavens, believing that somewhere amongst them were the homes of the eternally blest he hoped one day to join. No word of discontent was ever heard by me to fall from his lips, nor did I ever hear him for himself express more than one desire—namely, that as he was so asthmatic, and always ready, it might please God at last to take him *suddenly*. And this wish was gratified. He had one morning been to see a married daughter, Mrs. Burgain, at the Forest-side, and brought a message to a house near the town-end, where, while standing within the threshold and having just delivered it, his breath was suddenly stopped as he stood; and there and thus he changed worlds without a wrinkle or a groan!

Matthew Whitehead's grave is on the north side of Sutton-in-Ashfield Church-yard, where "he being dead yet speaketh;" for in accordance with his own desire, a passage from one of the Prophets indicative of his faith is engraven on his head-stone, declaring his belief in the final triumph of Goodness over all things.

What wonder that the children of such parents should themselves "take good ways?" So far as I am aware they have every one done so. The youngest boy, Samuel, was one of my play-fellows; and it was he who, when a group of us were playing at the bottom of the lane, pointed up to the sky, and gave me my first startling and beautiful consciousness that "the music of the spheres" is no fable, but that the entire universe is one great harmony. One older than he, poor Eli, died young, a lover of intelligence, and loving others to share it. William, still older, ended his days at Derby, confidential employé in a mercantile establishment, but giving all his Sabbaths to teaching the children of the poor. Whilst John, who I think was the eldest, was the most gifted and remarkable of them all. One day when they were at work in their stocking-frames, a gentleman, who was also a relative, one of the firm of Messrs. Wright, of Derby and St. Petersburg, called to see them. John was then fourteen years old, and though he and his brother William had toiled from their childhood, as all the family were then toiling, they two had, by attending night-schools, acquired unusual proficiency in learning. Mr. Wright, standing by John's loom, became so interested in him as to ask if he would like to go with him on his return to Russia, and take a situation in the counting-house

there. It led to his doing so ; and on his coming of age, which was of course seven years afterwards, a holiday was given him to visit and bless his dear old parents, brethren, sisters, and neighbours, with a sight of the true and thoroughly genteel man he had grown, accomplished in French and German as well as in the Russian language, and a credit in every way to his training and the position to which it had led. From that time I remember him, and to remember was to love him ; nor was there an old neighbour, rich or poor, who did not ever after join his family in that feeling.

At the end of a second period of seven years, Mr. John Whitehead came to England again. A distinguished firm, having houses in Liverpool and Archangel, had asked the Messrs. Wright to commend to them some person for a competent partner at the latter place. They knew of none so worthy as Mr. Whitehead, and recommended him. His gratitude made him at first refuse to leave their service, but notwithstanding his high value to them, they insisted on his doing it for his own sake ; whereupon, when he came home on his second visit, to cheer his parents with what I believe was their last sight of him in this world, it was in the character of "acting partner in the firm of Messrs. Gladstone and Whitehead, of Liverpool and Archangel."

Now it happened in time that the British Consul at Archangel was taken ill, and intrusted his duties to the neighbourly management of our friend, who transacted everything so well that, on the Consul's decease, he was unanimously nominated by the British residents as successor ; and the next time he came to England, he was himself the Consul, and accompanied by a loved and loving wife, and some sweet children. How well I remember them all, as they visited several of us from the old neighbourhood who were by this time living in London ! What a treat it was to be his companion in visiting intellectual friends, and to hear him pour out information on many a genial topic, and withal to listen to his advanced psychological speculations.

After his return occurred the great fire at Archangel, which included the premises of the firm in its devastations ; and these had no sooner been restored, than all had to be given up, and a thousand noble aspirations were frustrated through the breaking out of that horrible Crimean War. But John Whitehead, nothing daunted in spirit, though sadly worn in body, had to leave. On *this* return I saw him again very often, and his growing family too. One day he was with me after he had been having an audience of Lord Palmerston, whom he had felt it his duty, for his family's sake, to ask for another consular appointment. On my inquiring how he had fared, he jocosely answered, " Oh, beautifully ! The reception was altogether so handsome, so affable, so

amiable, that it was almost a luxury to have it, even if to be denied! His lordship said he had nothing at present that he could think of as worth my accepting, and so sympathised with me in the difficulty as to make 'No' sound as much like 'Yes' as possible! So now I must look in some other direction." He did thus look, and spite of failing strength, after dwelling so many years at Archangel, where the shortest day is only two hours long, he accepted a mercantile post in hot Calcutta; by hard application there won for his family the means of education and a start in life; came back emaciated in body, but bright and self-devoted in his soul as ever, to bless them with those well-earned gains—and then died.

Brave, generous, noble Whiteheads! worthy sons of a worthy stock! May my place be not far from yours, and some other dear old neighbours, in that blest world which our parents taught us to believe in while enduring the trials and not undervaluing the stern duties of this! To all their survivors let me dedicate this humble tribute, nor least to thee, dear Sam, who struck for me the scientific key-thought, while we were yet only in corduroys, that, spite of all sublunary doubts, and griefs, and strifes, this Mighty Frame of things we so partially see is one entire and universal Harmony!

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### FREDERICK WILLIAM DAVIES.

(Nov. 3, 1866.)

THERE have recently been interred on the quiet shore of Windermere, followed to the grave only by his relatives and a few sympathising villagers, the remains of a man more heroic and humane than many to whom national honours have been accorded. Frederick William Davies, late an employé at the Stanley Dock, Liverpool, was the only boy in a family of six. His father died while he was yet young; but from that hour the boy became as a husband—*i.e.*, a house-band; took home regularly what he could earn to help his widowed mother and his sisters, and may be said to have all but entirely sustained them for some years.

When the Liverpool Sailors' Home was in flames, on the 30th April, 1859, and some of the inmates had got out of the upper windows, where they were clinging between two chances of death, with their shirts on fire; on an escape-ladder being hoisted, it was found too short to reach them. The crowd below seemed perplexed and hesitant, while to the sufferers above every moment was a little eternity of terror; and it was just when all hope for them appeared to be gone, that Davies, who



had been standing as a spectator, voluntarily sprang forth, and climbing the larger ladder, braced a smaller one near to its top, stave to stave, with his naked hands alone, while four men and a boy came down it and *over his body*, thereby escaping the death, one mode or the other of which seemed but an instant before inevitable. At one time a man and a boy were upon him together, when, to use his own expression, the shout of the crowd was so tremendous as to make him feel as if it were shaking the ladder under him; and the pressure upon him so great that his hands were forced all but open: a moment's longer pressure, and all three must have been dashed to pieces by the threatened fall. By the mercy of God and Davies's noble persistence, however, the escape was complete. The case excited considerable interest at the time. His portrait appeared in one of the most popular pictorial weeklies, and the philanthropic feat was acknowledged by a public subscription, which realised about £220 for his benefit, though no thought of reward or applause had incited him to the action.

All accounts of Davies's life agree in this, that his general conduct harmonised with that brave and generous effort. "Prompt at pity's call," whatever he was, whatever he had, was always at the service of the distressed and needy; and the crowning act of his career is a fine illustration of this character.

Two years before his death he was paying his addresses to a young woman at West Derby, near Liverpool; his visits to her being sanctioned by the family with whom she was in service. One evening, as he was sitting in the kitchen, where she was performing her ordinary duty, a boiler, owing to the ill construction of some apparatus connected with it, suddenly exploded, cut out one of her eyes, burnt and disfigured other parts of her person, and laid her quite prostrate, while her clothes remained on fire. Davies was wounded in the head, his clothes were nearly destroyed on his back, and both he and his sweetheart would soon have died from suffocation if from no other cause, but that he had the presence of mind to kick out a panel of a bolted door, and let in a rush of fresh air. He early recovered, but it was otherwise with the young woman. As soon as she was capable of being removed, she was taken to a public infirmary, where her lover, now more devoted to her than ever, visited her as often as the rules of the institution would permit. The authorities there, struck by his constancy and tenderness, presently allowed him to visit her every day; and after she had so far as possible recovered, his attentions to her were continued as regularly as before. When she had left Liverpool for the house of her parents at Bowness, he came down as frequently as his duties would allow him, to see her; and on the 1st of January,

1866, notwithstanding her personal disfigurement and semi-blindness, made her his bride.

That fidelity to Katie Martin, and that marriage, were, as time has proved, among the most providential things that ever happened to brave Frederick William Davies. A fatal disease (consumption), not apparent at the time, soon afterwards set in with slow but sure determination; and any close observer might plainly have seen that he who had so nobly saved the lives of others, must ere long lay down his own. Day by day his body diminished in bulk, and grew weaker; and since it was found that the medical skill, even of Liverpool, could do but little for him, he was removed to the home of his wife's parents in Westmoreland, to try what change of air could accomplish there. Neither change of air nor ordinary medical treatment, however, could arrest his complaint; and it was about three weeks before his death, that I was first called in to see him. I can never forget the nobleness and benignity of the young man's countenance in the extreme emaciation in which I found him. His pale and beautiful brow was one of the most intellectual, and his face, altogether, rather of the Byronic type—only that the outline was filled up with something more benign than that of Byron as generally presented to us. I have seen some physicians and philanthropists with a similar aspect, but seldom, if ever, one in whom it excelled that of poor Davies. It was on that and several succeeding occasions, that he was able to detail to me in whispers various particulars of his history for which I inquired; and it was touching to hear him, instead of boasting of his feats, saying in somewhat of the manner of one apologising for himself, when speaking of that achievement at the Liverpool fire, "You see, it was very hard to stand by when the poor fellows were in such danger, and nobody seemingly able to help them, without making an effort of some sort; so I did it."

I have said that Davies's marriage to poor Catherine Martin was providential. In the course of a life fraught with some adventure and professional experience, it has been my lot to see nurses of nearly every possible kind, from those of the magnanimous type of Florence Nightingale downwards. No words of mine could adequately indicate the patience, gentleness, assiduity, tenderness and tact, of many a loving soul I have seen in that humane capacity. In the devotion of some—not for an odd day or night, but by day and night, from week to week, and in a few instances for periods so long that to specify them would be but to awaken doubt—I have seen all that it was possible for woman to do to "lengthen out life's taper at the close," and sustain its glow with her watchful care and devotion. But I can never here-

after think at all on the subject, without remembering how poor Mrs. Davies's comparative blindness became sight at the bedside of her failing husband, how she seemed to see his every movement with her whole body, to hear his every breath with her quickened ear, and to the very last be to him all that man could have hoped of the strongest and healthiest woman in her circumstances. True, there were other kind spirits there to help her, and occasionally to take her place. But when at length he was dying, with his hand in hers, as she bent down to him to get a last glimpse of him ere life finally ebbed out, and almost anticipated him in every wish for change of position as his breathing became more difficult—while her vision could have scarcely been more expanded than that of the smallest bird—I felt that his devotion to her in the hour of her own sharp affliction was now meeting with its reward, and was thankful for his sake that he had ever known her.

Should anyone wish to know what such a man thought and felt, in relation to futurity, it may be but justice to say that he had not, by any means, been indifferent to that question. His religion, from all I can gather, had certainly been one more of *life* than of *talk*. But he had heavenward aspirations, and was deeply interested in and happier for any religious conversation as his end drew nigh. He was sometimes engaged in fervent though voiceless prayer, and was much comforted when others prayed, or talked in his presence of sacred matters. After the last ordeal of physical nature had commenced with him—trying as it was to a man in some respects so weak, but in others so strong as he—and all stood around him in mournful anxiety as to the final change, upon some one stepping near, with soothing words, alluding to the presence and goodness of Jesus, and saying in gentle tones, "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest," a composure more beautiful than aught merely of the earth could have given settled over his entire countenance; and presently, with one more earnest and loving look at his weeping wife, he passed away. This was about half-past seven on the evening of Sunday, Oct. 28th, and I have since heard that at the very time a pastor in Liverpool (of course without cognisance of what was then occurring at Bowness) was alluding in his pulpit to Davies's philanthropic effort at the burning of the Sailors' Home.

When two days afterwards the corpse lay in its coffin, methought I had never seen a more striking instance of manly beauty in death. Even children of tender years loved to linger in the room and gaze upon him as long as they could be allowed.

The young hero's humble funeral was on the Wednesday following

his decease. Four of his wife's brothers, boatmen on Windermere lake, carried his remains from the door. They were relieved now and then by other friendly bearers on the way, but bore him at last to the side of the grave. That grave is in the little retired cemetery of Bowness, whence glimpses of the lake may be caught beyond the old Rectory trees; and the cragged and wooded hills, just now in their last vestige of autumnal beauty, stand silently and pensively, if not mournfully, around. Monument or no monument, as raised by man, can now be of little importance to him; no doubt, he enjoyed in life that sweetest of earthly luxuries, the consciousness of duty *done*, and is too well rewarded above for approbation here to add one thrill to his joy; but—

“Because he needs no praise shall I be dumb?”

Whether or not any trophied memorial be raised at Bowness or Liverpool, his modest funeral card shall here at least have a grateful shrine:—

IN AFFECTIONATE REMEMBRANCE OF  
FREDERICK WILLIAM DAVIES,

AGED 32 YEARS,

*Who distinguished himself at the memorable Burning of the Liverpool Sailors' Home, April 30th, 1859, by saving the lives of five other persons at the voluntary risk of his own, and by other noble actions, and died at Bowness, Windermere, Sunday, October 28th, 1866.*

The world knows nothing of its greatest men,  
'Tis said; but worth like his can never die:  
It bloom'd on earth; but now it blooms again  
Where death is swallow'd up in victory.





## Chapter Twenty-Third.

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### SELF-DEVOTED WOMEN.

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To the Memory of my Half-Sister, Mrs. HANNAH SAXTON (*née* BACON), of Sutton-in-Ashfield, Notts, whose ashes repose in obscurity there ; whose whole life was one loving act of self-sacrifice for others ; who did more by her arduous toil to nourish my body in childhood, to store my mind in youth, and to promote my welfare in this world and in that on which she herself has entered, than my whole life could possibly repay to her,

“ And all for love, and nothing for reward ; ”

I humbly, affectionately, and reverently dedicate this chapter on Self-devoted Women, grieving that I can make but so poor a return for her devotion to me.

S. T. H.

MAY 24th, 1871.

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### GLIMPSE OF FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE IN DERBYSHIRE.

As the tourist ascends from Sherwood Forest, leaves Bolsover, Hardwick, Newstead, Annesley, and Alfreton behind him, and passes the picturesque ruins of Wingfield Manor, he comes, in the space of a dozen miles or so, upon the steep “ cliffs,” and “ tors,” and “ carrs,” of

Crich ; and then suddenly opens before him one of the most beautiful scenes in all the Peak of Derbyshire,—the stream-lit vale of Holloway, and the wooded slopes of Lea, backed by the heights of Matlock and Wirksworth, and touched and dashed all over with some of the most pleasing features of rural and industrial life.

Nearly in the centre of this scene, and adding much to its romantic interest, is a verdant knoll, or rather platform, occupied by a tasteful mansion, with its terraces and lawns, sheltered from the north and east by a lofty, cragged, and wooded upland, almost worthy the name of a mountain—the hamlet of Holloway (or, as the natives call it, Ho'way,) scattered, not ungracefully, upon its side, and crowning its summit. The gleaming and arrowy Derwent, the Cromford canal, and the Ambergate and Manchester railway, form far-winding and almost parallel lines below to the south and west ; and whether freshened by the green of spring, flushed with summer bloom, or the still mellow tints of autumn, or sparkling in an unsullied mantle of hoar frost, as I have often seen it on a bright winter's day, it is a prospect that once photographed on the soul, might, without a single historical association, remain “ a joy for ever.”

It is not, however, without its histories. Yonder, on the top of Riber, now so differently and conspicuously occupied, the Britons and Romans—possibly also the Saxons—had in turn, the first their temples, and the latter their encampments, commanding on one side the Peak and the other the Plain, far almost as eye could reach,—Riber, a softening of the old Saxon *Righ-bergh*, i.e., Ridge-hill, which its form so well qualifies. Near at hand, if not visible, as we have already hinted, is Wingfield Manor, where in later time dwelt in confinement, Mary, Queen of Scots ; and equally near is Dethick, the home of young Anthony Babington, who was beheaded for trying to set her at liberty. In the folds of the valley beneath, just out of sound as out of sight, are the since famous factories of the Arkwrights and Strutts, the revolutions of whose wheels revolutionised the character of the whole district in their day, without much interfering with its natural beauty. Add that of Mr. Smedley, also standing out of view, on a small tributary of the Derwent, below Lea Wood ; and far up before us, with its park-like surroundings, Alderwasley Hall, seat of the ancient family of Hurt, with countless other significant footprints and mile-posts on the path of time.

Being in the native region of my mother, herself one of the most loving of all nursing spirits in her way, it was ever to me a true delight to rest on the hill sides and gaze on so beauteous an amphitheatre—its blendings of life and character with nature's primeval grandeur ; those patri-

cian or rustic homes that seemed to be *growing* out of the very bosom of the landscape and sending up their long, long columns or wreaths of blue reek into the brighter blue of the sky ; its waving woods and winding waters ; its lawn-like meadows and grazing flocks and herds ; its peaceful traffic and useful toil.

But in the whole of that lovely view, never seemed a spot more fair or attractive than the many-gabled rural seat of Lea Hurst, on that central knoll—henceforth classic forever—one of the English homes of FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE, whose name, like Grace Darling's, was destined some day to quicken the beatings of millions of hearts. She was not born here, nor, if I am rightly informed, at that other beautiful home of the family, in Hampshire, but in the fair and far-off city of Florence itself, whence her loved and musical name.

Some people have a natural genius for nursing and solacing, as much as others have for music, or dancing, or poetry ; and Miss Nightingale has come to be regarded as the archetype of her order. Long before the Crimean war, how many times have I had passing glimpses of her, visiting the cottages of the sick poor around this fair spot, with her quiet, sensible, unconventional looks, and her gentle and generous hands bearing something for their comfort ! Some of the people of her own class in the neighbourhood who were less given to such unselfish luxuries, thought her in those days rather eccentric, and it is said sometimes so spake of her ; while the poor themselves spoke of her as an angel of mercy, when any of them meeting with a serious fracture in the quarry or the mine, or suffering from some more chronic cause, was not only tended by her with sisterly solace, but had often a medical adviser from Wirksworth entirely at her expense. And such was the way in which that young maiden schooled herself for other and more extended spheres—in continental hospitals ; afterwards in London, where she took the office of matron to a retreat for decayed gentlewomen ; and ultimately with the army at the siege of Sebastopol : strange contrast to the quiet retirement of Holloway, with its rural delights,—making her famous throughout the world !

They who love not war must still sorrow deeply over the fate of its victims ; and to such, amid all the din of arms, the beautiful and beneficent name of Florence Nightingale must have come sweetly as “ flute notes in a storm.” And in future ages, when humanity mourns, as mourn it will, over the blotches and scars which battle and fire shall have left on the face of this else fair world ; like a stream of sunlight through the cloud with which present strifes shade the history of civilization, will shine down upon it, brighter and brighter, the memory of the heroic Maiden of Lea Hurst, till all nations shall have learnt to



"do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God," and covetousness, war, and tyranny shall be no more!

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### NANNY SHACKLOCK.

In girlhood Nanny Shacklock came from Gloucestershire, to one of the little border towns of Sherwood Forest, as nurse in a baronet's family, and in her young-womanhood was married to a village tailor. But what a noble soul was hers, and what an unspeakable blessing was her whole life to her adopted neighbourhood! She had in time a large family of her own, but was in many respects a mother to all around her. And yet, so quiet. Both her husband and she were Methodists, of the early sort,—he, Francis Shacklock, fervid as a summer sunbeam, and his wife gentle and soothing as the zephyr that tempers it. There are people in the world who are always ready with great professions, to which they are in the habit of adding, "and should you ever want a little assistance, don't fail to let me know," but when it is required are too much otherwise engaged to render it. Yet it was not so with Nanny Shacklock. She seemed almost ubiquitous, though by no means an intruder or a gossip, and was scarcely ever out of the way of anybody when needed—as neighbour, general adviser, and friend. Supposing, for instance, that Mr. Goodacre, the parish clergyman, had called to solace some poor dying woman, whose husband was away at his necessary toil, and whose helpless children were in danger from want of attention, he could always leave such a case with a longer breath and a lighter heart after sending for Nanny Shacklock. Mrs. Woolley, who lived at the Hall, who was a descendant of the ancient and gallant Nottinghamshire house of Willoughby, and whose loving daughters were very Florence Nightingales in their way, found in many of the dispensations of her goodness, an ever-ready and worthy auxiliary in Nanny Shacklock. The parish doctor too, over-worked and badly paid, unable to stay long in a house where every member was so ill that it seemed inhuman to go away, could always proceed to his next case with some relief, after he had ascertained that Nanny Shacklock would supersede him. A lovely orphan girl, little beyond her childhood, betrayed and forsaken by a pretended suitor, died of the consequences, among which was a broken heart; but it was in the arms and under the religious solaces of Francis and Nanny Shacklock. When the ladies of the parish were commencing a Bible Society, and wanted some christianly suggestions as to the best method of commencing, it was unanimously resolved to send for Nanny Shacklock. At the start-

ing of a Dorcas Society, for supplying poor people with clothing in winter, on the question being asked who was to chalk out the plan for them, several voices at once said, "Let us send for Nanny Shacklock." In short, I have a doubt if, for many, many years, any consecutive words of similar import were so often repeated in all that parish of Sutton-in-Ashfield as those four words of "send for Nanny Shacklock." And it was to her that I, too, was indebted for one of the best impulses to improvement I ever received. From seeing me fond of haunting the lanes and fields, she had come to imagine that I cared nothing for learning; but on my good sister one day telling her of her mistake, she put into my hand a beautiful poem, asking me to read it; and when I did, her face was bright with delight, as she exclaimed in her native dialect, somewhat elongating the words, "Bless that tongue!"—thereby giving my love of books a fresh glow the value of which I can yet feel. And such was the way in which she spent her days—without neglecting a single duty to her own family. Yet never did she take pecuniary reward for all her service to the sick and poor—her sittings-up at night, or her consoling and healing visits by day. I saw her in her 90th year—her eyes still bright with heavenly light—her voice as clear and sweet as that of a youthful maiden. Sooth to say, as with all the really good people I have ever known, her soul seemed to be growing more youthful as her body declined. And why should it not? Was it not *going back* to join that of her husband in its native heaven? It was; and the next time I heard of her, God himself had sent for Nanny Shacklock.

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#### PHŒBE HOWITT.

WHAT a striking and beautiful character, in another sphere of life, was that good old quaker lady, Phœbe Howitt! Of course, everybody who reads knows, or ought to know, something of William and Mary Howitt, husband and wife, but imagined by thousands of people to be brother and sister. It was my privilege and pleasure to know the mothers of both, as it is to be on friendliest terms with them and their children. Mrs. Howitt's mother, Mrs. Botham, lived to a very venerable age, coming from the banks of the Dove, on the Derbyshire border of Staffordshire, and closing her life at the house of her gifted daughter and son-in-law, near London. It was only in those closing days that I saw much of Mrs. Botham, and nearly all that I could say of her might be summed up in this, that even in her wrinkles, she seemed still a very loveable and loving woman. Old Mrs. Howitt I had opportunities of

seeing in other circumstances—in the family residence at Heanor, a village that, clustering round its ancient and lofty church-tower, looks along and across the Erewash Valley on fifty other villages and hamlets, on coal fields with their fires blazing up at night like volcanoes, and on the mountains of the Peak, fading into the bright blue of the distant heaven by day. Daughter of a family that could ride the full length of a mile through their own territory, yet in all her tastes and habits a simple and practical Friend, it was very interesting to think of her as wed to tall, picturesque, sagacious Thomas Howitt, who had himself become a Quaker too, though his ancestors of the seventeenth century had been noted for their hostility to that sect. And very interesting was it to think of them both as the parents of men of genius like their sons, William, Richard, and Godfrey—not to speak disrespectfully of their other sons, Emmanuel and Francis, men more attached to the fields of agriculture than those of literature and science, or of their son Thomas, who died long ago in America. But above all was it delightful to think of good, sensible, and tender Phoebe Howitt, as doctress of all the poor in the village and the neighbouring valleys, in days when the law made less provision for the poor in that respect than now, added to which was the frank, unsophisticated, hospitable spirit, that made her a kind of mother to all who came within her sphere, whether from near or far, and let none go away without feeling better for her acquaintance. In the writings of her children you get so many pleasant glimpses of her, that there is the less need for me to dwell at great length on her virtues here. But it is a positive refreshment to me, to think, after all these years, of what I saw when on a visit to her with her son Richard in my younger days. It was amazing to see how much she did for all her household, in that active, very slightly bent little frame of hers, at her years, and yet with what a systematic and matter-of-course air she attended to the poor invalids who came in every now and then, much as if they were coming to a general hospital, where they were sure to get nourishment if she thought nourishment more needful to them than medicine, though the latter was dispensed in a style far superior to that of ordinary amateur practice. Not only did she appear to be “well up” in pathology and the pharmacopœia, but there was a *healing manner and tone* about her that could not but greatly enhance the virtue of her medication or surgery; and she treated everything, from the slightest catarrh to the severest wound (of course, gratuitously,) and very rarely failed to cure. I have a belief that the *penchant* of some of her descendants for chemistry and healing may have been inherited from her; and when one thinks how her grand-daughter Margaret, known by the

published reminiscences of her long sojourn with Frekerika Bremer, has been distinguished among her friends as a devotee to the requirements and enjoyments of a large section of the London poor, it is a pleasure to connect her doings in that sphere with those precedents of her long-deceased grandmother in the Erewash Valley.\* Phœbe Howitt died in 1840 or 1841, when her son Richard was sojourning in Australia. Having in one of my letters to him while he was abroad alluded to his mother's death, he enclosed me, in his reply, the following sweet and tender lyric, in which he finely alludes not only to the spirit of her life, but to the freedom from elaborate monumental structures of the little grassy cemetery of the society in which her ashes rest:—

#### OUR MOTHER'S GRAVE.

Strew flowers upon the honoured grave  
 Where our lamented mother lies,  
 But let no gloomy cypress wave  
 Betwixt it and bright summer skies;  
 Let freshest verdure o'er it spread,  
 Let purest light upon it fall,  
 For these resembled most the dead,  
 In life, in death, beloved by all.

Keep thence memorial works away,  
 Obstruct not Time's etherial grace:  
 The Seasons there will tribute pay,  
 And Nature sanctify the place.  
 In solemn autumn, gladsome spring,  
 Mute things to her will reverence show;  
 And there the birds she loved will sing,  
 And there her favourite flowers will grow.

The sun from out the amber west  
 Will touch that spot with lingering rays;  
 The moon upon her place of rest  
 Will seem more tranquilly to gaze:  
 The wind that through the welkin sings,  
 Gently as dies a summer wave,  
 Will thither come, and fold its wings  
 To downy slumbers on that grave.

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\* The good old woman would make use of the knowledge and skill of her sons in her own neighbourly work, when she could. I have heard that when one of them was with her upon a Sunday visit, and somebody came hurriedly in for help of a young woman in the village who had taken poison, he was hastened to the place, and found that the slightest loss of time would be fatal; yet, when he arrived, neither stomach-pump nor medicines normally adapted to the case were at hand. Asking, however, for some smelling salts and vinegar, these were soon found, and a solution of the first being injected and followed quickly by a due proportion of the second, back instantly came the whole effervescing draught, bringing with it the poison—and the young woman's life was saved.

Whate'er is in its nature fair,  
 Whate'er is in its spirit good,  
 Around, diffused through earth or air,  
 Or undiscerned, or understood ;  
 With whatsoe'er she loved to tend,  
 On which she living love bestowed,  
 Will flock to their departed friend,  
 And cheer and grace her last abode.

Let there no painful tears be shed :—  
 A cheerful faith was hers, is ours,  
 Of truth divine through all things spread ;  
 Of love divine in simplest flowers ;  
 Of goodness, like a sun above,  
 Diffusing light and gladness far ;  
 The boundless confidence of love ;  
 And knowledge like a guiding star.

The " Life in Life " she made her own  
 By thought, and word, and virtuous deed,  
 Lived not nor died with her alone—  
 But will through future years proceed ;  
 Whilst what she was on us impress'd,  
 Is more to us than wealth and fame,  
 Will more conduce to make us blest,  
 And cause us most to bless her name.

June 18th, 1841.

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### MRS. WILBERFORCE.

THERE is a class of women who, without being themselves individually distinguished, still deserve the admiration and gratitude of us all for the way in which they aid and solace husbands whose lives are devoted to public usefulness. Of all things, few can be more painful than a union in which a keenly sensitive and self-seeking woman happens to be connected with a man of popular sympathies, regarding everything he does for others as a robbery of herself, and every exaltation or expansion of his sphere as a derogation to her. On the other hand, what can be more loveable or prizeable than a woman foregoing all she can, and giving herself up to the furthering of a good and great man's usefulness—watching, thinking, feeling for him and his noble objects as being not the less hers because she does not chance to have her own name and personal qualities blazoned separately on each ? When a woman acts thus, regardless of the thousand little attentions which many husbands pay their wives, but to which hers could not give time without forfeiting all for which he mainly lives and labours, one may justly exclaim with Dr. Gall, in his disquisition on the faculty of Adhe-

siveness, "Happy is the man that hath a woman for his friend!" These thoughts have just grown out of my recollections of the late Mrs. Wilberforce. It is many years since I one day dined with three generations of William Wilberforce's family—though there were only four of us at table, namely, his widow, his son Henry William, that gentleman's son, and myself. It was when I was on a short stay with the Rev. Henry William Wilberforce, at his rectory of East Farleigh, in Kent, a place surrounded by luxuriant hop-yards, on the banks of the Medway, near Maidstone. Mrs. Wilberforce was just the gentle, affectionate, reverent, earnest person one could fitly imagine as the widow of the indefatigable philanthropist, to whom she still referred in brief but touching terms of profoundest love. Unlike her sons, the Bishop of Oxford,\* and my rev. host, she was of a complexion slightly dark, and had a face somewhat oval, with brown eyes, that still in age retained much of their youthful lustre. It was pleasant to hear her converse on scenes and events in the olden days; and sad, on my visiting the rectory again, about twelve months afterwards, when her son, with quiet affection and silent tread, took me into the churchyard close by, to see her grave.

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#### MRS. JERRAM.

LET me here repeat what I have asked in "Days in Derbyshire." Did you or your children ever read some sweet and innocent books for the young, entitled "My Father's House," "The Pearly Gates," and "The Children's Story Book," published by John Darton many years ago? If so, there is no need for me to tell you what a loving spirit pervades them, and how much good they must have wrought in many an English home—graphic, lively, instructive, and entertaining as they are. And their author, whose friends know her by the sobriquet of "THE PALE STAR," at the time I am writing lives in a homely cottage near Derby. In her early days—days of brightest hope and promise—all who knew Jane E. Holmes, thought of her as a gentle and intellectual sister. Charles Reece Pemberton said she had the finest mind of any woman he had ever met, and Mary Howitt regarded her with a most affectionate interest; while Richard Howitt, in a playful way, would read one of her poems to us, and pass it off, for a moment, as by Mrs. Hemans. As she grew to womanhood, Jane Holmes, loved by and loving William Jerram, became his wife, and for some time

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\* Now (1871) of Winchester.

they lived at Derby, but while yet young removed to a lone yet very pleasant rural spot, Bannells Farm, in the parish of Etwall, where, as their family grew around them, she shone not less as an industrious farmer's wife, managing her dairy, than she had in her books by the firesides of thousands of her country-people,—her intellectuality, as well as her devotion to every duty, producing a marked effect upon the scattered neighbourhood. There were those who might think such a mind out of place in such a sphere. But did not God know best, and was she not placed there by Him? And time sped on, and duties accumulated, and cares increased; yet there that genial spirit still glowed and cheered all around her. What a blessed memory have I of summer and winter evenings there—and of one summer Sunday evening in particular! The sun was setting, and forming golden bars of light along the horizon from Radbourne Woods to Sutton Hill, and giving a bloomy hue to the nearer fields. A gentle breeze was creeping over the ripening corn, and making a sort of half-whisper in the orchard-trees. The kine were scattered a-field, and the bees had come home to their hive. The family were assembled in the little parlour, where several good books lay open. The mother, her meek eyes beaming with religious light, sat within, while the children and one or two friends were singing with her “Thy will be done;” and cheerful, hospitable Farmer Jerram himself, enjoying his long pipe and the scene, leaned in at the open window with a smiling face, and listened. But the affection and faith of that family have been tried since then. Paralysis one day laid its cold, heavy hand on honest Farmer Jerram, and turned the cheerful voice of the household into a sad wail; and shortly afterwards Mrs. Jerram was subjected to a shock of the same sad complaint. They have had to leave the old farm, and their family are now widely scattered; but God and filial love forsake not that suffering pair. The soul that wrote “My Father's House,” “The Pearly Gates,” and “The Children's Story Book,” is still there, in the midst of that adversity and anxiety; and so let us trust is the Good Spirit, the Comforter, that first inspired them. But has the *Civil List* nothing to add in such a case as this? It is hardly possible to imagine one in which some share of its bounty could be more deserved or more useful.





## Chapter Twenty-Four.

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### MY FIRST LITERARY FRIENDS.

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SWEET Poetry ! let me once more tell the oft-told tale of my earliest acquaintance with thee and thine. Yet, was it the earliest ? Who knows but that the lullaby which sings infancy into sleep and dreaming, may in some way touch the soul with a thrill, that revives and reverberates in after years when its origin cannot be remembered, finding its symbols in all lovely forms and fancies, and growing at last into full organ tones, as hidden rills grow into grandest rivers ? Or is the poet, as has been said, *constitutionally* a harp, framed and nerve-wired to repeat or reply to all nature's breathings with preternatural melody ; so that if the vibration has from infancy been kept alive, he is not performing all his function until he gives or finds for it a voice, or some metaphorical sign at least ? And is it from this cause that when he sits with his pen in his hand, he feels as though it had become a living part of himself, moving in obedience to every loving impulse, and giving expression to all his inner being ? I cannot tell. But if it be not so, how should it have happened that, when I was only three years old, and my father was carrying me in his arms, on that calm, grey Sunday, by our old neighbour's garden, and the snow was falling upon it so slowly, silently, and solemnly, flake by flake, that I never felt the happiness it gave me *ripe* until I had uttered

it in after years? Did the snow bring down the poetry with it, or merely awaken poetry that was already in me; or was its glow *then generated* by that mating of beautiful Nature with the young and tender soul? Or when I stood on another still, grey sabbath morn at our cottage-door, as the church-bells were chiming, and the people were slowly passing, some alone, and some in pairs and groups, to their weekly worship; and the robin came to be fed from my hand, then flew into the garden-hedge and twittered forth its note, which my sister told me was its morning hymn, while a love for all things filled my heart; how came it that the joy thus inspired was at once an *aching* extasy and a travail, until the reading of Robert Bloomfield taught me how to ventilate my soul in verse?

Ah, that lovely morn which followed—that bright February morn, when Winter was just beginning its first overtures to Spring, in the lane going down from Fulwood towards Greenwood Falls! May I not be forgiven for repeating the previously repeated story here? The whole landscape was sparkling with gems of frozen dew—not hoar-frost, but that bright, powdery scattering which is next akin to it. A cluster of rustic cottages was sending up blue-curling smoke-wreaths just by, and a green holly-bush—save here and there a little ivy, the only green object to be seen—was sweetly glowing at the bend of the lane beyond them, as though Spring were just coming round that way. It was a very wide landscape spreading out from that spot, dotted, not as now so much with coal-works, but with cottages, farms, churches, villages, corn-stacks, windmills, villas, and all the other indications of glad rural life, up to where the North Peak of Derbyshire brought its blue hills in a semi-circle and hemmed in the scene. All this, in the sunshine, was very delicious; and quietly pondering on it, the consciousness of its beauty bewitched my heart with silent joy—the love of love. And this was only one of fifty similar occasions, Summer and Autumn awaking kindred emotions in their turn. I would have given a world at those times, had I possessed it, for power to utter what I felt, but had none, until Bloomfield's "Farmer's Boy" fell into my hands, and unlocked the way. Blessings on all true poets! The world at large little thinks how much it owes them. It was not that poetry or the poetical alone occupied my mind, that it became of so much importance to me. As youthhood ripened, it had thickening under-strata of scientific or semi-scientific lore, the result of a voracious reading and much vocal inquiry on all subjects that happened to present themselves in their order—including something of theology, physiology, and pathology. But just as all the substrata of the earth contribute their essences to the superincumbent soil, and the essence of the soil flushes out into

verdure and bloom, so when, at sixteen years of age, I went with the fruits of my readings and forest-ramblings to reside at Nottingham, it was not very long ere I found myself writing, and mating with the literati there.

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### MATTHEW HENRY BARKER.

THE first thoroughly literary man to give my young hand a friendly grasp was Capt. Matthew Henry Barker, author of "Greenwich Hospital," "Tough Yarns," "Jem Bunt," and "Walks round Nottingham," long popularly known by his sobriquet of "The Old Sailor." He was at that time and for some years editor of "The Nottingham Mercury;" was a warm, florid, stiff-set, cheerful, heroic-looking man; could send jokes about him as thickly as shot in an action, and give a hearty laugh that might be heard for half-a-mile. Yet would he melt the eyes of his readers by his pathos when the season came, and was not by any means himself unacquainted with sorrow. His father, who was a devout and reverend dissenting minister at Deptford, named him Matthew Henry from respect for the distinguished commentator of that name, of whom he was a personal friend, and hoped to see the lad trained in turn for the pulpit; but he went to sea instead, and in time had command of a vessel at the battle of Monte Video. After many strange vicissitudes and considerable adventure, his latter years were spent in London, in editing one of the illustrated newspapers; and I had the pleasure of seeing his rosy, sailor-like old face at my first metropolitan lecture, in 1843. I have no means of referring to the date of his decease.

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### WILLIAM POWERS SMITH.

CAPTAIN BARKER was successor in the editorship of the "Mercury" to Mr. William Powers Smith, a native of Leicestershire, who still resided in the town after his connection with the paper had ceased. My intercourse with Mr. Smith was altogether most intellectual and invaluable; for he was at once a genius and a sage, as versatile as profound; yet could he be playful. His habits were altogether his own. There was something about him of a Goldsmith, with something of Hazlitt which Goldsmith lacked, but much of himself unlike any other man; and he was as original and chaste in his thoughts as bold in his speculations. In private he was as great a conversationalist as Coleridge; and in public one of the most eloquent and telling orators I ever heard. As

he was never tired of speaking, I never tired of listening to him. One day I had to call upon him a little after two p.m. The great topic of the time was Reform; and for more than two hours he poured out one unbroken stream of rich thought, in the most classical and effective language, on political science. Pressing me to join him in his afternoon meal, he entertained me for two hours more with a philosophical disquisition on the passions; then glided from that into one on poetry and the poets, with which he so rivetted me by his earnestness and power, that I was still listening its conclusion with my hand on the door-latch as St. Mary's clock was striking ten. And all this copious outpouring was quite unpremeditated: he had only been thinking aloud, and regretted himself, as did I, at the close, that all which he had uttered had not been written. Powers Smith was by no means without his enemies—several of them perhaps made so by his occasional inadvertent and somewhat caustic outspokenness. He could not truckle to person, party, or self, and was therefore often misunderstood, and too little appreciated in a town given to indulgence in party strife. My own thought of him is that he was more fitted to be at home in some great university; and that for a youth like me to share his "conversations," as he paid me the compliment of calling them, for the time I did, was as great a privilege as to have attended the lectures of some half-dozen or more of ordinary professors. His memory was such, that at fourteen years of age he could recite the whole of "Paradise Lost" without book; and from the most recondite principles of metaphysics, and the most abstruse mathematical problems, down to the minutest phase of insect life—for he was a practical entomologist too—there was nothing in the range of art or science with which he was not more than ordinarily familiar. He was a great admirer of Byron, was at his funeral, and wrote a poem upon it. He had also an idea of establishing a superior school not far from the poet's grave, at Hucknall Torkard, but it was never fully realised. His latter years in Nottingham were partially employed in editing "The Nottingham Review," which at length he left to edit "The Carnarvon Herald." He was married, and had some interesting children. One of them with features much like his own, when little more than a baby, going out to play, saw a white mist floating along the fields, and thereupon running back into the house exclaimed, "Oh, do, papa, come out with me and see how *the wind smokes!*" I have been told that the child in question, since becoming a woman, has manifested a high order of intellect, and no wonder. Should this allusion to it ever meet her eye, it will prove to her that I have not forgotten or felt ungrateful for her father's former kindness in elevating and expanding mine.

## WALTER CRISP ELLIS.

WALTER CRISP ELLIS, (a man of a very different cast,) though chiefly employed at Mansfield was in Nottingham almost weekly, saying or doing something kindly, cheery and encouraging for somebody. In younger days, when a clerk with Messrs. Coldham and Enfield, he signed Kirk White's indentures; and in later days drew up mine. Few men were better acquainted than he with all the ins-and-outs, the archæology and history of Sherwood Forest. He was descended on the maternal side from Sir Christopher Crisp, and was in some way nearly related to Charles Hooton, the brilliant author of "Bilberry Thurland," whom I also knew in Nottingham. Ellis, in course of years, left Mansfield altogether, and was connected with "The Nottingham Mercury"—a paper to which, through all its changes, he had been attached from its first establishment. He was fond of giving nearly all he wrote a touch of drollery or of pathos, and had two hearts,—one a sound heart of love for everything good that God had made; the other a heart of flesh that had a disease of which he suddenly died, not very old. My grateful blessings on his friendly memory!

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## ROBERT MILLHOUSE.

BEN JONSON, it is true, had long before laid the scene of one of his dramas near Papplewick, as afterwards had Mason that of a portion of his "English Garden;" Dodsley, in "The King and Miller of Mansfield," had touched on some of the features of his neighbourhood; Kirk White had sung of Clifton Grove, and passed away; Byron had written much about Newstead and Annesley; William and Mary Howitt had published their "Forest Minstrel;" and antiquaries and historians had left many records of their observations and researches in prose. Ballads of Robin Hood had, from age to age, also done much to make it famous; but Robert Millhouse was one of the first who wrote of Sherwood Forest *specifically*, in verse at all commensurate with the dignity of the theme, and must certainly be considered one of the chief founders of what has been called by W. H. Wylie, "the Sherwood school." I doubt if England has ever known a writer who could be said to be more strictly—so far as the phrase is worth anything at all—uneducated. Yet so classical was his style that Southey refused to rank him amongst "Uneducated Poets" for that reason alone. And what was the history of the man too elevated for that distinction?

Robert Millhouse was born at Nottingham, October 14, 1788, the

second of a family of ten ; was put to work in his sixth year ; at ten was placed in the stocking-frame ; learnt to read at a Sunday school, and while yet a child became an appointed singer at St. Peter's Church. When sixteen (as his elder brother John informs us,) he was one day looking at a statuette of Shakespere, in the house of an acquaintance, and read, as inscribed on the front of its pedestal—

“ The cloud-capt towers, the gorgeous palaces,  
The solemn temples, yea the great globe itself,  
And all which it inherit, shall dissolve ;  
And like the baseless fabric of a vision  
Leave not a rack behind.”

Struck by its beauty and solemnity, he asked his brother at the first opportunity if it was not “ Scripture ;” and on being told that it was an adaptation of a passage in Shakespere’s “ *Tempest*,” he borrowed the whole of that drama and read it. His brother says that up to this time, though he had been accustomed to survey with delight the scenery round his native town, and to be charmed with the phenomena of the seasons as they changed, the bloom of flowers or the songs of birds—nor less with the biography of great and virtuous men—he had never before connected such things with poetry. His appetite for reading now quickened, he did not rest till he had secured most of the “ *Standard Poets*” of his day, in procuring which he was greatly aided by his brothers, John and Frederick, both of whom were equally fond with himself of reading. Joining the Nottinghamshire Militia (afterwards called “ the Royal Sherwood Foresters,”) under Colonel Gilbert Cooper Gardiner, and remaining with it from 1810 for several years, a portion of which was passed at Plymouth and Dublin, he found leisure to become himself a writer, and made several contributions to the *Nottingham Review*, some of which, including his “ *Nottingham Park*,” though of unequal merit, contain many beautiful lines. His first little volume, the leading poem in which is entitled “ *Vicissitude*,” was completed in 1820. This was followed by a collection of sonnets, under the title of “ *Blossoms*.” In 1826 appeared his “ *Song of the Patriot, Sonnets and Songs*” a work which, says Wylie, at once placed him in the first rank of England’s “ *Uneducated Poets*,” although the principal portions had been composed while the author was at work in his loom. His poem of “ *Sherwood Forest*,” embracing a view of that fine realm and its history, was published in 1827 ; and it was after this, in 1829, that I first became personally acquainted with him.

It might be seen at a glance that Millhouse was gifted with a strong individuality, and he had but to utter a single word for his tone to confirm it. In person, of average height, with somewhat grave and

striking but not unpleasant features; a medium complexion with but little if any bloom; somewhat retiring and reflective eyes; an attitude most erect, a stately step, a deliberate utterance and sonorous voice, with now and then a pensive smile; the whole presented a remarkable correspondence to his prevailing mental mood, in which a proud dignity had considerable, but playfulness or trifling very little part. His sympathy with the beautiful and tender was such, that anything from a fair babe to a fading flower would make him all but weep. He could nurse a child and sing to it, or take it by the hand as a little friend and teach it the poetry there is in flowers; but anyone familiar with him would have been greatly surprised had he been caught, in imitation of the French king of old, running about on all-fours with one of his children on his back. In conversation he was sententious and aphoristic. Met in Nottingham Park by a stranger, who introduced himself on the score of being a lover of poetry, "Ah, then!" exclaimed Robert, "are you too one of the *abstract tribe*?" For somehow he had come to regard all lovers of literature as a sacred corps apart, and at once struck up a friendship with the person thus newly enlisted. It was perhaps for the self-same reason that he took a liking for me; criticised my own little efforts at literature with an elder-brotherly candour; advised me to chasten my style by learning to see and avoid the faults of acknowledged writers while enjoying their beauties; and took me as time went on into cordial friendship.

I think his fondness for the fourteen-line sonnet and the stately march of the Spenserian stanza was a manifestation of the same mood, and you see no little of his character in the following on "The Lot of Genius:"—

To feel a conscious dignity within,  
And be despised amidst a crowd of fools;  
Too proud by slavish purposes to win  
The paltry favours of Oppression's tools:  
Born to no heritage but that of mind—  
To waste in penury the sand of life;  
To look on wounds without the power to bind;  
To lift a cobweb shield to baffle strife;  
To labour with a patriotic zeal,  
And meet with calumny from thankless man;  
And trust to after ages to repeal  
A nation's apathy, and critic's ban;  
Ages—which rear base piles to mock the dead,  
And shame the sons whose sires denied them bread.

Take as another example of his mind these passages culled from his "Sherwood Forest," and mark the fine tone of patriotism running through all. Some of the stanzas in that poem ring or roll like the



strains of a military band on march ; while others remind one of the breath of primroses "by some mossy forest-well." He alludes to the declension of the ancient Britons as the Romans enslaved, then finally forsook them :—

Woe and destruction to that wretched land,  
In the sad hour of danger and of flight,  
Whose chief defence is bondsmen ! when their strand  
Is fill'd with fierce invaders in their might :  
For what have they to lose ? The proud delight  
Of Freedom never to their breasts can flow ;  
They to their homes have but a second right ;  
The love of country little do they know,  
Nor feel those ardent throbs which generous laws bestow.

Next the Saxons :—

And now, old Sherwood ! o'er thy forest bound,  
Proud of their conquest, a rekindling race,  
And with exulting shouts, with hawk and hound,  
Bold chiefs and Mercian kings renew the chase.  
Oh, earth ! what various changes on thy face,  
What peals of triumph and what cries of sorrow  
In the long lapse of time have taken place !  
From which the Bard and the Historian borrow ;  
Yet may they not unfold the dark eventful morrow.

One tear the Britons claim ; yet thence was spread,  
Along the land, a renovating flame,  
And a succession of events, which led  
To the development of mighty fame :  
Hence we derive the dear immortal name  
Of Alfred, Patriot, Law-giver and King.  
Blush, ye enlighten'd ages ! blush for shame !  
Time, in his dreary march, but few can bring  
Who match his glorious deeds of great imagining.

And so it is, look backward where we may,  
We find no age that blood hath not defiled !  
And none so infamous, but that a ray  
Of noble virtue through the darkness smiled :  
For proof of this we need not search the wild,  
And ask the savage what his sires have told ;  
To polish'd clans the savage is a child :  
Look to the classic chronicles of old,  
And those which after times with sword and fire enroll'd.

Come, smiling Hope ! Anticipation come !  
To fancy's eye disclose the joyous spring ;  
Lead where the snowdrop and the crocus bloom ;

Bring violet perfumes on the breeze's wing;  
 Unclasp the primrose, bid the cowslip fling  
 Its incense back to heaven; let matins rise,  
 Till in imagination's ear shall ring  
 Each love-told hymn that swells the April skies,  
 Ascending unto Him, all-potent and all-wise.

Enough—old Sherwood now the song reclaims:—  
 Oh, there is something in the sacred sound  
 Of Home and Country, thrillingly inflames,  
 And makes the Patriot's heart all-joyous bound!  
 And were my birth-place nought but barren ground,  
 Where but the ling, the furze, and harebell grew,  
 These should the foremost in my lays be found,  
 Fresh, and expanding in the morning dew,  
 And when the setting sun shone sweet at his adieu.

Notwithstanding the fine tone of "The Song of the Patriot" preceding it, and the popularity of the subject, when Millhouse published his "Sherwood Forest," only seventy-seven subscribers could be obtained, and most of them in London where he was personally unknown; so that the foregoing sonnet on "The Lot of Genius" published in the same volume, seems not to have been unprophectic of his own. The appreciation of the Rev. Dr. Booker, vicar of Dudley, Dr. (now Sir) John Bowring, Mr. Thomas Wakefield, the Howitts, and a few other friends, however, did something to cheer him; the press spoke highly of his works; and while his health was weakened and his first wife was near her death, he was aided by Mr. Wakefield with the means of leisure for writing his last poem of any length, "The Destinies of Man." I use the word *leisure* emphatically—he and his brothers, in the days gone by, when his first poems were written, having had to work in the frame sixteen hours a-day for family bread. "The Destinies of Man" achieved for him more fame than pecuniary profit, and literature never became his sole profession. His first wife had died; he had married again—a blooming young woman, named Marian Moore; a double family was growing around him; worse poverty threatened with its savage grin, and a fatal intestinal disease was setting in; but his intense love of nature and poetry never flagged. He would come with me to Sutton-in-Ashfield, lingering by the way to listen to the birds and streams among the crags and green larches at Kirkby Grives, which gave him great delight; we wandered together in Birkland and Bilhagh—Pemberton's "ruined Palmyra of the forest"—one afternoon in a thunder-storm which added much to the grandeur of the scene, and made his knees tremble under him from veneration and awe. Literary and other friends drew closer and aided him, as his departure from amongst us approached, with such

solaces and comforts as circumstances rendered possible ; Dr. Godfrey Howitt afforded him all that medical skill stimulated by a kindly spirit could ; Thomas Ragg made a poetical appeal for him in Nottingham ; and in reply to a prose one I made at Sheffield, Ebenezer Elliott sent him a brotherly word as well as a contribution of material gold.

A little time before his eyes closed on his last spring, I was sitting by his bed-side in his cottage at Snenton. He then knew there was not the slightest chance of his recovery, but spoke of death with philosophical and religious calm, adding—"Spencer, my family belong to my country; my fame I leave; I know that you at least will be one to vindicate my memory if needed. My name is linked with Sherwood Forest, of which my children will live to be proud. Your turn will be next; go forth into the world; and God, and a dying poet's blessing, go with you!" It was just the occasion to remind one of that striking line of his—

"'Tis Time! I feel him knocking at my heart!"

Willie Wylie, in his "Old and New Nottingham," calls Millhouse "the Burns of Sherwood Forest," and adds that he was a "most brilliant example of the might of that genius which has welled up from the ranks of the toil-worn and penury-stricken crowd." In another place he says, "the moral and religious character of Millhouse reflected a lustre upon the name of the poet; and as a husband and father he strove to do his duty." His mortal remains were interred by the wall on the eastern side of the Nottingham old Cemetery, nearly opposite to the chapel. Some time afterwards, with Christopher Thomson, Mr. Widowson, John Trueman, and a few others, at Edwinstowe, I joined in raising the cost of a stone for the head of his grave, to which the late Mr. Samuel Fox, of Nottingham, was also one of the contributors. Unfortunately the stone is friable, and decaying, and ought to be replaced by one of material more enduring. On me, by wish of our little set, fell the duty of composing for it the following inscription, which dear old Widowson engraved:—

In Memory of ROBERT MILLHOUSE, author of "The Destinies of Man,"  
"Sherwood Forest," "Song of the Patriot," "Blossoms," and other  
Poems; who died at Nottingham, April 13, 1839, aged 50 years.

When Trent shall flow no more, and Blossoms fail  
On Sherwood's plains to scent the springtide gale;  
When the lark's lay shall lack its thrilling charm,  
And Song forget the Patriot's soul to warm;  
When love o'er youthful hearts hath lost all sway,  
His fame may pass—but not till then—away;  
For Nature taught, and Freedom fired his rhyme,  
And Virtue dedicated it to Time.

## RICHARD HOWITT.

BUT there was none in Nottingham for whom I contracted a much earlier or stronger regard than Richard Howitt,—a true poet, a just critic, a cheery companion, and young man's mentor. I had written a little poem, inspired by some Trent-side scenery on a sunny day, and showed it to him with fear and trembling, as to one who might possibly tell me to write no more. Instead of that, he praised it and I felt that he was sincere. Thus encouraged, I soon went to him with another, which I myself thought still better, because it was more smoothly written, saying to myself, hopefully, if he spoke so well of the first what will he say of this? He saw my danger at once, and cut it up. Somewhat dejected, I said—But will it not do? It was then he gave me the answer I have mentioned when writing of Miss Mitford:—"Do!" he emphatically said, "A young author ought never to ask if anything he writes *will do*, but if it can be *done better*; and if it can—*do it*."

At the time of my arrival, this "Wordsworth of Sherwood Forest," as Wylie has not inaptly called him, was keeping a pharmacy at the corner where Parliament-street and Newcastle-street united; but it was quite as much of a Parnassium as a pharmacy,—a house of regular resort for some, and of occasional call for others, of whom Nottinghamshire may never see the like again. William Wordsworth once visited him there; so did James Montgomery and John Edwards. There Thomas Bailey, with true father's pride, showed him the manuscript of the great poem of "Festus," before it startled with its electric thrill the general reading world. There too, sometimes, was to be seen Henry Wild, the man whose great theory of light, force, and compression, may some day modify if it does not overturn Newton's theory of attraction and repulsion, and of which already more popular savans are availing themselves without acknowledging the author. Thither too, on one or more of the evenings of every week, came Danby, Millhouse, and Samuel Plumb, as afterwards came Thomas Miller and Sidney Giles, where the little cluster would sit reading, criticising, concocting quaint ballads, or firing original epigrams or sonnets at each other, for hours together. And another regular caller was gentle, sedate, and intelligent William Davidson, a native of Annandale, who might almost have been the "model" of Wordsworth's beautiful-minded peripatetic trader in "The Excursion," and who, as he wandered from village to village of the Forest and the Derbyshire-border with his pack, (in days, be it remembered, when there was no penny-postage,) acted the good part of intellectual courier for us, calling with mutual messages upon poets and

many a lover of poetry, and leaving with them the best reviews and other literature, on his weekly or fortnightly round. And there was another, younger man, Walter M'Latchie, of somewhat kindred type, who came now and then as if on a similar errand, which ended in his falling in love with Richard's niece, Annie, and marrying her. And I think the first or second time I saw Jane E. Holmes (afterwards Mrs. Jerram), was there, with a look that she seemed to have brought from a better world, as a few of us would stand listening to Richard's fine, sonorous rehearsal of sweetest poesy, old or new; though I am not sure that any he recited was much sweeter than some of his own. Hark, as with his musical tone, not unlike that of a cathedral-chant, he leans back against his medicine-drawers behind the counter, and gives us—much in the spirit of his ordinary conversation too—

#### THE POET'S QUEST.

WHAT seeks the Poet? To be known  
Far as his country's fame extends—  
To make the world of mind his own—  
To make remotest men his friends.

His skill he counts but as a bird,  
Though wronged, though sad, redressing wrongs;  
In every clime and season heard,  
And breathing solace in his songs.

A beacon on a dangerous shore—  
Over Time's sea a guiding star;  
A date-tree in the desert—more—  
A fountain in the desert far.

A stately tree, a generous leaf—  
A noonday temple, green and fair:  
That weariness, that pain, and grief  
May shelter find and solace there.

'Tis well! but seeks he nothing more?  
Inspired at Truth and Beauty's springs,  
His soul with goodness flowing o'er,  
He would be that which well he sings!

By the world's flatteries unmoved,  
To vice, to guilt, no sad ally:  
Through life of his own soul approved,  
Of God and man approved to die.

When afterwards living fourteen miles away, I often walked over for a single evening's conversation with him or any of the chosen few who might be there. Sometimes I was able to stay all night; but it was no uncommon thing to be returning through the thick, dark woods of Annesley, when the old clock at the Hall struck its heavy notes of

one, two, or three, as if on my very heart, while yet five miles remained between me and home. But what refreshing draughts of "*noctes ambrosiana*" were those hard-won conversations for me! Then, when I was about leaving the old neighbourhood to reside in a distant part of the country, Richard also left it, and went to reside in Australia, whence he sent me, as he sent Sidney Giles and many others, most interesting letters. But as these, with his general experience of the colony, have been embodied in his free-and-easily written colloquial volume, entitled "*Impressions of Australia Felix*," there is all the less need for my dwelling on them here. It was a life of strange adventure, and equally strange was that which followed his return. Though eminently social in his disposition, few men I have known could better relish solitude. Twice crossed in love, though one of the most loving of men, he never married; and instead of rushing into town-life and literary society for recompense, knowing that

"Nature never did betray the heart that loved her,"

he took a little farm at Halam, just over the Forest-border, and afterwards bought one at Edingley, near by, giving himself up to rustic occupation by day, and reading or writing at night, and only varying that routine by occasional rural rambles, or attending the meetings of the Board of Guardians at Southwell, of which his fellow-villagers had elected him a member.

Once when with my friends, the late Mr. John Atkinson, of Stratford-on-Avon, and Frederick Enoch, author of "*Songs of Universal Brotherhood*," on a forest-excursion, we made a detour to Halam for the purpose of seeing him. We found him, dressed somewhat in the style of an Australian settler, reaping his corn. Giving us most hospitable welcome and refreshment, he then went with us several miles on our way, talking much in the same manner as in his Nottingham conversations of younger days. Between him and worthy Frederick, who is now publisher of the "*Pall Mall Gazette*," there struck up a "friendship at first sight" which led, I believe, to much pleasant correspondence in subsequent years.

The last time I saw him was after he had removed to Edingley. On my passing the kitchen window I caught a glimpse of him sitting before a large fire, preparing a mash in a bucket, for some cattle, and heard him reciting poetry in his old Parliament-street tone, unconscious of anyone besides himself for auditor. On my knocking, he met me at the door with a "hale-fellow, well-met," sort of laugh, and told me I had just caught him rehearsing to himself a ballad he had "been composing about Jack Musters"—meaning the Mr. Musters who married Mary Chaworth, and who in his day had been one of the most noted

Nimrods of the county. I asked him if he thought it was right, thus to spew out ballads and mingle them with mash in a bucket,—ballads seeming curious diet for cattle; on which he laughed again. And my last hour of conversation with him in this world followed,—perchance as pleasant a one as any we had passed together, and which will ever be very tenderly remembered by me.

In person Richard Howitt was slender, and in complexion pale, like his mother, of whom I have already written. In earlier years he had been what is commonly called “a mother’s boy,” and more than ordinary of that mood remained through life. When in jacket and trousers, instead of roughing it with other boys of his own class, he would select some humble villager for companion, and steal away to the banks of the Erewash, or into the far fields and woods, making acquaintance with Nature in her shyest retreats. When no such boy-mate could be had, he would worship her alone. When on a visit to old Mr. Lever, at Mansfield, he would walk backward and forward on the coping-stones of a mossy wall, for an hour at a time, apparently musing and reciting to himself, as was his wont by the fireside in after years. It is to such moods, I suppose, that we owe his exquisite volumes, “Antediluvian Sketches,” “The Gipsy King,” his work on Australia, “Wasp’s Honey,” and hundreds of beautiful stray poems, contributed in the first instance to “Fraser,” “Tait,” “Blackwood,” and other periodicals, or read to his friends, then laid aside. He died, at Edingley, February 5th, 1869, and his body was interred in the Friends’ Burial-ground at Mansfield, just as he was closing his seventieth year, and not long after the publication of his volume ironically entitled “Wasp’s Honey,”—a book abounding in poetry sweet and fresh as the honey of the blithest bee. A copious memoir of him, evidently by some kindly writer well acquainted with him, has since appeared in “The Reliquary.” Let me add one fact he once related to me in conversation—namely, that when a youth, in Derbyshire, he dreamed of a strange sight—the sunlight descending on a slope, amongst trees the like of which he had theretofore never seen; and that dream was realised exactly, some thirty years afterwards, in Australia!

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#### WILLIAM AND MARY HOWITT.

IN these memoirs and sketches I have hitherto said little but of such as have already departed, in relation to whom one cannot be accused of flattery or invidiousness, and whom there can be now no risk of hurting with praise; though I could love to tell much of many (who, let us be thankful for their longer stay,) are still amongst us. My



pen ! move gently and deferentially while I venture to trace one or two whom, in this particular chapter, it would be ungrateful in me to omit.

When I first knew William and Mary Howitt, as they dwelt in Nottingham, a family of lively little children was climbing or skipping about them. The only glimpse I ever had of Wordsworth was on their threshold ; and I have seen Alaric and Zillah Watts, Allan Cunningham, Mrs. Jerram, Jeremiah Wiffen, and Charles Pemberton there. Every Sabbath-day I saw them in the Friends' meeting, and in many a sweet evening hour have seen them making sabbath of the middle of the week, in the meadows, groves, and lanes, surrounding fair old Nottingham ; while their "Forest Minstrel," "The Book of the Seasons," and other works, were already winning fame.

Ebenezer Elliott was in the habit of remarking, that their names always reminded him of a "William and Mary shilling," with the two heads side by side. And when one thinks of the arduous career through which they have solaced each other, and how much the reading world owes to their beautifully united labours, certainly the symbol is not an inapt one. Shortly after their marriage, they made a five hundred miles' tour, chiefly on foot, in the north of England and Scotland, laying in stores of that romantic imagery which was afterwards to gladden the minds of so many of their country-people ; and the fine scenery of Derbyshire, North Staffordshire, and Sherwood Forest, having been more or less familiar to one or both of them from early youth, material was never lacked for song or sonnet, for romance or rural sketch ; while residing, as they did, many years at Nottingham, the beautiful landscapes expanding around that ancient town were exhaustless sources to them of poetical incident, historical association, and that rich feeling welling up and glowing in his "Rural Life of England," where Mr. Howitt says :—

If I could but arouse in other minds that ardent and ever-growing love of the beautiful works of God in the creation which I feel in myself—if I could but make it in others what it has been to me—

"The nurse,  
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul  
Of all my moral being"—

if I could open to any the mental eye which can never be again closed, but which finds more and more clearly revealed before it beauty, wisdom, and peace, in the splendours of the heavens, in the majesty of seas and mountains, in the freshness of winds, the ever-changing lights and shadows of fair landscapes, the solitude of heaths, the radiant face of bright lakes, and the solemn depths of woods, then indeed should I rejoice. . . . I feel, however, an animating assurance that Nature will exert a perpetually-increasing influence, not only as a most fertile source of pure and substantial pleasures—pleasures which, unlike many others,

produce, instead of satiety, desire—but also as a great moral agent; and what effects I anticipate, from this growing taste may be readily inferred, when I avow it as one of the most fearless articles of my creed, that it is scarcely possible for a man in whom its power is once firmly established to become utterly debased in sentiment or abandoned in principle. His soul may be said to be brought into habitual union with the Author of Nature—

“ Haunted for ever by the Eternal Mind.”

I have alluded to their children, several of whom, with many of the usual characteristics of the children of men and women of genius, early passed away. One little boy in particular I remember, with his sweet pale face, high brow, and flaxen hair, playing about and amusing a grave old man by his gentle words, and a few weeks after seeing him borne away in his coffin, his parents and others following, and that old man with other friends and neighbours silently watching the mournful scene. Yet though so many (I think six) so early vanished, five survived, and promised to be strong and hale, when a sad accident—a fall down a staircase from the arms of his tutor in Germany—took one of these, and left marks of grief in the family which linger yet. And then another—bright, brave, noble-hearted Charlton!—after adventures in Australia, hard duties well done in London, and public services well performed abroad, was recently drowned in New Zealand, while engineering for a new road. Thus but three of all their children now remain on earth to them,—and one of these, Alfred, is devoting his remarkable skill and powers to the public service in Australia. Only two daughters, Mrs. Alfred Watts (so wondrously gifted with genius alike for literature and art,) and Margaret, remain near her now. Yet, through all her bereavements, through all trials, and in the midst of duties requiring a talent for domesticity surpassed only by her genius as a writer, while at the same time dispensing a frugal but graceful hospitality to friends and occasional guests from all parts of the world, Mary Howitt, in her beautiful poems, her stories for children, and translations for readers of all ages and classes, has never ceased to charm and cheer the popular heart and mind, until there are few literary women whose names are more widely known or beloved.

Envy has more than once insinuated that some of the books bearing William Howitt's individual name owe the greatest share of their merit to Mrs. Howitt. If two such spirits could dwell together so many years, with such a popular run upon their powers as there has been, and they never helped each other at all, it would be indeed remarkable. But knowing William Howitt as I do, and having heard both him and Mrs. Howitt in reference to the very topic, I believe the insinuation to be as absurd as his power to write whatever may bear his name is certain. And here I can most honestly add another word. In that

sad dispute about the origin of "The People's Journal," when Charles Knight remarked that "the quarrels of literary men are like the battles of brothers, in which every blow inflicts a double pain," it was said (let us trust not in designed falsehood), that the Howitts took the idea of such a publication at second hand, and only after the work had been started by another. It would do no good now to revive that dead dispute, but it is bare justice in me to say that, years before "The People's Journal" commenced, William Howitt stated fully to me his plan of such a work, as also his plan for a weekly newspaper, and told me of his hope that his brother Richard and myself might be amongst his constant contributors.

It would be but an ill return for upwards of thirty years' kindly recognition, courtesies, and welcomes, were I here to trench more upon the private sphere of friends because they chance to have popular sympathies and relations, merely to make a present of every glimpse of their home to the world. Never in my visits to persons of distinction did I at the moment mark a single feature or incident with the view of thereafter writing about it. The first publisher of this sketch could bear me out that my theme was chosen quite as much for as by me; and however popular any person may be, that gives no one the right to invade his or her private home, and make it public. Yet can I be wrong in saying that William Howitt, as a companion in the field, or woodland, or in river-side rambles, is an unmistakeable impersonation of the spirit of his choicest writings; or that Mary Howitt in her household is the same? Can it be wrong to tell any of the young people who may take up one of her volumes, that the outline of its story was perhaps first told to her own children, as they leant against her knee, looking up into her kindly face, many a long, long year ago?

Once I was their guest, at Clapton Elms, for a fortnight, when poor Charlton, who is now drowned, and Maggy, who has since written so pleasantly about her life with Miss Bremer, were very young. And it was then a treat to see and hear how, when a short leisure could be snatched by father or mother from the daily routine of literary or other duty, those children would go to them, lean upon their knees, and looking up with eyes full of love and expectation, say "Papa (or Mamma, as the case might be,) will you be so good as to make me a pretty story?" when forthwith was extemporised something adapted at once to stir up all the interest of an inquiring child, and to crown the occasion with a moral sentiment calculated to benefit a whole life. Yet that is only one of a hundred illustrations of the same spirit that might be given,—while no herb or flower, or even a feather, could be brought in, without its probably leading to a short but pleasant dissertation which,

while it had all the charm of a tale, inculcated some sound knowledge of botany, natural history, or humanity. To me it was always amazing how Mrs. Howitt could get through so much literary work, yet turn aside from it so oft to bless the *un-literary* world as I have known her, without wearying; but such seem destined to give more of themselves to their God and their kind as their trials and years increase, their truer life being renewed from year to year, somewhat akin to what she herself says of Cowslips:—

Oh! fragrant dwellers of the lea,  
When first the wild wood rings  
With each sound of vernal minstrelsy,  
When fresh the green grass springs!

What can the blessed spring restore,  
More gladdening than your charms?  
Bringing the memory once more  
Of lovely fields and farms!

Of thickets, breezes, birds, and flowers;  
Of life's unfolding prime;  
Of thoughts as cloudless as the hours;  
Of souls without a crime.

For again, again, on dewy plain,  
I trust to see you rise,  
When spring renews the wild wood strain,  
And bluer gleam the skies.

Again, again, when many springs  
Upon my grave shall shine,  
Here shall you speak of vanished things  
To living hearts of mine.

And so, my friend, they will; for it is thy beautiful destiny that Nature shall write thy epitaph in flowers, and Time renew them every spring; and they shall speak of thee, when thou hast vanished, to many a living heart thy song will still make thine!

To enumerate all the works written and translated by Mr. and Mrs. Howitt would be to write a lengthy catalogue; for they have laboured hard and long. To me it is interesting, while this sheet is in the press, to hear that they are (1871) keeping the fiftieth anniversary of their wedding-day, in Rome.

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#### SAMUEL PLUMB.

The name of Samuel Plumb (or, as it is sometimes spelt, Plumbe,) has been repeatedly mentioned in these pages. I have not known many of

his family; but to most of those I have known, literature seems indigenous. In his own case it certainly grew with his growth; and I give this brief history almost in his own words.

He was born Oct. 11th, 1793, at a lone cottage called "The Odd Place," between Woodborough and Lambley, in Sherwood Forest. His father, George Plumb, stocking-weaver, had this cottage and a piece of land, at a low rent, from a gentleman in the neighbourhood, for protecting his fences against the forest-deer. It was customary when he was from home on dark nights for his wife to put a candle in the chamber window, as a sort of home-star to guide him over the plain on his return—especially when he had been to Nottingham with his work, in which direction the light could be seen for two miles. George Plumb was thrice married, and Samuel was the eldest child of the second marriage. His mother died while he was so young that his father had to lift him up to look into her coffin, ere it was finally closed. This occurred at Southwell, to which town they had removed, as they again removed from it to Edingley,—a sweet rural neighbourhood which Samuel much enjoyed. The father still went periodically to Nottingham, and the little boy cried whenever he returned without bringing him a book.—That village of Edingley ought to have a wide reputation. Besides having been the residence of Richard Howitt, it was the birthplace of Mr. Charles Plumbe, who, if he had continued to devote himself to poetry as ardently as he has done to other pursuits, would, in my opinion, have ranked second to none of the rural poets of our day. His "Welcome to March," "Address to the Ivy," "The Ballad Singer," and "Winter hath never a charm for Age," were deservedly popular throughout the whole country-side, in our younger days; and his humorous "Address to the Toothache," is worthy of a reading, even after that of Burns. Another true poet, who must have loved poetry for its own sake alone, for he has left no formal collection of his writings, was Henry Cooper, commencing life there as a stocking-weaver, and (almost without help), so educating himself as, later on, to become schoolmaster of Amlwch, in Wales, where his ashes peacefully sleep. Then there was Mr. Alvey—once I believe a china-painter at Pinxton—who became schoolmaster at Edingley, writing humorous verse and diving deep into mathematics; besides others, whose talents for music or literature gained at least local fame.

Samuel Plumb learnt his A, B, C under an old Edingley schoolmaster of the name of Huddlestone, who was noted for being rather liberal with the "clapper-claw," (an obsolete word for a stroke on the open hand with a flat board, somewhat like a battledore); but long before he could read, he was wont to cry for others to read to him, much

as many children cry for sweetmeats; and every halfpenny he could procure was spent in books. After staying for some time at Edingley with his brother Benjamin, Samuel joined the rest of the family at Nottingham and Radford, and finally removed with them to Carlton-in-the-Willows, in 1808, when he, of course, would be about fifteen years old. At this time the Bible, "The Pilgrim's Progress," and "Robinson Crusoe," were favourites in the home, and were often read aloud by the father or Samuel for the benefit of the whole evening-circle—one commencing when the other was tired; but it was seldom that father or son read long without being overcome with emotion. George Plumb had an exceedingly tender and kind heart for all—his children especially, and Samuel inherited it.

At seventeen years of age Samuel had learnt arithmetic from Fenning; and seeing mathematical problems weekly in the "Nottingham Review," he became ambitious of solving them, succeeded, and with the solutions were published problems of his own; but this was mostly with some fictitious signature, his modesty preventing the revelation of his own name. The then high price of books stood in the way of extensive reading; but he managed to take in the "Quarterly Visitor," published at Hull, some pages of which were devoted to mathematics. To that he occasionally contributed; but the cost of postage rendered this indulgence a rarity. He was now nineteen, and the charm there is in fields and woods and by river-sides, having imbued his soul from childhood, began to show its effects in his maturing character. The recital of tales of sorrow or pain, which would at any time have made him weep, now led to his attempting the composition of such, and his "Orphan's Tale," "Mother's Tale," "Old Man's Tale," etc., flowed from him in streams of truest pathos. Even in his advanced years, he could never read the parable of the Prodigal Son without an emotion that sometimes stopped his speech.

In addition to enjoying the "Poet's Corner" of the newspaper, he read Thomson's "Seasons" and a few other standard works,—few, because of their then dearth. He learnt also to play on the violin, and picked up several thousands of French words from a cheap Vocabulary and Boyer's Dictionary, without a tutor—his sister, with the books in her hand, testing his correctness. When he at last tried his own hand at composition, his sonnets and ballads found their way into the "Nottingham Review" and "Derby Reporter." But these were seldom signed with his full name; and there may perhaps be some still living who can remember in those days the unpretending, but often beautiful poetical contributions of "S. P." and "T. B.," the latter Thomas Brown, of South Normanton, also a stocking-weaver, a gifted

poet and worthy man. Between the two there was great respect, arising from their mutual readings, and they longed to see each other; but it was never their fortune to meet, except in the columns of the newspaper. At this period Robert Millhouse was rising in reputation; the Howitts were in Nottingham, as also was a young man of genius named Danby, but who early died. To these Plumb became known, as afterwards to Thomas Miller, myself, and others; and notwithstanding his constitutional shyness was a favourite with us all. His poetical effusions and mathematical solutions gained him a fixed, even though it might be a limited reputation; and with access to the newly established Artizans' Library at Nottingham, and the quiet luxury of belonging to "Richard Howitt's set," his life was far from being a blank as the years glided on.

He was married at the age of twenty-one, but his wife died very early. Her death, which was preceded by that of their little son, aged twenty months, was caused by her going out one night to see that the child's grave was unmolested—there being much agitation at that time in the neighbourhood, owing to the "resurrections" at Nottingham and the "burkings" at Edinburgh. After this event he saved five or six sovereigns for nearly ten years, in the hope of being able to emigrate, sooner or later, to America. But repeated panics in trade prevented the little sum growing to so much as was needed. It, however, did good service in kindly loans to poor friends and neighbours in their need. It must have been in these times that he threw off the following stanzas on

#### CARLTON-IN-THE-WILLOWS.

I've ne'er travell'd far, but wherever I've been,  
 I've sought for scenes lovelier than those where I dwell;  
 Their equal, perchance their superior, have seen,  
 But never saw any I loved half so well.  
 And as for the vineyards, and sweet orange groves,  
 Aye verdant and blooming beyond ocean's billows,  
 Their gay gaudy gardens, and shady alcoves,  
 Would not please my fancy like Carlton-i'th'-Willows.  
 Their mountains majestic are barren and bare,  
 Where ravenous prey-birds in safety abide;  
 The world's widest waters roll rapidly there,  
 But serpents and crocodiles lurk by their side;—  
 Our hills are with cornfields and pastures bespread,  
 And o'er them Hygeia's best breezes are blowing,  
 And there is no reptile the wanderer need dread  
 Adown in the vale where Trent's waters are flowing.  
 O sweet rural spot, ever dear to my heart,  
 Where love unalloy'd, and true friendship I've met,



If ever I'm doom'd from thy scenes to depart,  
 My spirit at times will be steep'd in regret.  
 Should fate, who metes out weal and woe at command,  
 Waft me to seek fortune across ocean's billows,  
 I'll drink to far friends, and my dear native land,  
 But my first and last toast shall be—"Carlton-i'th'-Willows."

He was very smart and clever in epigrams, some of which, equal to many of Burns's, I should be tempted to give, but for their being so personal that their publication might hurt the feelings of parties still living. In an age when some land-owners are provoking popular hostility by obliterating the public foot-paths, which they have no more right to do than the public have to invade their private rooms, the following sonnet, first published long ago, may even yet be not out of place. Born myself, and receiving my earliest impulses in the border-life linking, as it ought, (or separating, as the case may be,) the homely and the well-to-do classes; appreciating, as I think I do, something of the rights and feelings of both; and in all things just and reasonable desiring to be conservative, I sympathise deeply with the sonnet, excepting in one harsh phrase, (provoked, however, by ill usage on the part of a low "watcher;") for I believe there are few luxuries more valued by a poor man, or to which, so long as he behaves himself, he has more right, than a walk in the woods and fields in leisure hours. If there be one thing for which more than another I respect several of our olden aristocracy, it is the liberal way in which they have left their domains as open as good taste and safety would permit for the approach and enjoyment of the people; and by parity of reasoning, one feels just as indignant with any "rough" who abuses that liberty. Samuel was wont jocosely to say that, on any new enclosure, "a foot-path ought to be left through every field, and that the penalty for trespassing from it ought then to be—*hanging!*"

With pain and indignation we behold  
 Paths intersecting wood and flowery lea,  
 The old brown lines of rural liberty,  
 Ta'en one by one away: where, uncontrolled,  
 Enjoying friendly converse, on we strolled  
 Through scenes and haunts in which we loved to be,  
 Fearless of prowling menial, and as free  
 As is the wind. But now, oppressions bold  
 With avarice leagued, upon our birthrights lay  
 Their grasping hands, shielded by laws severe.  
 These wrongs are ours, and much we think and fear  
 The time may come, nor distant far the day,  
 When all these pleasant paths may disappear,  
 And none be left us but a bare highway.

There is a delicate and tender charm, worthy of our most educated and refined poets, in the subjoined, "on finding some Primroses in Burton Wood, on New Year's Day, 1848":—

Old Winter came with fierce destructive sweep,  
And shook the woods and turned the green leaves sere,  
When, as if wearied in his wild career,  
He paused awhile, and couchant seemed to sleep:  
Forth from a southern covert warm and deep  
Came Spring, and looked upon his front austere,  
And lightly stepped about like one in fear,  
And where she trod the flowers began to peep.  
Stern Winter woke—down fell the tempests dire,  
The Year's fair daughter terror-stricken fled,  
And left the flowerets to his ruthless ire;  
With care we bore them from their cheerless bed,  
To gratify a Mother's fond desire,  
Who placed them o'er the unforgotten dead.

Poor Plumb! In his latter years he became rheumatic, and ultimately paralytic, his fate as touching as that of any subject of the most pathetic ballad he ever wrote. He sometimes visited me in those sad days. On one occasion—it was in a dim, gusty autumnal evening—I was stepping out of my door at Derby, when who should be stumping along the garden-path towards me but Samuel, with a little bundle in a blue cotton handkerchief, tucked under his arm, filled with manuscripts and printed slips from newspapers and periodicals, which he presently laid out on my table, asking me, in half-articulate words and with a tear in his eye, to get them published for him. I made overtures to publishers, offering to write an introductory chapter, but could get no one to undertake the matter. In this adversity his nephew, Charles, rendered him such aid as was possible; and under the heading of the words "Shall Genius die unsolaced?" I published an appeal for him in the Nottingham newspapers; but it gained little or no response, beyond one small contribution, left at the office of the "Nottingham Journal;" and shortly afterwards he died at Basford, deserving a better fate. One of his favourite poets was poor Robert Bloomfield. Sad that their final lot should have been so akin!

Samuel Plumb was of medium height, with a lofty brow, slightly ruddy complexion, and blue-grey eyes, twinkling alternately with shrewdness, tenderness, and mirth. When denouncing cruelty or oppression, there would be a frequent *jerk* affecting alike his frame and his speech. His ruling characteristic was manly independence. His death occurred beyond his sixtieth year; and Gedling Spire, one of the most picturesque landmarks in Nottinghamshire, overlooks his grave, with no other monument to indicate the lowly spot.

## THE AUTHOR'S EARLIER WORKS.

"Go on! go on!"—JAMES MONTGOMERY, the poet, to Spencer T. Hall, on reading his first work, "*The Forester's Offering*," in 1841.

"A volume of sterling good sense, pure English, and native poetry, appealing not to our charity but to our perception of excellence."—From a Review by WILLIAM NEWMARCH, Esq., F.R.S.

"It has a sparkling richness and graphichness of description, which rivet the attention and delight the mind. . . . The appearance of this work at the present time is a striking and flattering characteristic of the age.—SHEFFIELD IRIS.

"The effusion of a healthful fancy and a kindly heart, worthy of a wide celebrity."—SPECTATOR.

"He possesses a fine natural taste and great ability, and gives utterance to his thoughts with such truthful earnestness, that by this one little work, he holds no inconsiderable place in the ranks of living authors."—From a Review by Mr. JOHN FOWLER, the Biographer of Pemberton.

"Mr. Hall is no common observer of things and men—he sees with the eye of a poet and a philosopher—and his descriptions of scenes and characters are worthy of special attention. He has faith in the strength as well as in the beauty of goodness, and all his efforts are directed to the promotion of right feeling among his fellow men. . . . He writes as if his heart were in his pen.—LEEDS TIMES.

"— One of Nature's gentlemen. . . . The confession of his experiences at the end reminds us of Franklin, and has a noble and impressive moral."—THE ATLAS, March 19, 1842.

"He is one of Nature's freemasons, and knows all her secret signs—one of her high priests, who is at home in her innermost shrines, where he pays his vows and calls upon his fellows to pay theirs. He is her poet and sings her praises—and her champion too, who vindicates her right."—TAIT'S MAGAZINE.

Dr. Hall's later works have been spoken of in similar terms by the Press; while the late DR. SAMUEL BROWN, a grandson of the celebrated commentator on the Bible, and himself one of the most distinguished minds of his time, thus wrote in 1852:—"Spencer Hall is not unworthy of his names, like Spenser, a poet, like Hall, addicted to philosophy, like both a christian gentleman. His woodland poems have made him amiably known to all his countrymen as the Sherwood Forester; and his scientific experiences have commended him to the respect of many of the true lovers of science, both at home and abroad. His poems are affectionate, sunny, graceful, true to English nature, and also spiritual in their tendency; his scientific narratives and descriptions are ingenious, vigorous and clear. As a man I know him to be a lover of man, given to self-help, enthusiastic, industrious, dutiful, brave, and altogether honourable."

IN deference to the advice of "Friends in Council," the Author has resolved on extending this Volume to SEVEN PARTS, for the purpose of including matter essential to its greater completeness. Should any *bona fide* Subscriber not feel quite satisfied with this arrangement, and will address DR. HALL, care shall be taken that he is not charged for the additional Part.

Part VI will commence with reminiscences of THOMAS MILLER, and include those of other Persons of distinguished note or worth,—Miscellaneous Papers and Poems to follow.


South Parade, Burnley,  
June 21st, 1871.





PART VI.]

[PRICE 1s.



# MORNING STUDIES

AND

## EVENING PASTIMES:

MEMOIRS AND VERBAL PORTRAITS, MISCELLANEOUS  
PAPERS, AND POEMS.

BY DR. SPENCER T. HALL,

"THE SHERWOOD FORESTER."

Author of "The Forester's Offering," "The Peak and the Plain,"  
"Days in Derbyshire," "Mesmeric Experiences,"  
and other Works.

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PART VII.—"LAYS FROM THE THE LAKES, AND OTHER POEMS,"—will complete the volume.

*Author's Address*—BURNLEY, LANCASHIRE.

## THOMAS MILLER.

ONE of the most interesting of my literary freres in Nottingham was Thomas Miller, with whose rural and other writings the whole world of English readers is now more or less familiar, and who owed his first introduction to the public in some measure to Mr. Thomas Bailey, father of the author of "Festus." I am writing of the years between 1830 and 1836. The basement storey of Bromley House was at that time used as a basket-manufactory by one Mr. Watts; and therein was employed a young married man who had come up from the neighbourhood of Gainsborough. He had a somewhat round but intelligent face, a fair complexion; full, blue, speaking eyes; and a voice reminding one of the deeper and softer tones of a well-played flute. Of all who saw him at his work, it is probable that scarcely one knew how befitting him was that couplet of Virgil, where he says—

" Thus while I sung, my sorrows I deceived,  
And bending osiers into baskets weaved,"

until he became known to Mr. Bailey, who was at that time editing "The Good Citizen," and who, immediately, not only encouraged the printing of "Songs of the Sea-Nymphs," but did all in his power to win the modest little book a welcome. That young basket-maker and singer about Sea-Nymphs, was our Thomas Miller, who, it was said, had once in a freak been the companion of gypsies, and who, though descended on the maternal side from a family of some rank, had known pinching poverty in his childhood, and had received no higher education than such circumstances could normally afford.

"Songs of the Sea-Nymphs" soon gained Mr. Miller additional friends, and he started business on his own account, having a work-room in the Long-row, and a stall on Saturdays near the corner of the Exchange. There was poetry in his very baskets. A few coarser ones were there; but others of more beautiful pattern, texture, and colour flung a sort of bloom over the rest; and the basket-maker and his wares well matched each other, as he would take his cigar from his mouth and ask some pretty market-maiden, in his cheeriest tones, as she lingered and looked, if she would not like to purchase. As a youth, I was wont to stand there chatting with him occasionally, and to hear him, between customers, pour out the poetry of Coleridge and other great minds with an appreciance and a melody that such authors might themselves have listened to with pride and delight.

One week we suddenly missed him, and a few weeks afterwards found, by one of the monthly magazines, that he was in London and had literary employment there; and there he has ever since, like a



caged thrush, remained, charming the national heart with his outpourings of verse and poetical prose. There is no need for me here to catalogue his volumes; and it would be impossible even to indicate all he has furnished anonymously for the illustrated papers and annuals. It was, I believe, his "*Royston Gower*" that won him the friendship of the late Countess of Blessington, under whose auspices he commenced business as a publisher, in Newgate Street, just opposite Christ's Hospital. And there, in 1842, he published for me one of my earliest little books—"Rambles in the Country: by the Sherwood Forester." He did well for it in every way; and on paying over to me at last the balance in my favour, regretted that two thousand additional copies had not been printed, saying he could have sold them all.

But Thomas Miller was not destined for trade; and for many, many years past he has devoted himself almost exclusively to writing. His "*Gideon Giles, the Roper*," was very popular. After it had for some time been on drawing-room tables, it found its way into a weekly journal; and through that into some of the obscurest cottages in the land. As an instance:—I was one day talking with a shepherd from Kirkby-in-Ashfield. "Hayes," said I, "much of your time is passed in the fields: does the charm of nature ever strike you there?" "I know what you mean," he replied: "once it didn't; but ever since I read '*Gideon Giles,\* the Roper*,' the world about me, and all I have to do in it, has been quite changed: there is now a charm for me in all I see." "I'm very glad to hear what you say," I rejoined, "and will certainly tell the author of it when I see him." "Why, do you know him?" cried the shepherd in ecstasy, grasping my hand. "Yes." "Then when you see him next," said he, his eyes beaming with delight, "tell him to write us another tale as good as '*Gideon Giles, the Roper*!'" *That*, thought I, is real fame.

Old Friend Miller! Shall we ever meet again? During my last visit to London I was under an engagement to visit him with David Chambers. But something detained me; and David is now "beyond the bourn."

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#### THE REV. THOMAS RAGG, AND OTHERS.

If I dwell not at length on others of the old Nottingham literati, it is not that they are unworthy, but because, though on terms of kindly acquaintance, I had really less intimacy with them. There was Thomas Ragg, who commenced life as an avowed sceptic, but in time wrote a

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\* He pronounced the *G* in *Giles* hard, the same as in *Gideon*.

masterly poem in favour of Theism, in addition to a hundred minor poems on many themes,—at first a stocking-weaver or lace-maker, but afterwards assisting at Dearden's book-shop and library, and of whom the following anecdote is told. His book having just been handsomely reviewed, a pompous customer in the shop walked up to the counter, and in a patronising manner made some allusion to its merits. Thomas mistook the compliment for one of generous appreciation, and afterwards showed some recognition of the party paying it as they passed each other, but was given the go-bye with an air of contempt. Subsequently, the person who had thus behaved, being in conversation with one who knew him, said—"Haw! that Ragg, at Dearden's: do you know him?" "Yes," was the answer, "why do you ask?" "Haw—why—you see—he has written a book; and I thought I would slightly compliment him on it; but what do you think the fellow was afterwards—haw—imprudent enough to do? He positively bowed to me in the street, as if we were acquainted!" "Did he, indeed?" (gravely rejoined the other), "well, that was very remarkable, considering that when you and I are dead, buried, rotten, and forgotten, his name will probably be much more honoured than yours or mine is now!"

Mr. Ragg's next move was to Birmingham, where he was publisher if not editor of a leading newspaper, after which he "took orders" and became a clergyman of the Church of England. Considering that he commenced life so humbly, was self-educated, and without exception one of the most modest and gentle men I ever met, I have ever regarded his career with wonder, and his character with admiration.

And in truth old Nottingham had at that time many whose writings, had they but appeared early enough, might have won for them a place in "Johnson's Lives,"—Mrs. Gilbert (of the family of Taylor of Ongar), Thomas Bailey, who was also a powerful speaker, and John Hicklin, author of "Leisure Hours,"—to which may be added the names of Renals, Cooke, Wilcockson, Mullen, and E. G. Pickering,—not the least. It was at this time some one said to William Howitt that "Nottingham had turned out many authors." "That may be true," replied William, "for I never knew it keep one!" But as the old galaxy vanished, some by death and others by change of residence, a new generation started up not less remarkable. Philip James Bailey, "dark-haired, dark-eyed," whom I well remember seeing walking across the Forest, hand-in-hand with his father, was already meditating "Festus;" and only second to him in poetic power and promise was Henry S. Sutton. Sidney Giles was writing exquisite lyrics and sonnets, and as he early passed away, Edward Hind seized the harp and struck from it

fitful yet most impassioned and thrilling music. Bradbury Mellows was rising into favour; and John Westby Gibson, claiming to be a Sherwood Forester, soon afterwards, published poems full of bloom, in London. But these and others I would gladly name must be left by me. And why should they not? Will not their own works be sufficient monument for them? Or, Carter! shall the loving task be thine to tell their names to other times? There is one of them, however, I cannot pass without an additional word—EDWARD HIND—in relation to whom I long since said, that it is almost as natural for some men to think in metaphor and write in rhyme, as it is for mankind in general to eat and drink. It often happens, too, that this propensity is associated with a most warm, susceptible, and impulsive soul, peculiarly alive to sympathy, and perpetual craving, but seldom in an adequate degree receiving it. Hence, a man thus constituted soon feels more isolated among the common crowd than in the wildest solitudes. He walks the human world as one not of it; and, disappointed of genial communion with his kind, extends his love to the aggregate beauties of creation, finding in every object there the embodiment or symbol of some glowing and exalted ideal. And as large-heartedness is not unfrequently the accompaniment of enthusiasm, in so much as such an one feels himself inducted to the inner meaning of things,—in proportion as he *feels the throbbing of a star* as well as *sees its brightness*, or rejoices in the sentiment as well as in the bloom of flowers, and learns by the emotions they awaken to discover their analogues in the arcana of his own being,—the more intense becomes his desire to give others possession of his raptures; and he turns again towards society with their record in his hands, to be received or rejected according to the taste or humour of the times.

It was in the spring of 1853, and at the distance of a hundred miles or more from Nottingham, that a literary friend put into my hands a poem entitled “Prometheus Bound,” and asked if I were at all acquainted with its author—Edward Hind. Replying that I knew his name only through the newspapers, and looking over the lines before me, I soon observed that, notwithstanding considerable hyperbole, and what the majority of readers would regard as great irregularity in the rhythm, they contained passages of wondrous power, and presented for the psychologist a study of remarkable interest. In truth, it was the very ecstasy of grief, uttered in some of the intensest language I had ever read; and even the rhythmical irregularity alluded to was the result of a peculiar method which the author had adopted, of sometimes giving greater emphasis to a single thought, by allowing it to occupy the space of a whole line, without attenuating his verbiage to the regular

length. On the other hand, and for a converse reason, some of the lines were disproportionately long to the eye and ear—but had evidently their harmony in the author's mind. Making allowance for this mental idiosyncrasy, it was impossible to avoid becoming deeply interested in him. "Prometheus Bound" was a history of sufferings, not his own merely, however peculiar they might seem to him, but of thousands, who, lacking the power, the courage, or the opportunity for utterance, have

"Dropt into the grave, unpitied and unknown."

In the present case, metaphorically speaking, cold water by one party, and oil by another, had been severally employed to quench the spirit's fires; but too strong for the former, they were aggravated by the latter, and thus at length broke forth in the "Life-Drama" I was reading, and which led to our correspondence, and ultimately to personal intimacy.

According to the Rev. W. H. Wylie's "Old and New Nottingham," Edward Hind was born in that town, on the 7th of November, 1817; and, while yet very young, published much, both of prose and verse, through the metropolitan and local journals. In 1848, he sent to the press a pamphlet entitled "Reason's Remonstrance," which was pronounced by Philip J. Bailey "a very powerfully written appeal in favour of the greatest-happiness principle." The warm-hearted, bright-thoughted author of "Festus" added, that it set forth "the evils of war, and the pure and holy fruits which spring from love and good-will towards men, with much force and beauty of expression." After this quotation, Mr. Wylie proceeds:—"His local sketches abound in curious, out-of-the-way knowledge, acquired in his rambles round the borough. Though he has made some flights in a higher sphere, as in his address to 'The Stars,' still he excels chiefly in transferring to his page the characteristics of the life and scenery by which he is surrounded, and he will be long remembered as a successful member of the Sherwood school. In one of his rambles by his favourite Trent, some years ago, Edward Hind was the happy instrument of saving a young man from being drowned, though he accomplished the task only at the risk of his own life." Some passages of "Prometheus Bound" are then introduced, and one or two of them will, perhaps, not be out of place here. Speaking of his own boyhood, in the third person, he thus beautifully says:—

In the soft sunshine of departed days,  
I see him roaming o'er the gold-flowered fields,  
Referring every thought to Deity!  
Trained by the Hebrew bards, by Milton, Addison,  
Burns, Fenelon, Goldsmith, Shakspeare, Paley—all

Who've writ in stars upon the night of time,  
 His mind reflects the beauty of the earth,  
 And glory of the heavens, as a clear mirror  
 Reflects the face of morn.  
 He gazes hopefully on the years to come,  
 Anticipating happiness to be—  
 Radiant of love, and joy, and fame, and fortune.  
 Child of imagination! see him stand  
 With aspect open as a cloudless sky;  
 Heart full of truth, as is the rose of fragrance;  
 Thought lighting up his brain like summer sunshine;  
 Sending the music of his praise from earth,  
 As happy as the lark that sings in heaven.

Then we learn that he was

Sent to pursuits, for which he was as fit  
 As Pascal for a prize-fight; Cowper for a crowd;  
 Life's beauty faded; health, its glory, went.  
 Sunless, moonless, starless grew his sky;  
 The brightness of his morn became a night  
 Of festering thoughts, and blistering, strange sensations.  
 The chords of life 'gan playing discords, not  
 The harmonies they should;  
 And, in the darkness of despair, his soul  
 Wept fire, and none consoled him.  
 He felt the glory of his spring eclipsed;  
 He watched the beauty of his youth depart;  
 Starr'd with irradiant hopes as thick as heaven—  
 Fraught with all noblest aspirations—gentle as  
 The tears of summer, wept o'er sleeping flowers.  
 He felt health go—he felt his peace depart,  
 Despite his tears, his efforts, and his prayers,  
 Which shook his breast, as earthquakes shake the world.  
 He could not stay them.  
 Oh! this story  
 Should utterance have—like Nature's thunder-throes,  
 When, with volcanic voice, she speaks in groans,  
 Affrighting nations,  
 And writes her pangs in mountains on the world!

It is consoling to know that Edward Hind was not left long in that gloom, but has since, in married life, sent forth works as cheerful and hopeful as ever were penned, to the delight and encouragement of many readers.

But it was not to the literary worthies of Nottingham alone that my youthful mind was indebted for its greatest enjoyments. There were men, some profoundly scientific, who printed or published but little, to whom I owed much. Heaven spare me to tell my tale of them some other day, as well as to pay fit tribute to dear old Henry Wild and

others, whose psychological and spiritual conversations oft led me up into brightest realms of love and light.

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### CHRISTOPHER THOMSON.

It was when I was yet a young man, but dwelling once more amid the scenes of my first inspirations, that there came to Edwinstowe, a village in the heart of the Forest, one of the most picturesque people it had ever sheltered. In early life he had been a brick-yard boy, at or near Hull; had gone to the Greenland fishery, and afterwards worked as an artisan in various works; I think he had also attempted something as a local preacher; when the idea occurred to him of reforming the strolling stage, and, in turn, through it reforming the minds of the English population. His wife, in her way as remarkable a person as himself, sympathised and worked with him with all her heart. They gathered about them a strolling company, and played in barns and booths, steering clear in their performances of everything promotive or suggestive of immorality, and sometimes, on wet nights, having to walk from one village to another for lodgings, shared the remnants of candles which had served as foot-lights, for their evening's wages. This remarkable person was Mr. Christopher Thomson, who, if his means had been as large as his heart and hope, would have changed the world.

There lived in Edwinstowe at that time a cluster of men with souls just ripe for welcoming such a character and appreciating his originality, his genius and social worth. One was Mr. Widowson, a stout, kind old mason, sculptor, and musician; another was Mr. Russell, the village schoolmaster and parish-clerk. Then there were the Truemans, father and son,—the father, Reuben, frank, genial, intelligent as could be; and the son, John, besides being one of the best naturalists as well as best shoemakers within a hundred miles, a man of wonderful wit and polish, fit for the most urbane life, yet whose heart was in the forest, as the forest was in his heart; which simile my friend Edwin Waugh will excuse my altering from one of his own, because it is so fitting. Poor Trueman! he was afterwards killed near Ollerton, by an omnibus coming suddenly in contact with his pony, on turning a corner of the road. And there were the Tudsbury and Websters, with the Hills and Uptons from Budby and Gleadthorpe, and many other kindly denizens of that sylvan world, which is known far and wide as the Dukery, from the contiguity in it of four fine ducal estates; and it was there that I for one first became acquainted with grand old Chris-

topher, who died at Sheffield so recently as January, in the present year, 1871, at the age of seventy—being followed in about twelve days by his affectionate widow, fitted for companionship with him alike in this or a better world. It was by the wish of a dear friend that I then hastily threw off my impression of him, for a local newspaper, as follows:—

Ere the week of his modest funeral closes over the grave of Mr. Christopher Thomson, the artist, let us cast upon it—or rather let us twine around his honourable memory—one more wreath of kindly thought. Did the reader ever, in his country rambles, notice a picturesque oak striking its roots into the cleft of an all but impenetrable rock, and sending out its branches in a form that showed how, from infancy, it had sustained itself by inherent vigour and determination through every wrenching and riving storm, until nearly all its beauty and interest might be regarded as a history of the very difficulties through which it had struggled, as it still kept putting forth fresh leaves to the last? Such tree was not unsymbolical of the life of brave old Christopher, as year by year, after age and many trials had traced their wrinkles on him, he still developed his natural talents with a freshness not unakin to that of “immortal youth.” In the language of one who knew him well, “he was as guileless as a child” before men, and certainly appeared to be as ductile as one when in the presence of Nature, who was continually photographing her most exquisite lineaments on his earnest soul. Yet were his individuality and independence strong, so that he always stood out a distinct figure in the social landscape. He might be fortunate or unfortunate as regarded his means; he might at one period comparatively abound with this world’s comforts, and at another be subject to its severest privations; sometimes occupying a central point in the spheres of intelligence and refinement, or anon finding his mates among the most simple and rustic of mankind. But no matter: wherever his lot was cast, he was always a man of mark, and, without the slightest presumption or pretension on his own part, was by tacit consent, a social and most sociable king.

We can easily understand how, while he was yet a mere boy—a parish school-boy, an errand-boy, or brick-yard boy it might be, he had so much *bonhomie* about him, so much of geniality as well as genius, that all his workmates or playmates deferred to him by instinct—not because he desired them, but because they felt it was fit, and that they were gainers by allowing him the relation to them of a teacher and moulder; and this was certainly the case with him in the vigour of his manhood. When, after having been a shipwright, a



Greenland fisherman, a veneer-sawyer, a comedian and a scene painter, he thought it was time, for his family's sake, to settle down somewhere, and he became a house painter in one of the most central and obscure villages of Sherwood, his influence, as a social renovator, was soon felt for twenty miles round; and whether as the founder and often the main director of oddfellows' lodges and artisans' and mechanics' libraries, or of spontaneous "gatherings of the people, in honour of science, art, literature, and moral worth," there is one vast district of Nottinghamshire which will owe his memory a debt for generations to come, to say nothing of what he did in his subsequent twenty years' residence at Sheffield, or on his occasional visits to other parts of the kingdom. The way in which Mr. Thomson grew into an artist was very remarkable. When he became manager of a strolling theatrical company, he had often to paint scenery for the stage, perforce of circumstances. It was from practical knowledge thus derived that he was enabled, when the time came, to operate as a house-painter. The villagers of Edwinstowe had as great a desire for him to reside amongst them as he had to settle; and as he had more than half his business to learn, and that without any tutor but nature, his only chance was to fall upon first principles. Thus, he had hardly commenced when he was wanted to "oak-grain" a gallery at Rufford Abbey, the seat of the Earl of Scarborough. This was considered very delicate work, and he had never even seen how oak-graining was done. But here his mother-wit came to the rescue. If he declined the job it would ever stand against him as an acknowledgment of incapacity; if he undertook and spoiled it, opprobrium would be inevitable. So in the emergency he got a piece of sound Sherwood oak, polished the surface, studied, imitated it, and then ventured on the engagement. Metropolitan oak-grainers had imitated each other till they had lost nature. Thomson's achievement was hailed as a grand return to it. The work was pronounced the best of the kind ever seen in the district, and his reputation was so well established that there was scarcely a mansion in the whole neighbourhood at which he had not afterwards employment for himself and his men. From imitating the grain of the oak inside, he went to work again to imitate its exterior. From the very outset—and he was then, we believe, beyond middle life—there was a true touch of nature in his woodland pictures. But conventional artists accused him of being unartistic. Just as truth is stranger than fiction, so, in some of his paintings poor Christopher, being too true, was often passed by as a man wanting taste and tact. He stuck to his principles, however, and went earnestly on. There were always a few to appreciate and encourage him; and we venture to say, however crude

comparitively may have been a number of his performances, as he continued to improve from day to day, some of his later works will stand the test of time and rise in value from year to year, as more conventional pictures will decline. If any real lover of the art that is in nature or of the nature there is in true art doubts this, let him see some paintings in the possession of Mr. John Guest, Moorgate Grange, near Rotherham, Thomson's faithful friend (and the faithful friend of many another struggling man of genius) to the last, and we are mistaken if he will not honour at once both the painter and the owner. Noble John Guest! if *thy* history should ever be faithfully written, it will be found to be not only one of the most striking, but one of the most interesting and instructive, in the entire gallery of British worthies.

As in Christopher's painting, so in his speaking and writing. Telling over again with his tongue and pen whatever nature and life revealed to him, without studying other people's rules of rhetoric, he had a wonderful power of striking latent chords of thought and feeling, till, under his vivid mind, even the commonest topics would partake something of his own picturesqueness and novelty. Wherefore, whether in the village club-room, the "Sherwood gathering," the more popular and urban assembly, or in some choice circle by the private fireside, there was always a true ring in his metal, however unpolished it might be; while in his "Autobiography of an Artizan" (so well mentioned by Lord Brougham and Mr. M. D. Hill), and other writings, there is a graphicness and a colouring in his descriptions of life and scenery, whether by sea or land, not often, if ever, surpassed by our most popular writers. As a man, a husband, a father, or a friend, we believe it is no flattery to say that he was one of the warmest-hearted, most amiable, and altogether worthy. "Perfection is not earthly," and a cynic might now and then, no doubt, find something in him to censure. Like all men of warmth and genius, he spoke right out, with vivid force, when he spoke at all, without first making any cool calculation as to the possible effect. To polished people, who did not well know him, he might, therefore, sometimes appear a little too brusque and too unfitted to run in social harness. But there are those who knew him better, and who will deeply mourn that he has left them behind, while he awaits their coming in more genial climes.

In person Mr. Thomson was as remarkable as in his mind. He never painted an old oak or a rugged landscape more picturesque than his own head and face; nor ever did tree or landscape more fairly brighten in the presence of the sun than did he amidst a circle of kindred spirits. His hearty hail; his rosy face; his snow-white shock

of hair; his shaggy brows, and the laughing or sometimes weeping eyes they shaded—for he could weep over another's sorrow as well as rejoice in his joy—will never be forgotten by those who knew him, —least of all in Sheffield or Sherwood Forest.

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### THOMAS BROWN.

EVERY man was made for a purpose, whether the world receive and acknowledge him or not; and whenever society blames a man whose mission has not been fulfilled, let it be first assured that the fault is not in a greater or less degree its own. I do not say that society should foster in every one a love of distinction; but it should carefully avoid closing up those natural facilities for his moral and intellectual development through which he would be best able to play the part, whatever it be, that in the economy of Providence has been assigned him. The rural poet, even should his fame never extend beyond the bounds of his own parish, appears always to me an important character. Inspired by the spirit of his time and place, he puts into those forms of language that are best understood by the simple minds around him such genial sentiments as they can comprehend and approve. There are thousands to whom a Milton, or even a Tennyson, may be unintelligible, but who could imbibe a thought through some more simple medium. In so far therefore as his humble harp may be tuned to morality and virtue, he exercises a beneficial influence on his neighbours, the extent of which is beyond our calculation. If, as is elsewhere said, the humblest cottager that sings to his child by the evening fire, when his daily toil is ended, is perhaps unconsciously influencing mankind to the last generation, how much greater must be the influence of him whose thoughts become current intellectual coin in his locality, continually payable from maturer mind to mind!

Such are some of the sentiments that naturally occur to me on reviewing the life and productions of the late Thomas Brown, stocking-weaver, of South Normanton Woodhouse. The Bernard Barton of his neighbourhood, though in a very humble degree, his soul was a constantly overflowing well of affection and thought; and as the quiet waters of an inland rill, not less than those of the thundering cataract, find their way to regions in which the name of their source is unknown; so it may probably be that many of us who were accustomed to hear his verses in our childhood, and are now ourselves engaged in public instruction, may oft be unwarily amplifying and applying some of the homely and gentle suggestions of his muse, and making debtors to him

among those who may never hear his name! Yet why speak thus, when even the greatest and most original of writers is himself but a debtor and a medium of the Eternal Giver?

Thomas Brown was born at South Normanton Toll-bar, February 5th, 1781, and died at the Woodhouse, near, May 25th, 1848. He was altogether a gentle, sedate, ingenious, affectionate, and sociable man, training his children to virtue and quiet thought. When first I heard of him it was by the fireside, where my father was reading some of his verses to our local schoolmaster, and my mother was talking of him as the friend of her brother Robert, then living in the Peak of Derbyshire. My first personal acquaintance with him was in the year 1835. Living, as he did, just beyond the verge of Sherwood as it was in the olden time—wandering oft, as he loved, among the bowers of Brookhill and other rural scenes not less dear to myself—and being for some time almost my nearest literary neighbour—the same subjects of thought and conversation were common to us both. How happily, though pensively, have we occasionally strolled down Carnfield-lane, on a summer sabbath-evening, enjoying all the sweet influences of a Derbyshire sunset! How often, since the commencement of my more extensive acquaintance with the world, have I contrived on returning home to take in my way the cluster of rural habitations of which his own was one! And how there—as the pipe or social cup of tea diffused its hospitable fragrance—have I listened to his quiet moralisings, of which the following, suggested by a new Church Clock, at the village of Warsop, is not an unfair specimen:—

Useless now the crowing cock  
To proclaim the morning near,  
While the well-adjusted clock  
Strikes on every waking ear.  
Hark, a sound, before unknown,  
Issues from the village tower,  
Measuring with solemn tone  
Man's existence by the hour.

Day or night no difference makes,  
Hours are told distinct and true,  
And as if t' avoid mistakes  
Cautious Echo counts them too.

If its voice unwelcome prove,  
'Tis to those who, one in heart,  
Feel the ecstasy of love,  
And it warns them to depart.

But "Old Time" is deemed a cheat,  
Mete his progress as we may;

His whole march betrays deceit,  
 Feigning hurry, or delay.  
 For, when suffering mental woe,  
 Or bodily diseases rage,  
 Then how loitering does he go,—  
 Every moment seems an age!

When the mind sweet transport feels,  
 Musing on some darling theme,  
 Still, yet rapid, move his wheels,  
 And the hours but moments seem!  
 Thus he intermits his speed,  
 As if misery charm'd awhile;  
 But, when health and joy succeed,  
 Will not stop to see us smile!

Time, in his extended flight,  
 A mysterious power assumes,  
 Secret intrigues brings to light,  
 Public deeds t' oblivion dooms.  
 Life he shortens every day,  
 Keeping still the end unknown;  
 Let us, while he glides away,  
 Mark his footsteps—and our own.

I regret much not having space for further quotations. His genial poem on a "Cup of Tea" is as characteristic of him as its conclusion is caustic, when he touches on the heavy tax upon it. There are passages in his "Lines on Pinxton Wharf," terse and truthful as Crabbe; yet the mutability of things earthly, with the certainty of the laws of divine order and an unfading world beyond the grave, were subjects on which he loved most to dilate.

In addition to his literary talent, he had considerable skill and power in mechanical construction, and had also made some progress in mathematics.

Speaking of him phrenologically, I should say that his head indicated quiet, homely, good sense, though not brilliant fancy; and his writings indicate the same. His merit as a man did not consist so much in the possession of great power, as in making the best and purest uses in his own humble sphere of what he had. Intelligent without pedantry, religious without cant, industrious and prudent without affectation or severity, and steady and cautious in conversation without any mixture of obstinacy or suspicion—and often cheerful without frivolity—he loved all mankind, but especially his family and friends. Without harshness or vulgarity, he sometimes used his pen against petty oppression and injustice; but whilst taking a rational

interest in public events, never for a moment forgot his private duties. I wish Old England had a greater abundance of such men !

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### RICHARD FURNESS.

It was sometime, I suppose, about my twenty-fifth year ; and I was on a visit to Francis Marples, at Shuttlewood Spa House, near Bolsover. Francis was himself one of the rarest of characters. He was learned enough to rattle off Greek and Latin as easily as his neighbours could talk in their native dialect ; and was good-natured in the extreme, yet sometimes given to fits of severest satire. He could make fun and write epigrams plentiful and fast enough (had his genius been more in harness), to have sustained a " Comic Weekly." His knowledge of botany and chemistry was sufficient for two average university professors. His " folk-lore " would have filled " The Reliquary." He knew the most telling points of the most picturesque people within forty miles. And all this, and much more, he mingled in his talk—his tongue being seldom still when he had got anyone to listen—with some of the most random, rollicking nonsense ever poured from human lips. Yet could he be grave and thoughtful on occasion, and tone down his conversation till it became as agreeable and instructive as it was friendly.

At the time just mentioned, although the country was getting white with snow, Frank suddenly exclaimed, " Let us go to Dore and see Richard Furness, the poet ! You are men who ought to know each other. He will be glad to see us ; and you'll never regret the visit." " All right," I replied ; and a little before the dusk of a mid-winter evening, we were crossing some high and bleak country on our eight miles' excursion. Frank, who was a peripatetic sort of doctor, had to call on two patients at Unstone and Dronfield, and as night advanced we lost our way on Bradow Bank, in a storm of snow. But we were young, and enjoyed the adventure—sliding or rolling down the steep where it was too slippery to walk—and found a way into the upward lane on the other side of the valley at last—about ten o'clock reaching the poet's door.

Hark ! What was that ? Belated, weary, and snowed over though we were, it was impossible to avoid pausing awhile and listening. Besides, through chinks between the curtains or shutters we could see inside ; and there were the poet and his family, sitting round a blazing fire, and to the notes of a well-played violin singing a sweet evening hymn.

And what a welcome they gave us when at length we joined the circle ; and what a relishable supper, and still more relishable talk, as the moments flew ! for Frank had thus introduced me to as complete an impersonation of the Genius of the Peak, surrounded by all he most loved, as it was possible for a poet from the Plain to imagine or desire ; and a brotherly friendship was struck up between us, that remained as long as Richard Furness lived. The next day, when I told Ebenezer Elliott where I had spent the night, he said emphatically, “ Then you have seen a man ! ”

Furness was much my senior, having children nearly as old as myself. In person he was rather rotund—somewhat of the Johnson and Erasmus Darwin type ; was sonorous and clear in his speech ; and besides being the author of one or two little volumes and any number of fugitive poems, he was factotum supreme of the village and neighbourhood where he dwelt. The township of Dore, five miles or more from Sheffield, by the road to Bakewell and Castleton, was infinitely more secluded in those days than now ; and the times, the man and the place fitted each other exactly. His house and the school-room (for he was parish-clerk and schoolmaster) were both under one roof ; and thither came people in every condition requiring humane aid—the young to be taught, the sick and lame to be healed, the perplexed in their affairs to be solaced : he was ever ready for all, and could make a will, survey or convey an estate, reduce a dislocation, perform all the functions of parish-clerk, lead a choir, write an ode, or rouse a good-natured laugh in conversation, just as easily as he could eat his dinner. Old Mr. Parker, the village clergyman, knew his worth, often (being himself lame) employing him as a kind of clerical *aide*. Hence it was that late one winter’s night, being sent for to baptize a dying child at a remote cottage over the moor, and unable himself to go, he deputed Richard, who with his son William for companion, and a lantern to light their path, found his way to the lonely and sorrowful scene, about which there was altogether a touch of most primitive character. Richard had forgotten to inquire the sex of the child before commencing prayers ; and as the father and he were kneeling side-by-side, in the midst of the service he turned his head and parenthetically asked, “ what sex ? ” The simple cottager did not understand the word, whereupon Richard asked again, “ male or female ? ” Still the poor man was in the dark ; but a further hint being given, he at last emphatically replied, “ It’s a *mon childt*.”

In an old book belonging to the Society of Friends, is the following entry :—“ 4th month, 1661. For meeting together to worship God. A meeting at Eyam, in the High Peak : within came the constable of



the town with soldiers, and plucked down Elizabeth Deane then praying, dragging others out by the hair of the head. Richard Furness and others were taken to Crich and committed to prison at Derby. They were cruelly used, nor were their friends permitted to visit or relieve them." From that Richard Furness, or one of his family, descended our friend, who was born in the same village of Eyam, August 2nd, 1791, in a house over the door of which is an inscription to this day [R 1615 F] cut in bold relief. According to the parish register the pedigree of the family shows eleven descents from 1589 to 1858. The poet's parents were excellent and sensible people, giving their children as good education as circumstances and the times would allow. For himself he was a peculiar child, early evincing intelligence and abstract thought. When one day driving the horses at plough, which his father was holding, he let them get out of line, when his father threw a sod at him, and asked him what he was doing. The answer was, "I was thinking of a rule in Murray's Grammar." His early reading ranged all the way round from a Geographical Grammar to Don Quixote, the latter being a book he dearly prized. He was apprenticed to Mr. Graham, a currier, at Chesterfield—his fellow apprentice being the late Mr. Hobson, of Ashbourne. While the two lads were yet young, they were one Sunday passing through the village of Shirland, when they saw a number of young fellows insulting and pelting a poor man, for no other fault than that of being poor, and innocent. This aroused their ire; Richard wrote a remonstrant poem, nearly his earliest, on the scene; and the Sunday following it was found posted on Shirland church-door. One feature of his life, during apprenticeship, was predicative of his future mind. His leisure was scanty, and being forbidden to read in bed with a candle, he placed one in a box, and while on his knees, book in hand, supported the box-lid with his head—a hide of leather being so arranged as to prevent any light escaping through the chinks of his chamber-door. Mathematics, poetry and music became his delight, and in due time he shone, as a proficient in all.

It is impossible for me in this brief sketch to tell every incident of importance in the life of Richard Furness; and there is the less need of it as my late friend, Dr. G. Calvert Holland, published an excellent memoir of him in a preface to his poems, soon after his death.\* But it would be wrong to omit some mention of the manner of his first courtship, with as beautiful a girl perhaps as ever poet wooed—Fanny Ibbotson, of Hathersage, whose family (being Roman Catholics)

\* The Poetical Works of the late Richard Furness, with a Sketch of his Life, by G. Calvert Holland, M.D., Edin., &c., &c. London: Partridge & Co. 1858.

were so averse to the match that one member of it would not unfrequently lay wait for the wooer, and chase him from the neighbourhood, at night, with a gun! Love conquered, however, as he mostly does in such cases. They were married, and a family of fine, intelligent sons and daughters was the issue. The day on which Chantrey was buried at Norton, I stood with William, the eldest son, by the side of the yet open grave of the sculptor, as he dropped a beautiful wreath of evergreens on the coffin—an act which drew a frown from an officious by-stander, but which Mr. Reade, an executor, better understood, saying, “It is right: let it remain.”

After life in Chesterfield, London, and elsewhere, in business, Furness seemed at length to have rest for his foot, and right use for his mind and hands, in the spot where, through Francis Marples’s kindness, I found him that snowy night, and where afterwards I saw him any number of times, being once, to our mutual joy, his near neighbour for several years. Here is his own account of his functions there, to which was afterwards added that of registrar of births and deaths for the district:—

I, Richard Furness, schoolmaster, Dore,  
 Keep parish books and pay the poor;  
 Draw plans for buildings, and indite  
 Letters for those who cannot write:  
 Make wills, and recommend a proctor;  
 Cure wounds, let blood with any doctor;  
 Draw teeth, sing psalms, the hautboy play  
 At chapel on each holy-day;  
 Paint sign-boards, cart names at command,  
 Survey and plot estates of land;  
 Collect at Easter, one in ten,—  
 And on the Sunday, say Amen!

But there was one thing to which he would never say “Amen,” and old Mr. Parker excused him. Whenever the Athanasian Creed, with its well-known anathema, was read, Richard invariably closed his book and leaned back in the clerkly desk till it was finished. How good Mr. Aldred, Mr. Parker’s successor, dealt with him in this matter I am not aware; but I believe he was as liberal as his conscience would allow.

Richard’s first wife having died, in due course he married again, I believe happily, and ended his days in a genteel retreat, Ash House, where I last saw him, about half-a-mile on the Sheffield side of Dore, within sight and hearing of a murmuring water-fall, and commanding the rich scenery of Abbey Dale and Chantrey’s Norton, with glimpses of the distant moors, and many pleasing and inspiring objects besides.

And here it was that he continued almost to the last to delight his kindred and friends (when his fits of asthma would permit) with his ancient lore, his sensible criticisms, his seasonable advices, his philosophical speculations, and his poetical effusions, till at the not unripe age of sixty-six years, his spirit took its flight to that better world to which he had done something towards assimilating the one he was leaving. Mr. Furness died on the 18th of December, 1857, and was buried in the church-yard of his native village of Eyam, on the 16th of the same month. The greater number of the parishioners of Dore, with his friend, the village pastor, and the village choir at their head, proceeded on that day from the house of another of his old and valued friends, Mr. J. Hancock, to his own; and singing psalms by the way, and met by a similar procession from Eyam, conducted his remains to their last resting-place with a solemnity which will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. One can easily imagine the effect as his confined remains were borne across the heights of Dore Moor and Totley looking down on Scarsdale, or afterwards along those overlooking the vales of the Burbage-brook and the Derwent—scenery than which Old England has perhaps none more fair, and amid which the Bard had himself so often mused. A neat monument in Eyam church-yard records his name and manly worth.

His principal poems were "*Medicus Magus, or the Astrologer*," a droll story, full of ancientry, folk-folly, philology, and quiet humour; and "*The Rag-Bag*," dedicated to *John Bull, Esquire*, in many respects much akin to it. Most of his versification was as Johnsonian and Darwinian as his person; but some of his minor poems are very beautiful and impressive. Take, for example, a passage from "*The Old Year's Funeral*," a poem which won a high encomium from James Montgomery, and forcibly reminds one of Samuel Bamford's "*Pass of Death*:"—

The clock in Oblivion's mouldering tower  
By the raven's nest, struck the midnight hour,  
And the ghosts of the seasons wept over the bier  
Of Old Time's last son—the departing year.  
Spring showered her daisies, and dew on his bed,  
Summer covered with roses his shelterless head;  
And as Autumn embalmed his bodiless form,  
Winter wove his snow shroud in his jacquard of storm;  
For his coffin-plate, charged with a common device,  
Frost figured his arms on a tablet of ice,  
While a ray from the sun in the interim came,  
And daguerreotyped neatly his age, death, and name.

Then the shadowy months at call,  
Stood up to bear his pall,

And three hundred and sixty-five days in gloom  
 Formed a vista, that reach'd from his birth to his tomb.  
 And oh, what a progeny followed in tears—  
 Hours, minutes, and moments—the children of years !  
     Death marshall'd th' array,  
     Slowly leading the way,  
 With his darts newly sharpened for New-Year's day.

Take another, on “ War and Love : ”—

War and love went forth to fight,  
 War and love in all their might ;  
 War with force, and love with wiles,  
 War in tears, but love in smiles.

War aroused the world to arms,  
 Love for peace displayed her charms ;  
 War o'er all in ruin swept,  
 Love beheld the scene and wept.

War in flames love's votaries bound,  
 Love as quick her martyrs crown'd ;  
 War prepared the bitter cup,  
 Love in pity drank it up.

War to dread collision came,  
 Love stood trench'd in scathless flame ;  
 War had swords, but love had darts,  
 War struck heads, but love struck hearts.

War struck high, but love stoop'd low ;  
 War felt love's celestial blow.  
 War had wounds, but love had none ;  
 War expired, and love had won.

And another, on “ Mind : ”—

Think ! wonder of thyself ! unbounded Mind !  
 What thou shalt be when years have ceas'd to roll.

Think what thou art,  
 Immortal part !

Hadst thou not been, yon sun had vainly shone  
 On myriad worlds, and all  
 The beauties, glories, wonders, ne'er been known  
 That decorate this ball.

But thou wert form'd to view creation's store,  
 To use, admire, to wonder, and adore ;  
 And when this world is wreck'd, to mount and see  
     Millions and millions more,  
     Life's ocean without shore,  
     When souls are free.

Rare son of the Peak ! he calmly wrote his own “ Requiem ” a short

time before his departure, of which the following is the apt and closing verse :—

To joys and griefs, to hopes and fears,  
To all pride would and power could do ;  
To sorrow's cup, to pity's tears,  
To mortal life, to death adieu !

Dr. Holland has given such a graphic description of his person, that it would be sheer affectation to attempt any improvement upon it, when he says:—"He had a strong athletic frame. His chest was broad and deep. His limbs were more than ordinarily muscular, and few men could lift or carry greater weights. In walking he rather stooped, but his step was firm and indicated power and mental energy. In height he was five feet nine. The description which Dr. Currie has given of the person of Burns, applies with little modification to that of Richard Furness : nor is it easy to imagine two men, had they met, that would have been more kindred. The Derbyshire poet was rich in wit, humour and satire, and full of anecdote,—qualities which the Scottish bard would have keenly appreciated ; nor would they have failed to light up his own matchless powers. The head of Richard Furness was massive—much above the ordinary size. It was well developed posteriorly and laterally. The forehead was broad, and the lower regions of it extremely prominent. It was more remarkable for its breadth than height, though by no means deficient in the latter respect. His face had a sedate and thoughtful expression. When he was roused by animated conversation, it underwent an extraordinary change. Portraits, taken under these different conditions, would have had little in common, and would scarcely have been recognised as belonging to the same person. His somewhat heavy features became radiant with humour, fire, or earnestness, according to the subject which interested the mind. If it admitted of badinage—the eyes, full and of a bluish grey, seemed, if the word may be allowed, to laugh with an exuberance of life. I never saw a countenance susceptible of the same changes, except that of Sir Walter Scott, as I knew him."

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#### JOHN EDWARDS.

Among the fast-growing population of the town of Derby, how many are there now who remember anything of John Edwards, as author of "The Tour of the Dove," or as a friend of James Montgomery and William Wordsworth ? I once tried the experiment in the very street where he had dwelt, and very few could tell me anything, if I asked for the sometime house of "John Edwards, the poet ;" but many

could easily point out to me the premises where the business of "John Edwards, the liquor merchant," had been carried on, and remember him well enough in that capacity. Yet not by his wine or spirit dealings, but by his fine apostrophe to Water, is his name now known far, far away from that spot. Hark! how pleasantly, how musically, wellet forth that effusion—

Thou eldest of the elements which sprang  
From underneath the Spirit's brooding wings,  
When chaos heard the potent Voice which rang,  
Commanding life and being to all things,—  
Hail, WATER! beautiful thy gushing springs,  
Thy lakes and rivers; shrined in clouds or dew,  
In ice or snow; or, where the rainbow flings  
Its radiant arch; in every form and hue,  
Thou, glorious element, art ever fair and new!

And for a liquor-merchant to have written it! Why, it might fitly serve as an inscription upon the most regal monument ever raised to Temperance!

But let us hear a few particulars of his history. John Edwards was born in the year 1772, at Fulneck Moravian-settlement, near Leeds, and was intended by his friends for the life of a handicraftsman, but removed early to Derby. It is needless to inquire how he came to exchange his first condition for his second, or the second for his third. Probably the only answer relevant would be that—*so he grew*. Be that as it might, he had evidently the "life within a life" which nothing external could either harden or corrupt; and, beloved by his family, respected by his fellow-citizens, and recognised by his literary contemporaries as a man of superior taste and imagination, like Ebenezer Elliott and many others, he ran the train of his ungenial business and the train of mental effort on collateral lines, guarding them in some way against collisions, and reached the Grand Terminus at the age of seventy-three, having secured the friendship of men of high reputation on the way, by the beauty of his character and his intellectual worth.

What I first knew of his poetry was from hearing Richard Howitt recite one of its passages, in a private circle, at Nottingham. Some one had been quoting the well known stanza of Byron, on the lot of Genius:—

He who ascends to mountain tops shall find  
The loftiest peaks most wrapt in clouds and snow;  
He who surpasses or subdues mankind,  
Must look down on the hate of those below.  
Though high above the sun of glory glow,  
And far beneath him earth and ocean spread,

Round him are icy rocks, and loudly blow  
 Contending tempests on his naked head—  
 And thus reward the toils which to those summits led !

“ Yes,” said Richard, “ that is very fine ; but it wants a stanza from a poem by John Edwards, of Derby, to complete it—a stanza which, I own, has somewhat less power, but equal truth and far more consolation :—

Time cannot hide, power cannot quench the lamp  
 Of Genius, kindled far above the sun ;  
 Art's fairest works are crush'd beneath the tramp  
 Of rude barbarians, flush'd with victory won ;  
 Age wastes the giant to a skeleton,  
 And man's immortal spirit hath been driven  
 To shrink in idiocy, with woe undone ;  
 But Genius through the night of years hath striven,  
 And Homer's deathless song to this late age is given !”

The only time I ever saw him was in a call, with a poetical password, on the morning of the great flood at Derby, in April, 1842 ; and very pleasant was the cognition, as we exchanged our works and talked of mutual friends, or quoted such passages of their writings as both loved best. What would one not give for such companionship at any time ? He died in May, 1845, when his remains were interred in the cemetery of the United Brethren at Ockbrook. Though he had a heart warm and large enough to make him anything but an exclusive sectarian, he held closest at last to those he loved first, and amongst whom his son was a respected minister. He had a manly form ; a mild, benevolent and intelligent countenance ; a bald and reverend head ; and a manner and tone indicating at once gentleness, prudence, and self-control : a person well calculated to win regard and command respect, in whatever condition of life he might happen to be placed. A teetotaler might ask, how such a man could sell liquors ; but when he entered that business teetotalism, as now understood, would have been thought as improper as impossible.

Besides his “ Tour of the Dove,” there is a much earlier poem on “ All Saints Church,” from which a quotation is made in notes to some editions of Wordsworth's “ Excursion.” It is a poem, in all respects, of much easier construction ; but he is best in the Spenserian stanza of the former poem, whenever he has taken care to give it that fine, sonorous and harmonious finish without which there is no style of composition taking severer vengeance on its own abortions. But, while asserting that no one has written more graphically and sweetly on the romantic scenery and natural phenomena of the most interesting part of the Peak than he, one is compelled, not the less, to admit



that he too often flags and falters in his alexandrines, and thus mars the effect of some of his richest conceptions and most artistic touches. It is matter of surprise that he should have done so, seeing what a perfect finish he has given to passages like the following :—

Charmed by the music of the rolling deep,  
The Muse that pours her own sweet song to heaven  
Might lingering stay beside the rocky steep  
Till the day fled and came the star of even :  
But she a boon has to her votary given,  
With him to view the Dovedale of the Peak,  
And trace its River, in meanders driven  
Through the deep-channelled hills its way to seek ;—  
To tread the glens and caves, and climb the mountains bleak.

Let not the wanderer of the Switzer alps,  
Who oft has seen the clouds beneath him sweep,  
And far above beheld the naked scalps  
Of the huge glaciers, or within the deep  
Dark piny forest on the mountain steep  
Has been benighted, treat with cold disdain  
These heartfelt raptures : passion here may reap  
Strong pleasures, and the soul a glimpse obtain  
Of Nature's wondrous works and Wisdom's boundless reign.

At last he brings us to where the rocks so resemble ecclesiastical architecture as to have won the name of " Dovedale Church," and adds—

I glance along the dale from right to left ;—  
It seems as Paradise were passing by,  
And I beheld it from this secret cleft.  
Flowers yield their fragrance ; trees luxuriant, high,  
Climb the rude rocks ; and in the orient sky  
O'er yonder peak the sun reveals his fires.  
The sparkling stream of Dove has caught his eye ;  
His glory lightens all the cliffs and spires ;  
And at the sight my soul breaks forth in rapt desires !

O, hither bring the harp from Judah's palms,  
With psalter, sackbut, dulcimer and lute ;  
The music tuned of old to golden psalms,  
This crag-built church, these rocky aisles will suit.—  
They come—the wilderness no more is mute :  
The winds have brought the harpings of the sky ;  
Dove breathes its dulcet tones, the lark his flute ;  
The psalter trees, the sackbut caves supply ;  
And one harmonious voice of praise ascends on high !"

Blessed be the memory of all such writers ! There needs no book but itself to enable one to enjoy Dovedale, when days are bright and calm, and the " voice of the turtle is heard " above that of the waters.

But when the hills are covered with snow, and winds are howling loud in every hollow—when every road has become a river, and every river a torrent—such is the time to take up a book like the “Tour of the Dove,” and while our feet rest on the fender, let imagination go free with that of its author, into a realm in which, as seen in summer or autumn, the Muses themselves might almost pause in silence, transfixed with delight.

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AND now this series of Memoirs must come to a close, at a point where I cannot but regret not having space for the inclusion of others that would well have mated with them. Such, however, may enrich a future volume. Another regret is that, owing to circumstances it is not essential here to explain, I have not been able to give these sheets, in their passage through the press, the calm and close supervision they required. Hence, some errors have gone uncorrected, for which the intelligent reader's indulgence and forgiveness must be craved until a complete list of *corrigenda* can appear. But, far transcending all regrets, is my gratitude to those correspondents (to many of whom I must be personally an entire stranger) who have encouraged me as the parts have successively appeared, and cheered me with the assurance that my chief aim in them was appreciated—that of showing that goodness, truth, and talent, are not the exclusive possession of any particular party, sect, or class, but may dwell in hearts and minds from the highest to the humblest that God, in his unbounded love and wisdom, embraces.



## Miscellaneous Papers.

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### ON LOVE OF DISTINCTION.

(WRITTEN IN EARLY LIFE.)

THE Love of Distinction is a powerful principle of human nature, and has its day and its use, as an incentive to discovery and industry in the sciences and arts, with those who have not yet realised a better motive. Under its stimulus men have explored for long years both sea and sky—have penetrated the bowels of the earth, or sought communion with the stars—to win an honourable record on the scroll of fame. But it is not alone the mariner's compass, the geologist's hammer, or the astronomer's telescope, that witnesses to this truth: we may learn it as well in the laboratory, the studio, the workshop, the garden, and the garret;—nor less on the stage, at the bar, in the senate, on the platform, or even in the pulpit.

In this way, God has often made this faculty an agent in the uncovering of great truths, in the developing of great purposes, and in promoting the happiness of our common humanity. But while, as the agent of Goodness, it has thus been conducive to noble ends; how often, on the other hand, driven by the impulses of Evil, has it become the severest scourge, and thrown whole nations into a state of terror; or, pandering to superstition, has caused their mental debasement! Under its *morbid* action, associated with destructiveness and acquisitiveness, see an Alexander blotching and scorching the face of the world with blood and fire, then lying down and weeping, like an over-indulged child, because he had not another world on which to

repeat the experiment; while, associated with a different class of feelings, we see it causing Simon Stylites to fix himself on the top of a stone-pillar, there to remain from year to year,—his filth, and the length of his nails and uncombed hair, being mistaken by admiring crowds for signs of sanctity.

At its best, mere love of distinction is but an inferior spring of action, as compared with what is not only possible but proved; and if either the voyager, the astronomer, the chemist, the geologist, the mechanic, the artist, the poet, the senator, or the preacher, have no higher motive than this, whatever be his reputation, he is much to be pitied. In truth it is painful to think what a canker may exist at the core of the noblest cause, when *love of distinction alone* is the main-spring of those who are engaged in it.

But how grand, how God-like, compared with such a petty motive as a mere craving for distinct name and position,—is that beneficent principle that can sacrifice self, honour, name, fame, every one of them, for good alone—for the good of others—often for the good of generations yet unborn, generations that can make no return but by continuing the same stream of love to the ages that shall follow them! It is quite true that “martyrdom may sometimes have its fools as well as its saints;” but its greatest fool was as wise as the man who, being asked to do something for posterity, buttoned up his pocket and asked what posterity had done for him.

When we see men quarrelling for the reputation of having *originated* some idea or scheme—not worth very much, perhaps, when we have got it—with what gratitude ought we to turn to the nameless, pretenceless, amount of GOOD and TRUTH pervading the world, like heat or light, from pole to pole, of which so many people partake without once thinking of the GREAT ORIGINATOR of THEM, or thanking Him in any wise for such a universal manifestation of His Love and Wisdom. And is not the name of the originator, in the secondary sense, of almost every great and useful art either forgotten or disputed, so that very often the emolument due to an inventor is bestowed, by mistake or caprice, upon some crafty or worthless rival?

Finally, (as is elsewhere asked,) has it ever occurred to us to inquire, with sufficient interest, what became of those unrecorded sayings and doings of our Lord on earth, which it is said in the Scriptures a world of books could not contain? Are we to think it possible they were lost? Not so. They float ever upon the restless tide of time, and we see them in a thousand beautiful actions, and hear them in perpetually recurring words of love, which, because they are so common, obtain no wonder, admiration, or distinction. “If the stars,”

said some wise writer, "shone but once in a thousand years, how people would lift up their eyes in wonder and adoration!" The same, or nearly, may be said of most of the abundant mercies of God, who "giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not." Then, let us endeavour, so far as it is possible, to be like Him—doing good for its own sake and for His, in the way in which it may please Him from time to time to give us opportunity—thankful if so many others are doing likewise as to leave us the less possibility of distinction.

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## EDUCATION AND ITS RESPONSIBILITIES.

(NEWSPAPER LEADER—MAY 15, 1847.)

THERE is now commencing an agitation of one of the most momentous questions that ever engaged the attention of man. We mean that of popular Education, which is important alike to every class; because in the future which it will influence, many descendants of the highest must necessarily mingle, by a law of nature, with those of such as are now the humblest of our countrymen. The Howards, Percys, or Russells, cannot all be peers to the last generation that shall exist. Even now it is not uncommon to find such names mingling with the homelier ones of Smith, Brown, Jones, and Robinson, among our shopkeepers and mechanics. And thus it is that the interest of the noble as well as that of the commoner is prospectively involved in the consideration of a question that, for good or ill, must affect in no limited degree the destinies of every section of our race.

And here let us inquire, have all those who are clamouring on the subject well considered in what Education itself consists? Have they felt that it is just as possible for time to stand still as for education of some kind not to proceed in the life of every intelligent being? Have they observed how, though the chilling influences of winter may somewhat hold back the process of vegetation, on it will go—out it will burst—and that poisonous or choking weeds *will* grow spontaneously, if kindlier or more useful flowers or fruits be not reared and tended in their stead? And have they also observed the analogy to this in the human mind? It is quite as much the nature of thought as it is that of corn to vegetate and multiply. We drop a grain of corn in the earth: that grain produces an ear, the ear a measure, and the measure a harvest. So into the mind of man—intentionally or accidentally—enters a thought, which germinates and produces other thoughts, and these others again. But here the analogy closes: for corn can be consumed,

and resolved into its primitive elements ; but thought is not subject to any such law of mutation. Ripening into action, the faster used, the faster it is multiplied. On and on it goes, and spreads with electric power from soul to soul ; and thus every thought—every act of the humblest peasant, entering into the economy of the universe, becomes important to all : for the truth is that, however trivial at the first glance it may be deemed, it cannot fail to affect in some degree the condition of humanity to the end. Thus every man is, more or less, at once both educator and scholar ; and this being so, what a solemn responsibility must rest upon such as claim the right to ordain *specific modes* of education !

Truth itself is pure as the light : but is the medium through which it is conveyed sure always to be well formed and pure ? This is a phase of the question that requires deep consideration. Let us illustrate it. Sunshine from the heavens is pure and bright ; but should it come to us through a window of peculiar architectural form—that of a cloister, for instance—with coloured glass, it will necessarily partake, in some degree, of the character of its medium. Just so of intellectual light through the teacher to his scholar : and if the medium be not pure as the source is pure, better by far that there had been no such interposition,—since it will but lead to the transmission of an adulteration worse adulterated, capable thereafter of being corrected by nothing less than superhuman power !

These remarks are ventured suggestively, not from any wish to discourage the aspirations and efforts of the ardent philanthropist, be he churchman or dissenter,—but that the true importance of the question, and the responsibilities it involves, may be more fully comprehended. Placed temporarily in a material world, and subject to external as well as internal impulses and influences, man may be likened in his body to the *camera obscura*, and in his conscious being to the plate within, upon which the forms and characters of things are photographed through the agency of his senses—there to be sublimed and adapted anew by the influences of the spirit. Society and its fashions—Nature and her forms—Art and its enchantments—all impart their features, and imbue it with their hues and qualities, as they pass. And as upon the metallic plate remains a portrait when its connection with the external machinery is dissolved ; so upon the soul will whatever the understanding may have realised remain. How many beautiful and striking proofs we have of this ! Let us for illustration take but one. Physiology teaches that, every seven years or oftener, there is a complete dissolution or resolution of the matter composing our bodies. At this rate, by the time a man is seventy years of age, he has dispensed with the

matter composing nine or ten bodies. Yet while this has been dissolved and resolved—has entered the earth or evaporated in the air—is growing in the flower or trailing in the cloud—or some of it, possibly, nourishing another human frame,—so little has the CONSCIOUS PRINCIPLE itself been subject to any like law of mutation, that the impressions it received through the FIRST fleshly agency are those which it still retains most vividly in the LAST—and which may probably remain clearer still when even that last wreck of matter is finally laid aside in death.

Now, if such be the pupil, what is the responsibility devolving on the teacher? Shall we despair of God, through fit and willing agencies, making some good impressions upon the most degraded example that can be found of a being thus beautifully and wonderfully constituted? Shall we go on piercing through mountains, bridging seas, and reining the lightning into an obedient messenger of thought, yet leave the human soul to be as the brute's that goeth downward? Shall we tame the brute itself, yet leave man in the wilderness? Or, remembering that he was made for something better than to be oppressed, and hanged, and shot at, shall we not sympathise with him in his lowest degree, and freely extend to him that love and help which, having beforetime been extended to ourselves, have saved us from an equally degraded lot? We have seen Carter, the "American lion king," on the open stage of a theatre, taking a lion and lioness for a couch, two leopards for a counterpane, a panther for a pillow, and go into the semblance of sleep with a tiger in his arms, lying face to face. Now, if thus a tiger, which is one grand, complex organ of destructiveness and ferocity, could be made by a humane education as docile as a lamb, in how much more shall we hope for the improvement of the very worst of men, if a truly brotherly and christian view of their condition be taken?

Whilst reiterating our caution against a false education;—whilst remembering, if our light be but darkness, how great that darkness must be;—whilst aware that for every evil form or hue we convey to the young and impressible mind, whether from motives of self-love and love of worldly power, or any other than those of the purest charity and justice, we are doubly responsible;—let it not be forgotten that we are not less so for the omission, if we attempt to do nothing. To whatever sect or party he may belong; whether favourable or unfavourable to a specific government measure; to the truly rational man nothing can be more obvious than his duty to let his own soul be influenced by the best and clearest light to which he can come, and to render all possible facilities for the sharing with him of the same ines-



timable blessing by every fellow-being, of whatever nation, caste, or colour. Such are our own views of Education in general. Such is the spirit in which we are watching the formation of public opinion on the subject.

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### ON RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES.

(1859.)

As it hath pleased God not to make all things in the external creation solely angular, circular, or oval—black, white, scarlet, or drab; he has been equally liberal in the world of intelligence—awaking our wonder and gratitude, not by establishing a dull, monotonous, stolid uniformity; but by so ordering that peace and joy may result from the very multiplicity and variety of his ordinations. Thus, just as all material forms are owing, in a philosophical sense, to the action of the sunbeam; so to the co-operative love, power and wisdom of Him may be traced every correspondent manifestation in the world of consciousness. Yet, since perpetual difference without any law would be but dissipation, as, on the other hand, perpetual sameness would be stagnation; there is one grand institute by which the end is bound with the beginning—by which all differences should be held in harmony;—whilst all beyond its sphere cannot be otherwise than discordant and worse than useless: that institute is the law of charity.

But applying this doctrine practically, and testing the conduct of mankind by its principle, what is the conclusion? Do we see every man sitting under his own vine and fig-tree with none to make him afraid? Or do we find the world a church, with every man a priest, and every act and word of his life a sermon? Even amongst those who most loudly profess the name of Christ, do we find more who are ready to pray for fire from heaven to light on those who, though doing good works in his name are not of their own party, than of those who are ready to exclaim with him, Let them alone—those who are not against us are for us?

The world has certainly made in some things great progress, but in others very little. In the things of time and space, things that affect our bodily nature, much vantage has been gained. All nations are brought much more convenient to each other in this respect than our fathers could have imagined possible; and clans are merged in nations, nations in still more imposing confederacies. The claymore and the dirk are in general laid aside; and men may go from one district of the same country to another, and from country to country, without thinking it absolutely necessary to make their wills at starting. But

is it not a monstrous fact, that there are men still left who look upon a blow with a stick as unscriptural—who recoil from the mere mention of a pistol or a dagger with shudderings and exclamations—but who, with a cool smile of self-complacency, or an equally cool air of solemnity, and with all the authority that a ministerial function can lend, will sentence in one fell swoop millions of their fellow-men to eternal torment, for not regarding some distinction which, so far as practical truth is concerned, may be as trivial as that between two shades of the same colour? Others, again, with the stroke of an anonymous and irresponsible pen, will, for similar reasons, wantonly assassinate an honest reputation, and send some tender soul to sorrow through the world, or carry its pang, for anything the assassin cares, into the life hereafter. And such is the way in which many infidels have been made. Or, is this not practical infidelity itself?

Yet what is the simple origin of all this evil, but a blind, morbid, and selfish pride—charity's direct antidote—which, (instead of allowing the mind when passing judgment on others to suppose in every instance a change of cases,) looks for self-justification and glory in the imagined virtue of its own acquists; which, in short, is disposed to persecute every principle that differs from it; yet—strangely enough—to treat with jealousy and fear whatever seems to agree, or to make it, at best, submit to a degrading subserviency?

History and life abound with illustrations that are familiar to all men. Not to go too far back into antiquity, let us glance at the spirit of the Tudor age. First, we find the Roman Catholic Church persecuting the Lollards. Then we find the Protestant Church retaliating on the Catholics, and, subsequently, under the Stuarts, acting as cruelly towards the Puritans. Next we find the Puritans, the "Pilgrim Fathers," fleeing from persecution here, and the moment they have set up their standard in America, hanging the Quakers, man and woman alike, for dissenting a little further than themselves!

In truth, the spirit of persecution—or, in other words, the natural spirit of arrogance and jealousy—is not the exclusive patent of any age, sect, or party. We have heard, on the popular platform, an idolised philanthropist talk a full hour longer than he had any need, for the sake of keeping down another star of the evening, lest he should shine in the same sphere with equal brilliancy. And a second great philanthropist we have known to decline speaking at all, because, as he said, another person of the party "carried the audience away with him so entirely." And has nothing of the same spirit ever found its way, even into the pulpit? In short, who could not point to deplorable instances of men in almost every station of life, decrying the

good that others in their own best way were attempting to do, merely because they (the declaimers) could not have the exclusive credit thereof themselves?

And yet, if men would but open their hearts and eyes, how easy to distinguish between this spirit and that which shall finally inherit the earth! For, the genuine life of Christianity stands contradistinct from all others in one grand feature—viz., that, whilst without it any two men of the same trade may agree very well with a third who has a different one, but would be glad to see each other in the gazette;—whilst men in the professions observe the nicest rules of etiquette, but sometimes try to ruin each other by left-handed compliment;—whilst the philanthropist and the preacher, or even whole sects and parties, in too many instances, instead of valuing the good that is done for its own or the Great Master's sake, like it all the better when it extends their own particular reputation;—the true man, the man of earnestness and guilelessness, whatever his rank, position, or calling, always feels that the glory of Christianity is distinguished from that of pride and covetousness in this—that *the more there are to share it, the more there is of it.*

How, then, is the evil in question to be remedied—how the triumph over it to be secured? Let every man be respected by every other “under his own vine and fig-tree.” Let religion be advocated, not in strife, but in life. Let not mere opinion be mistaken for faith; but let those who think they have a better idea to add to the general stock of human experience, add it, not by contention, but as something able to produce its own legitimate fruit, and to be propagated by shedding its own seed of active good. Let not any attack on falsehood be supposed as of necessity sufficient for the establishment of truth; for if we set one devil up to knock another down, there is sure to be one of them still remaining—perhaps both. But, leaving the dead to bury the dead, let men who will be men live the life. Instead of fighting on low, swampy ground the old-world battle of dogma and hypothesis; let them work with higher aim and more universal purpose for that Church-and-State, one and the same, that comes down from God, having the four-square walls of justice and the twelve varied, but ever-open gates of mercy and liberty. Leave the idolatry of partial *isms* and *ologies*. Strike a key-note on the divinest string of humanity's hopeful lyre, and whatever will not chord with it leave out of the concert. And let the music rise and roll from soul to soul, from sect to sect, from nation to nation, from world to world, until there be a Universal Brotherhood, as there is a Universal Fatherhood: for such is the glorious destiny of Man!

## LOCAL AND NATIONAL PECULIARITIES.

(1850.)

CLOSELY akin to the previous question of religious differences, is that of local and national peculiarities. And, without entering into an inquiry as to the unicity or diversity of human origin, it will be sufficient for our present purpose to take men as they are found, or as they have been found in any given period with which we are familiar. We have, indeed, known a person of some note who thanked God for the works of Prichard on the Human Race, "because," added he, "they set aside the right of man to enslave his fellow-man, by proving the common origin of all nations." But, for our part, we have no sympathy with such a contracted argument in favour of liberty; since, were it once admitted, it would involve another from which all benevolent minds must recoil in disgust and despair—viz., the right to cage every bird, to overwork every beast, to oppress every being in the lower creation, if possible, because it cannot be proved to have a descent from Adam! Tracing the birth of all things to a higher Parent than Adam, even to God, we obtain a nobler stand than this wherefrom to contemplate the common good, and are at once assured that a capability of enjoyment always implies if it does not confer the right to it—provided, of course, that such enjoyment does not depend on the injury of others.

Recognising, then, this broad and beneficent philosophy, how beautiful as well as useful, to the eye of the mind, are all the great varieties in creation, and especially those of the human constitution, whereby—since no two individuals are precisely alike—each one is adapted to a particular office in the universal economy, and becomes happy in proportion to his fidelity to it.

Yet, again, despite these many differences in particulars, how much is possessed by great numbers in common! There was more rationality than at first appears in the remark of the Negro, when looking at two of his compeers, that "Pompey and Cæsar were berry much alike—'specially Pompey." What Sambo meant, no doubt, was, that Pompey had the greatest share of that which made the likeness and distinguished them from others. And it is in a very similar way that nations at large, however distinct from each other in general character, have, as the constitutence of that very fact, much that is peculiar to themselves, and in which, more or less, every member shares. The same may be said again of the different septs of one nation, and in these the rule further holds true with respect to each family. And at

this point we are brought to consider and illustrate the good which from such distinctions and semblances, when rightly regarded, is derivable.

Whoever is acquainted with physical science, is aware of course of the two grand laws of attraction and repulsion, or sympathy and antipathy, supposed to operate throughout the physical universe. He is well aware, too, that the relation of these forces, as indicated more intensely by the common magnet, may, by a certain process affecting the polarity of the instrument, be reversed. And to this there is a remarkable analogy in human character. In a barbarous state, nation knows only the law of repulsion towards nation, and obeys no other. The same is true of clan against clan; it is almost equally so of individual against individual; and the result is mutual degeneracy not less than hostility. At length, however, civilisation—say in its divinest form of Christianity—appears; and “reversing the poles” of the affections and the understanding—converting the soul—the law of attraction, fraternity, amelioration, comes into play, till the whole is united, renewed, advanced, and blest; so that men, instead of thwarting and expelling each other from sphere to sphere, find that there is nothing by which they can more easily elevate themselves than by aiding others, and that through those very peculiarities of endowment which previously made them quarrel.

Our own nation—with the exception of America perhaps the most heterogeneous and composite on earth—affords a thousand corroborations of this opinion. On various parts of these islands there remain, even yet, distinctions which those who have not investigated the subject could hardly credit. It is true that, influenced by the amalgamating and progressive spirit of the age, they are becoming more and more blended and harmonised year by year. Still, perceptible in some degree from each other, are the descendants of two or three aboriginal races, besides the Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Norman-French, with all in addition that commerce, learning, hospitality, and adventure, have brought from every part of the world in the last thousand years.

There is one little line of country, not more than two miles wide, linking the far inland counties of Nottingham and Derby—we mean the valley of the Erewash, and especially that portion of it between Codnor and Ilkeston—where there did, and still may exist, with marked peculiarity, a number of people having rather abruptly-terminated noses; thick, open lips; freckled skin, light grey eyes, and sandy hair. They are the best excavators and well sinkers in that part of the kingdom. What is more evident, however, than all their other peculiarities, is a dialect quite distinct from any that prevails among the people

on either side of them ; and those again retain dialects very different, each from the other. That on the Nottinghamshire side is Saxon, slightly leavened with Norman. That in the Peak of Derbyshire has a greater mingling of ancient British and Roman. It may be observed that difference of occupation would in part explain these social phenomena ; the Erewash valley being a continued strip of rich ironstone and coal. The Nottinghamshire side has been more noted for tillage and warren ; whilst the Peak is a wild and broken region of heather and pasture, limestone rocks and lead-mines. But these facts would not of themselves account for the difference in dialect. May they not rather be regarded as having been partial inducements, in the first instance, for the settlement in those localities of various races, severally adapted to them by virtue of their different descent and previous habits, yet, at length, so harmoniously fused as to be already growing undistinguishable, save in faintest outline ? And if these observations are valid in reference to parts so far inland ; with how much more force they apply to maritime districts need hardly be demonstrated to the sons of the Tees, the Wear, and the Tyne, where every valley and inlet has its own peculiar people, differing at once from the rest in cast of figure, features, and language—in the latter most strangely.

Beyond doubt there is a much greater interfusion of Scandinavian blood along the whole of that coast than history—at all events the history of England—would indicate. The histories of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, throw more light on the subject, and show how much of our maritime enterprise may be owing to the transmitted spirit of those old sea-kings ; as are our domestic industry and steadfastness to the Saxon influx ; and our colonial extension to a union of these with Celtic and Norman fervour and restlessness. The probability is that we may have more, too, of the old Roman element among us than we are aware of ; and there are some who think they recognise it in our learning, love of authority, and general polity. That Alfred the Great must himself have had an eye to the value of such interfusions is clear. A worse state of anarchy than that with which, on his restoration, he found this kingdom cursed, it would be difficult perhaps to imagine. The Danes, from being temporary rulers, had degenerated again into robbers ; life and property were everywhere alike unsafe. A monarch less wise and brave would have retaliated on the pirates with fearful vengeance. There were three ways in which he had now the power to deal with them—expulsion, enslavement, or slaughter. But seeing their wondrous nautical skill and courage, he resolved on a fourth—that of allowing them to dwell still on his coasts, upon the simple condition that they should obey and enjoy his laws.

To his clemency and foresight on that occasion the maritime power of Britain to this late day is mainly owing.

That such various materials enter in their several degrees, some greater, others less, into our national character, is sufficiently obvious. And when we reflect how antagonistic they once were in their operation; how prolific of rapine, hatred and revenge; but how conducive they now become—in proportion as we find them blending and harmonising—to the general welfare; they give us assurance, by the comparison, of a better time, not very far advanced perhaps, but evidently begun; and there comes to the fevered brow and open lips of a long agitated and fretful humanity, breath after breath of “the world’s new spring,”—at last to bind together the most distant nations, as already it has done the most antagonistic septa of the same.

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### THE MISSION OF THE PRESS.

(1850.)

EVERY age has its own spirit, mission, and voice. The pulsations of the public heart may sometimes grow feeble, but they can never entirely cease till the death of Time. However, occasionally, the soul of society may lack noble aspirations, it can never be utterly devoid of emotions. Sometimes it has both in corresponding vigour; and feeling the development or bequest of these to be its legitimate function, it seizes upon such means as are placed at its service, and carves, or paints, or prints its idea on the eternal record. Thus one age gives expression to its impulses, tastes, and hopes, in sculpture; another in architecture; another in poetry, or oratory, and so forth. We are not now treating of savage life,—in which, not the less, an analogy might be perceived in the various modes of hunting and warfare,—but of those efforts of Civilization that stamp man as a progressive and immortal being, despite all the agencies that would crush and merge him in the dust, from which he was formed ere God breathed the breath of life into him and made him a LIVING SOUL.

The voice with which our own age seeks to express itself, it has been said, is JOURNALISM. Every man who has the power is now as much a writer as in the age of feudalism he would have been a warrior, or in that of puritanism a preacher. A few years back an idea prevailed that we were all going to be lecturers. The debating society, the mechanics’ institution, or the political platform, furnished an arena in which a man might readily discover his *forte* as an orator. Occasions



sufficiently popular, on which every person might find a hearing, were then not wanting; and lecturers sprang up in every locality as fast as mushrooms in a misty morning. Thus as the excitement of question after question rapidly subsided, it left a numerous profession comparatively "without practice." The walls of our large towns exhibited a distracting variety of calls from parties wishing to be heard on every possible topic; and of these a few can still, in some cases, draw masses of listeners; but *how few* is told by the fact that some institutions dare not engage any lecturer on any subject whatever—the people having become so satiated with respectable mediocrity that they will scarcely muster even at the call of excellence. The Mechanics' Institution of Nottingham once engaged one gentleman from Manchester, at great expense, on some theme the committee thought would be sure to *take*, and after shaking the town with a storm of announcements, they had, in a hall capable of holding two or three thousand, an audience of *fourteen*! In a similar manner Professor Nichol, one of the most popular writers on Astronomy, was engaged to lecture at the Sunderland Athenæum; and his audiences during three evenings varied from *six* to *thirty*! The probability, however, is, that had Professor Nichol sent the same lectures to the local newspapers, they would have been read by hundreds of families with delight. And this consideration brings us back to the main question. The greater value of time; a growing love of domestic refinement and recreation, owing to a higher appreciation of woman and of the importance to children of good examples at the fire-side; to which may be added more peaceful habits in general, with a consequent or rather contingent increase of household comforts, and many kindred influences of which we cannot here take note; all tend to make knowledge the more welcome when it goes to where the heart is, in the HOME CIRCLE. And thus it is that the Press has become pre-eminently the organ of principle and opinion in English society,—a character in which it naturally supersedes, to a great extent, many other ministrations that have, in their turn, been of great efficiency, and that still, in some cases, may retain much good and secondary use.

Of the various orders of popular Journalism there are three between which a marked distinction may be observed. First, there is the oracular or apostolic, which assumes to teach, to regenerate, and to form opinion and feeling anew. Next to this in moral rank is the representative—that in which the claims and objects of various classes, sects, parties, and coteries, or questions, are specially pleaded. The lowest, which one trusts is wearing out, is the mercenary, malignant, pandering, demoralising order—that which soothes, fosters, or inflames,

according to circumstances, every vicious principle or prejudice the first would aim at rooting out. There might, perhaps, be no impropriety in classifying a fourth,—that which takes a more guiding or corrective tone,—only that the two first lay severally some claim to this office. And all these various agencies, taken together, present a phenomenon to the philanthropic mind such as the world, having nevertofore witnessed, has no rules for estimating,—a problem which Philosophy shrinks from or handles with hesitation, and which Faith solves only on the simple principle of a final triumph of love and truth over all things.

A few years since we were passing, in London, an evening with three gentlemen, each widely distinguished for the amount of his information and power of bringing it to bear practically on the wants of society, when the influence of the Press became the topic of conversation. Imagine the effect upon the rest of the party,—one, the editor of a leading daily paper, one a writer in the “Westminster Review,” and the third the writer of this chapter,—when the fourth, a person perhaps then surpassing us all in the extent and wealth of his general information, and almost unrivalled in his reputation for statistical facilities, declared it to be demonstrable that the Press—in the service of which three of us were thus engaged—had been, and still was, *in the main*, an evil to mankind! We have not space here, even had we the power, to present the whole of his argument. But it touched on the ground that printing had a tendency, by too much assimilating man to man, to destroy his individuality and thereby his proper dignity of soul;—that, by taking away many motives for meditation, it robbed him of that faculty of insight which would, by continued exercise, acquaint him better with the laws of his own being and with those of the universe so deeply reflected in him;—and afforded him but superficial and inconvertible, if not absolutely fallacious knowledge, in lieu of that interpenetration with which God at first endowed him, and which, were it not kept dark by immorality, would give him, instead of the Press, a power of consciousness and communion almost equal to that of clairvoyance;—a recurrence to which pure and bright state the great multiplication of idle theories and hypotheses caused by the Press did much in preventing. These features of the argument we offer briefly, just to indicate its general tenor—the whole being intended to show that there is only one true light given to every man, and that the Press is not that light. And we must confess that such reasoning, by such a mind, added to the statement of its being a well ascertained fact, (however difficult to receive,) that, of all the books, papers and advertisements printed, a *greatly preponderating number* had

a positive tendency to obscure and degrade the highest faculties in man, and plunge him still deeper in the darkness mistaken for light—left an impression upon us by no means cheering, when we considered how rapidly the influence of the Press must still be extending in every part of the world. Had the assertion come from an idle dreamer, or bigot, the effect would have been far otherwise.

The firm faith in triumphant goodness, however, on the part of a highly-intelligent and sound-hearted lady, (nearly related to one of our most distinguished judges,) to whom we afterwards told the story in Ireland, gave the whole subject a very different aspect; and we will illustrate it as nearly as we can in her own words,—[premising that, at the time, slavery had not been abolished in the United States, nor the stamp taken off British newspapers.] She said,—“The Press, as the great voice of humanity, can only utter what humanity feels and thinks for the time. So long, therefore, as humanity is imperfect, its voice must be imperfect too; and you cannot bring any argument against that voice which might not as properly be urged against any other of its faculties. ‘Evil communications corrupt good manners.’ But in proportion as any individual improves in heart and life, he improves in conversation also. I have therefore no more right to look upon the Press as irremediably degraded and degrading than I have to take the same view of humanity itself and all that concerns it. WITH THE GRADUAL REDEMPTION OF HUMANITY, I LOOK FOR THE GRADUAL REDEMPTION OF THE PRESS too; but as we have no reason to believe that man in slavery presents us with an adequate idea of what he could accomplish in liberty, so we must regard the Press.” We pointed to America. “No,” said she, “the spirit that there keeps its hundreds of thousands of men and women in bondage, is a horrible despotism that vitiates the whole tone of society; and the Press, as its organ, is morally, if not legally, in corresponding slavery. But when Christianity shall have done its perfect work, the whole Press will be converted as well as the whole heart and intellect of man; and when the voice of God becomes the voice of the people also,—which no counter-influence existing can for ever prevent,—the Press as well as the Tongue shall utter it throughout the earth.”

It was a beautiful thought, and we believe there is truth in it as well as beauty,—opening to the mental eye one of the richest moral landscapes it is possible to contemplate. And one fact is highly significant, namely—that the increasing power of the Press does not seem at all to have lessened, so far, the general attendance on Public Worship.

## BLONDINISM.

(Addressed to the Editor of a Midland Paper.)

SIR,—The late terrible accident at Aston Park, the shock it gave to public feeling, and the Queen's letter upon it, still occupy attention and excite discussion; but the excitement, I imagine, does not spring so much from sympathy with the fate of the poor victim, as from the considerations it has awakened relative to the propriety or impropriety of such exhibitions in general; and this leads me to request you to give the following remarks a place in your columns, even though they may not exactly coincide with your own.

The principal objections to these exhibitions as ordinarily stated are, that they are for the most part accompanied by exposures of the human shape not conducive to morality; by equal exposures to danger little better than attempted suicide; and that they administer to a morbid appetite for adventure in a degree that may be regarded as very irrational if not very criminal. This question, however, like all questions, has two sides; and it may be as well, perhaps, not altogether to ignore the one while considering the other.

There can be no doubt of its being right to hold sacred the image of its Maker impersonated in the human form. That all creation should have been ransacked for its essences and its elements, until we find in it a wonderful and beautiful *résumé* of the whole physical world, entitles it, independently of other reasons, to this care. The rocks represented in its bones, the soil in its flesh, the lakes and rivers in its great vessels and veins, vegetation in its hair, the star-light in its eyes, and the bloom of the flower in its cheeks—not to mention the great length of time employed to ripen the whole into maturity and harmony with a still higher nature—all proclaim one truth, to which its mechanism and geometrical proportions bear kindred witness. Its two hundred and thirty bones, or thereabouts, involving every possible curve and line of art; the hinge-joint, swivel-joint, fulcrum, lever, stay, and every other principle employed in the most complicated machine that could be imagined, and all silently accomplished without the agency of hammer, chisel, or file; the grand telegraphic arrangement of the nerves, keeping the whole system in harmonious connection with the brain; the ropes, pulleys, cushions, hooks, loops, elastic bands, and all other apparatus needful for working and regulating the action of the skeleton, with such flexibility and ease that one man has been known to stand erect, with another upon him, also erect, and two boys surmounting the shoulders of the second—the lowest one, immediately afterwards,

putting his body by turns into the shape of every letter of the alphabet,—all bespeak such exact economy and design as it cannot but be criminal to disturb and risk for the gratification of any wanton feeling whatever.

But here there arises another and very important, because very practical, question—namely, as to what mankind would ever know of some of these wondrous powers and susceptibilities, were the athletes and acrobats, the equestrians and rope-dancers of every grade, to lay by their vocations, and leave the world to learn no more than it could from good, easy, stay-at-home sort of people, who understand about as much of some of their own bodily functions and capabilities as they do of what is going on in the planet Jupiter or its satellites. There can be no doubt that it is very silly, and much worse than silly, to risk walking at an excessive elevation on a rotten rope; that it should ever have been done on a cord not too well tested to leave the accident possible must argue, of course, the most absurd and culpable negligence; and that it should have occurred to a woman in the peculiar condition of Madame Genevieve, is as shocking as it was indelicate. But, on the other hand, it is doubtful, were the regulation of all bodily exercises to be left to people of an opposite class, whether a knowledge of our physical powers might not decrease until carrying each other by turns in sedan-chairs would be one of the noblest achievements of dexterity and locomotion.

By all means let us guard as a sacred gift our wondrous 'bodies and still more wondrous lives, not only our own but those of less heedful fellow creatures. Who has not sympathy with the little child that one day, after playing in the sunshine, ran into the house exclaiming, "What a funny thing it is to be alive!" Few of us, I suspect, could give more significant expression to the consciousness with which we are sometimes startled, of the mystery of our own being and its equally mysterious relations. We ought indeed to be careful in the preservation of what we could not have created, and have no right wantonly to destroy. But let us never forget that athletic and gymnastic games are among the very institutes of humanity, and must have been ordained from the first for some great and useful end. The monuments of the Egyptians, Greeks, Romans, Chinese, and every other people not absolutely barbarous or effete, bear testimony to their universality. To the pure in heart there is no indelicacy in just so much freedom of the person from encumbrance as is needful for their due exercise. In any ordinary exhibition of acrobatic or gymnastic skill, there is less risk of life to a person properly trained than there is in hunting and other sports in which even royalty itself not unfrequently indulges,—

certainly not near so much as there is in taking a few glasses extra at dinner, and then riding home along a dark road on a spirited horse ; or even in wearing crinoline near a drawing-room fire. While as to the other question—the effect on the popular mind—without going to the extent of talking about “muscular christianity,” I cannot but regard as natural, reasonable, and right, whatever tends to keep man alive to the many capabilities of that wonderfully and beautifully organised body with which his immortal soul has for temporary purposes been invested.

All things then considered, we ought not to be displeased with the thorough ventilation of this question likely to result from the late deplorable accident to the “Female Blondin ;” I hope that Her Majesty’s letter to the Mayor of Birmingham may have in future some effect in restraining all superfluous risk, and confining such exhibitions within reasonable and moral limits ; and I trust that the public at large, while content to use, will be more careful than “the Foresters” of Aston not to abuse, the right to witness *becoming* feats of agility on the part of those who are in a fitting condition for their legitimate performance.

*Windermere, August 11th, 1868.*

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### FOOTSTEPS OF CIVILIZATION.

[Outline of an Address by the AUTHOR, at a Gathering of the People, at Robin Hood’s Well, near Eastwood, Notts—as reported at the time in the “Nottingham Guardian.”]

Six hundred years ago, if they were to believe one of the most interesting chapters in the history of this land, the beautiful scenes by which they were now surrounded re-echoed strains widely different from those to which they had just been listening with so much delight. If they were to credit the history of Robin Hood—whose name, however, appeared to be associated with so many and diverse scenes, that it was almost impossible to believe he could have been connected with them all—it behoved them to glance back from the present day to the time when the bold outlaw and his merry men met around that Well ; to contrast the two periods, and to review the various historical phenomena which filled up the interim. There could be no doubt whatever, whether Robin Hood were a myth or a man, a merely ideal personage, or a being of flesh and blood like themselves—there

could be no doubt that the whole region around them was once one grand forest, extending from the Trent to the sea—overscattered with oaks like those which could still be seen in the neighbourhood of Birkland and Bilhagh,—and which corresponded with the mind of the people of those times. At that early period the mind of humanity like the face of the land, was one vast wilderness, and the wolf and boar which roamed through the forests were but types of the barbarous character of the people. For if they would look round attentively upon creation, and back through history, they would find—whatever country or age they glanced at—that there was always a striking correspondence between the character of the natural scenery of the land, its products, and the state of the popular mind. The condition of this, as of every other district of England, became less wild in proportion as the mind of the people became cultivated; as civilization advanced, the savage animals which formerly abounded began to disappear, and it was now many ages since the last wolves were hunted in this neighbourhood. There was formerly in the neighbourhood of Castleton, a family of the name of Wolfhunt, who held a portion of land upon condition of their hunting the wolves in that part of the country. He (Dr. Hall) did not know whether that avocation extended to Sherwood Forest—possibly it did—as no doubt wolves would be very abundant there, in consequence of the number of deer and other wild animals on which they fed. All these phases of history, of man, and of nature, by degrees passed away like the former, and there came another period when the blood-hound was extensively kept by the people, and seemed to typify the character of their mind. During the bloody wars between the Houses of York and Lancaster, there was so much of this spirit manifested that almost every person of pretension kept a leash of blood-hounds. This time also passed away, the mind of the people underwent a further change, and the character of the country again changed with it. The land became cultivated and cleared of forests, with the exception of comparatively small patches of woodland here and there—remnants like that in which they were then assembled. The people became more civilized and more social; and villages, formerly clustering round the noble's castle for security, or the wood-keeper's cottage for companionship, (from which latter circumstance, by the way, arose the name of Woodhouse, so common to hamlets in this district,) towns and villages expanded and smiled. Other times followed—the wild deer which formerly ranged the broad forests of England, became fewer and fewer in proportion as the land became more and more cultivated, until they were almost unknown in the kingdom, except in some of the more remote glens of Scotland, or



where they had to be imparked to prevent their utter extinction. And the deer had yet its correspondence in the mind of man. It was the nature of Englishmen to love that which was exciting; and hence the passion for the chase, which was formerly so remarkable a feature of the national character. But even this, too, appeared to be dying away. No man loved old parks and old forests more than he (the speaker); yet he could not shut his eyes to the fact that people were now enclosing extensive deer preserves on every side; so that they were becoming divided into fields, and applied to purposes of agriculture, in conformity with the change which was going on in the mind of the age. And this same principle he would venture to affirm would be found to hold true in every case. Many persons then present would remember a time when there was scarcely a town or village that was not overrun with bull dogs; but now they might travel from one end of the country to the other and would rarely meet with a thorough-bred bull dog. And why? Because the bull dog had disappeared from the minds of the people,—because pursuits of a more elevating, intellectual and refining description had taken the place, to a great extent, of the savage sports in which our forefathers delighted. It was the tendency of everything they saw to imprint itself upon and imbue the mind: no man could look with admiration upon a brutal spectacle without being to some extent thereby brutalised; or, on the other hand, could gaze upon a scene so rich and pure and elevating as the present, without being raised and refined by it, and without having, so to speak, its natural beauty assimilated with his very being. Therefore it was to him a matter of sincere gratification that he was able in that rural scene—with its shady arbours, its stately trees, its green meadows and bright waters, lying like spots of blue sky below—to see so large an assembly gathered together for the noble purpose of aiding in an effort for the promotion of education and the diffusion of knowledge. And to those who were earnestly disposed to learn, he would say that there was not a single object in nature which might not be their teacher. For himself he believed he was thoroughly English in his prejudices and sympathies, though he hoped he was not the less a cosmopolitan for that. He loved his country, and her institutions, and their origin; but that did not prevent him from likewise loving all mankind. And he could not help noticing here the remarkable fact that King Alfred—"that grand old monarch!—that oak o'er all the trees!—that Alp among the far hills of history!"—one of the greatest men, not merely who ever occupied a throne, but who ever lived in England, because one of the best,—for truest goodness was truest greatness,—when he, a thousand years ago, revised the laws for the government of the land, he began

by reciting the Ten Commandments, adding, "if these laws be well kept there be little need of any other." And as the Ten Commandments were the basis of all good legislation, so the Christian law of "doing to others as we would that they should do unto us" was the foundation of all real happiness. Not less remarkable was the commencement of Alfred's will than the commencement of his code: for in it were these remarkable words:—"It is fit the people of England should be as free as their thoughts;" and, surely, people who could recognise the Ten Commandments as the foundation of their laws, as was the case when Alfred had reduced the nation to order, were worthy of being free, and powerful as free! Long, long, might the British mind be symbolised by the British oak! Its roots striking deeply, as they did, into the past—its trunk, no hollow sham, but sound to the core, rising vigorously and nobly through the present—and its branches, even to the tiniest twig, enjoying a bright, fresh, free, and limitless heaven to expand in, through glorious ages yet to be! Dr. Hall then proceeded to dwell at considerable length upon the great facilities afforded in the present day for all those who were anxious to elevate themselves, morally and intellectually—graphically relating, for the encouragement of the younger portion of his hearers, some interesting particulars of his own early efforts. But in conclusion he observed, that, although since then he had been privileged to commune with many of the best and greatest minds of the age, all the advantages he had derived from man or from books were not to be compared with those which he had derived from the teachings of Nature—that book of Nature, which was open to them all; and he could bear a warm testimony to the truth of Wordsworth's beautiful lines—that

Nature never did betray  
The heart that loved her. 'Tis her privilege  
Through all the years of this our life to lead  
From joy to joy. For she can so inform  
The mind that is within us—so impress  
With quietness and beauty, and so feed  
With lofty thoughts—that neither evil tongues,  
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,  
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all  
The dreary intercourse of daily life,  
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb  
Our cheerful faith, that all that we behold  
Is full of blessings!

He hoped they would always be faithful to those beautiful principles which had their foundation in simple Christianity, in Nature, in love to God who gave us all things, and in the love of our neighbours as

ourselves, and that their minds would not linger behind the age of the electric telegraph and the electric light !

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## SPOKEN AT A LITERARY MEETING

### AMONG THE LAKES.

WHEN Napoleon I. was at the head of his army in Egypt, he pointed towards the Pyramids and said, "Forty centuries look down upon us !" But more than forty centuries are looking down on this spot to-night, from the hows and fells and mountain-peaks around us, which no man reared—and from the heavens above with their smiling intelligences—on an assembly gathered, not for war and devastation, but for sowing the seeds of mental improvement, and for cherishing sentiments of reverence and hope, and feelings of peace and good will towards one another, and towards all mankind ! And very pleasant it is, while old Time is looking back to see what his long progeny of years has accomplished, to trace their track over the country, and to read history in its landscapes. The lakes and rivers, with the rugged lands on their shores, where the aboriginal Britons fished and hunted, and sometimes fought, for a scanty living ;—the upland level, near Keswick, where still linger their grand old druidical monuments ;—that gap in the hills near Grasmere, where beneath his rude cairn rest the ashes of Dunmail, the last of their patriot kings in this region ; and Helvellyn, Glaramara, and Blencathra, mountains whose names may be said still to echo the ancient language : these are all within our reach by a short walk or ride. Then, there is the lofty Roman road called High-street, over which in turn marched the proud cohorts of the Cæsars ;—the winding lanes and upland tracks on which our more homely Saxon ancestors drove their herds and flocks and pack-horse trains ; with Morecambe-bay in the distance, where sometimes landed the marauding Danes. Memorials too of Anglo-Norman times abound, in the scattering of old churches and the relics of old feudal castles ;—while the borough of Kendal, with its semi-manufacturing population, dates from days when industry and trade began to assert their rising importance in our land ! But we now come, as regards time, to the commencement of that love of the picturesque and the poetical which touched the hearts of men, and began to draw them hither, until mansions and villas, and rural retreats of all sorts, gleam out or nestle down on every hand,—where bards of great power and

renown have dwelt and written,—and to which some of our most distinguished guests of this evening come for their periodical rest and restoration; while places for Christian worship beautifully dot the scene. How glorious it is on a sweet summer day, to stand on some bold headland and gaze on all these touches of human life and history, as Nature develops her beauty and grandeur to the eye; and then turn, last of all, to this useful though unpretending institution, on the table of which is monthly, weekly, and daily poured the literary intelligence of the world, in a manner that, but a few short years ago, kings and sages might have envied, yet of which now the humblest peasant or mechanic amongst us may avail himself at a cost which even he, from its smallness, need scarcely feel;—an institution which gradually extending its benefits to all the country adjacent, will aid in harmonising the minds and tastes of the people with the rich scenery around them, and with that still higher tone of Christian Truth, without which all life is but discord, but with which all existence is a beauty and a blessing evermore!. For—

Mankind are not all humbuds!

We each one know a few—

The candid and the generous,

The noble and the true,

Who meanness scorn—who learn what's right,

To do it, day by day,

Regardless of whate'er a world

Of envious tongues may say.

Mankind are not all Sadducees,

Who look upon the soul

As but a candle dim, to light

The body to its goal,

Then out be blown when that is done,

No more to be re-lighted,

As though the noblest work of all

Were made but to be blighted.

Nor are mankind all Pharisees:

For some, with homely air,

Love still their God, their neighbours' good,

Their duty, and their prayer;

And that without a trumpeter,

Their righteousness to blow;

Or any hidden telegraph,

More sure for lacking show.

No doubt, there are some sycophants,

And slanderers, knaves, and quacks,

Looking men blandly in the face,

Then stabbing at their backs:

Nay, some who say they discord hate,  
And shun all open strife,  
Would mildly take your character  
And your very bread of life.

But this is not the case with all :  
In every rank and station  
There's that in many a panting soul  
That seeks emancipation  
From all that's grovelling, and vile,  
And false, the heart within,  
Feeling that every true reform  
Must in that heart begin.

Yes, brothers ! there's a seed on earth,  
If only rightly deem'd of,  
Will yield more glorious harvests yet  
Than men have ever dream'd of ;—  
For Christ is true ; and truth is life,  
And life is light, and beauty,  
And endless joy, to those who love  
Above all fears, their duty !

Then let that seed among us grow,  
Uncheck'd by vicious leaven,  
Until we nothing learn below  
That is not learnt for Heaven ;—  
And as our sympathies expand,  
While each endeavour making,  
Let's pray that men in every land  
Like good may be partaking !

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## CHRISTMAS.

(WRITTEN FOR THE "DERBY REPORTER.")

WHAT the Alp is among hills, the cedar among trees, the wheat among grain, the grape among fruits, the sirloin among viands, is grand old Christmas among the festivals. In musical phrase, it is the key-note with which all the holidays of the year are made to harmonise. Nor is this all. It has the infinite charm of being everywhere at once, and in every season ! Though it be hailed the same day the wide world over, it is by our Canadian brethren in the very thick of their snowy winter ; by ourselves in whatever weather the next twenty-four hours may chance to bring ; and by our numerous kindred in New Zealand or Australia in the very height of their glowing summer. In our own country more than two hundred and fifty thousand bells will simulta-

neously strike up to ring it a welcome. As many minstrels will go forth, beneath the clouds or the stars, "from village to hamlet, and from hamlet to lonely farm," to sing its glad return; and millions of hearts, old and young, rich and poor, grave and gay, will rejoice in the general joy. From the Queen on her throne to the poorest wanderer on the hearth of the lowest lodging-house, will Christmas receive such welcome as each and all can give. In the mansion of the patrician "the family will be at home." In the merchant's suburban villa and the tradesman's town-house, the young people from school will be "at home" too. In the old farm-house the whole circle will be supremely blest—the "servant, sire, and all," being there pretty much "all one" at Christmas time. Social meetings of every pleasant kind will occupy the hopes and energies of our mechanics and artizans; while in the remotest and homeliest cottages of the labouring poor, neighbour will neighbour meet, to talk kindly of the absent, and to enhance the present feast. At any rate, should we perchance have one unlucky reader who doubts the truth of this picture, let him in the name of goodness and mercy at once set about doing all he can to make it true; and we will answer for it that, long before the end of the week, he will have realised a greater luxury than he ever before enjoyed.

Forlorn indeed must be the heart to which Christmas bringeth not some joy, or hope, or fond recollection at least. Great changes, it is true, have come o'er the manner of keeping it since the days of our ancestors. Railways, penny postage, and the telegraph, have now made one vast town of the whole kingdom. But it requires no great stretch of memory to link us with the days of the old stage-coaches, of which the Derby and Manchester Mail, winding through the valleys of the Peak under the guidance of our picturesque friend Burdett, was one of the last, and ought, when he had done driving it, to have been sent, with his portrait taken in full dress, to the British Museum. In those days, how remote from each other seemed the towns that are now brought within an hour's reach! And what facilities for keeping Christmas have been afforded by the change! In a dear old country house where was passed a portion of our childhood, what an event was the arrival of one solitary visiting relative from a distance! What a cost, if not a loss, of time on the way! What an amount of package, and difficulty of portage to the town through which the coach went, when said relative departed! What a writing of letters to be conveyed by that friendly hand, because of the heavy postage-tax! And how few the chances of seeing that kindly face again for many years! Still those old times had many pleasures peculiarly their own; and such visits, few and far between, had an intensity of affection and

delight in them we would not forget for all the joys that modern improvements could substitute. Yet, for these modern improvements let us be thankful too. There still stands that old house by the side of the rural lane. The same trees are keeping guard around it, little scathed by age; and the green holly-tree still keeps sentry at the garden corner. The same stream is winding and shining along the bottom of the meadow where we played. The same village spire is glinting up in the distance, and pealing forth the same sweet holiday tones. The same blue hills are circling all. In that old house still dwell some of the dear, good souls, companions of our youth: and though time has scattered its frost on their heads, and the gleam of their smile steals upon us through wrinkles, yet happy young hearts are springing up and renewing past joys around them; and we have only to drop them a penny letter, by to-night's post, to say we shall be there to-morrow evening; and in one short hour from quitting the scene of our ordinary duties, the train will leave us at the new station, near the auld-lang-syne toll-bar, by the turn of the lane; and in five minutes more the omnibus will set us down among a troop of joyous friends, gathered from every region, in that "old house at home!"

But, oh, if the little cheerful picture we have drawn should catch the eye of the bereaved, the widowed, the outcast, and the forgotten, and from the heart of sorrow strike a tear, let us hope that those who live in glad homes, like the one we have described, may draw nigh with hearts as loving, and dry it. If in the "back settlements" of the large, growing and prosperous town in which we are writing, there should be—as God knows there are too many—whom "nobody owns," let them at this time be remembered and sought out, and let them understand how truly CHRIST'S BIRTH-DAY belongs alike to all. Let us not, however, grow too pitiful and pensive. It is the bright side and not the night side of humanity we would love to paint at Christmas. Let all enjoy it innocently, but heartily. Let the noble and rich on his ancestral domain, carry out the patriotic sentiment of the late Duke of Rutland, who so warmly and worthily said—"I am one of those who think that all classes of our great national community should be frequently brought together—that the poor should be made to know and feel that they are cared for and valued by those whom Providence has placed on the higher steps of the social ladder."—Let the merchant and the manufacturer give their work-people every possible facility for such recreation and kindly intercourse as the season so beautifully warrants. Let the professional classes forget all distinctions—the trading classes all competition—the sects all differences; and let all politics, *isms*, *ologies*, and *pathies*, of all sorts, be swallowed up in uni-



versal good will. If the innkeeper dispenses his beef and ale as of yore, let not the teetotaller be chary of tea and toast. If the healthy faculties of those who have such be brought into genial play, let not the blind, the deaf, the dumb, and the crippled,—or the various inmates of our union workhouses,—be unremembered in their capability to enjoy. In short, let peace, hope and charity, cheerfulness and thanksgiving, reign in every heart; and let our readers be assured how cordially we wish them—one and all—"A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!"

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## NEW YEAR'S EVE.

### A REVERIE.

WE are not disposed to speak lightly of an old friend on his departure, because a new one happens to be approaching; nor value we less the past because our hope in the future is strong. There is a beautiful law of the affections by which those we have once loved keep always lovely—the bloom of youth remaining to the soul, undimmed by the gloom of age, though wrinkles mark the brow. The object we admire, once daguerreotyped on the heart, is a living picture to the last, which no vicissitude can obliterate. And thus it is with the Departing Year. Though his teeth are but shattered icicles, and snow is on his head,—though his limbs are paralysed, his eyes have lost their lustre, his beard be hoary, and his breath be cold,—we know him to be the same who came bounding, in the spring-time of his childhood, over flowers and verdure—who, in the warm summer of his prime, gaily laughed and sang to the ripening sun—and who brought, with sober step, the golden treasures of autumn, and laid them down at our feet with a grateful smile. Give us thy hand Old Year, and let us have one more cordial shake before we part! Come, sit thee down with us by this cheerful Christmas fire, and take thy share once more in our gossip about our pleasant memories and hopes—our cherished philosophies and cheerful fancies—and we will forget thee never!

What a wonderful institution is that of Time! To think of the Great Being who inhabits Eternity (which has been aptly described by James Montgomery as "a moment standing still for ever;" or an instant that never departs—an everlasting now); to think of His love in so adapting a parenthetical portion of it to our capacities, for the conveniences of life, as to give it the character of measurable duration—by cycles, years, months, days, hours, minutes, and even seconds! What a beautiful, as well as wonderful institution; but how little

valued by a thoughtless world! And then, to think of its kindred institution of Space—filled with suns, planets, and moons, to “tell us what o’clock it is,” as the ages roll round; while we ourselves go on as heedless of the grand economy as though God were but playing a game of chance with us, or as though the stars themselves were but a wild, unregulated “snow-storm of light!”

And last of all, the Mind that is given us to appreciate and appropriate all this, if we will—the imponderable, illimitable Mind, that can conceive all these cycles, these seasons, and these objects—that seems to be within us, yet can embrace the mighty things beyond us—that essays to dissect all nature and detect its laws, yet sets all calculation of its own powers at defiance, and aspires to unity with the Infinite Himself! We thank thee, Old Year, for hirpling into our room to take this kind farewell of us, and for bringing with thee the thought of these wondrous things!

But, withdrawing from considerations so vast and profound, we thank thee, too, for the momentary revival, as here thou sittest with us, of countless minor but not less welcome reflections, of a character more personal and social. Thou takest us back in imagination to the days of our own childhood, and we are in a loved old house, on the border of Sherwood Forest, where, on New Years’ Eves, that affectionate mother, now in heaven, was so wont to gladden us with the hospitable and gentle customs of the season, brought down with her, in her girlhood, from her home in the mountains of the Peak. There is a brighter and warmer fire than usual, shining on brighter faces, and answered by warmer hearts. Such games are passing as parental care, and a pious sense of responsibility, dare allow us; and though it be in the house of a Quaker, we are for once indulged with a Christmas carol and a winter’s tale, to interest the mind; while a generous, but innocent home-made beverage is dispensed around, to cheer the body. That gentle mother’s thoughts wander away to her relatives in the Peak; a tear of affection glimmers in her kindly eye, and she trusts all there are as happy as we. We ask her to tell us of her youthful experience there, and she complies, in the narration of some adventurous story; while our father, reverend and grave, sits by, and “mixes all with admonition due.”

And next we are running up from childhood into youth, and at the same time running out from that parental hearth. The boisterous spirit, content no longer with such tender bonds, rushes away to find for itself more animating associations. We join a band of boys, who adjourn from the village street to the front of a large malt-kiln fire, there to “sit the old year out and the new year in,” to the merry

tunes of flute, and fiddle, and rustic song, and all the other aids to such seasonable harmony; and at length the midnight bells strike up, to warn us home aneath the light of the watchful stars; and the voice of parental forgiveness almost outstrips that of remonstrance, which meets us as we slowly, and with throbbing heart, lift the domestic latch, while preparing to put the best side outwards of our explanatory tale.

And a few more years have passed, and again the scene is changed. We have left far behind us that home and that village; and, in a large and busy county town, are aspiring at once to manhood and to fame. Again it is New Year's Eve, but we are not in the humble malt-kiln. It is the festival of the "Literary and Philosophical Society,"—to which we now belong; and the magic spells of science, poetry, music, and beauty, are upon us. The intellect is trying its first flutterings, and the tongue its first public falterings; and the eyes grow dim, the brain whirls round, as the cheers of that assembly crown a maiden speech, which the mother it would most have delighted is not there to hear; for the partings as well as the meetings of life have begun, and her affectionate spirit has already passed away to "the world beyond the grave."

Another change; and in a lone but pleasant villa, near where the Erewash seeks the Trent, we sit by the midnight fire, in deep communion with one who has visited foreign lands and is spending his last New Year's Eve in England preparatory to going again—perhaps for ever! How still is all, save our own subdued voices, until a party returning from a religious "watch-meeting" come singing by, and pass on till their hymn has died away in the distance, like the voice of the year just gone.

Transpose the scene and the time yet again; and in a sweet little cottage on the side of a romantic hill, overlooking one of our large and most enlightened inland towns, we are keeping New Year's Eve by our own fireside, with one object especially beloved, and a cluster of intellectual friends as visitors. Oh, time of comfort and of joy, that shall come never again to us on "this side Jesus Christ!"—But believing, as we thoroughly do, in a heaven where all that is good and beautiful is restored, refined, and made immortal, we will still look "onward and upward," nor linger back with a story beginning with such promise, to end with the cleaving asunder of united hearts. Onward and upward—onward and upward, ever!

At length we have reached the meridian of our mortal span, and are spending New Year's Eve in the city of a great university, with some of the most distinguished philosophers and literati of the time. Society,

on one of its higher platforms, has held out to us its hand ; and we have gazed, as from the top of a pyramid, on the quieter joys of the green and flowery plain we have left at its base ; and so come we down again—though not without some loiterings—to merge once more in the homely and warm-hearted multitude we had left—finding the summit of personal ambition, like the summits of lofty mountains, very picturesque and bright as gazed up to from below, but comparatively isolated, cold, and cheerless, when gained.

Change the scene once more ; and we are enjoying the season in a retired and happy Lincolnshire rectory, with that rare kind of pastor “whose parish knows no bound, except the bound of human sorrow,”—the sky one great cloud, and the earth all covered with snow, outside ; but intensifying more than ever the love within that sweet home.

Another year ; and we are laid upon a sick bed, in the house of strangers. But there is one warm and gentle spirit, even there, watching over us with soothing care ; and bidding us at the same time to hope afresh, as she whispers in soft, low, musical tones—“the new year’s begun.”

Twelve months from that time we were passing New Year’s Eve in a very different manner. It was in wandering, with a poetical friend, through the streets of London, and noting the wondrous contrasts of life that in that mighty city strike the eye anew at every turn ; and we thought how glorious it would be could the tide of luxury, which brings so little true happiness to anybody, be directed into channels where it would help to relieve the misery of everybody—in short, that the luxury of self-gratification would give place to the far more delicious “luxury of doing good.”—

And as we reason’d thus, there stole  
A voice, though still and small,  
Most sweetly whispering to the soul—  
“God’s love is over all !

“Then let not thou a vain despair  
Thy spirit’s faith bedim,  
But in thy sphere do thou thy share,  
And trust the rest to Him.

“For though his own bright hopes to blast  
Man’s tendency may seem ;  
Be sure the wrong will fail at last,  
And God the right redeem !”

And, consoled by this truth, we sought at leisure our suburban abode. Outside the city the night was calm and beautiful—as within it was glittering, throbbing, and restless ; and after so much excitement a

disposition to peace and contemplation filled the heart. But just as in this frame our hand was laid, at twelve o'clock, on the hospitable door we were about to enter, the only breath of air that stirred coming to us from the direction of the city brought with it a tide of sound we shall never cease to hear echoing in the arches of memory. It was that of all the bells in London striking up at one moment to ring the old year out and the new year in, and filling the dome of nature, which a few seconds before was so solemnly silent, with a requiem so strange as to be quite startling, when we remembered that, with some allowance for longitude, a similar sound was emanating at the same time from more than half of Christendom!

But—it would fill a volume, to record all the incidents and emotions we can recall for this season more than forty times returned. What a crowd of friendly images, of the living and the gone, peoples the imagination! what kindred scenes expand around, and what feelings they enkindle, as we see them arrayed, one beyond another, along the far retreating vista! And now another New Year's Eve is at hand; and here we are, with old Eighteen-Hundred-and-Fifty-Three sitting by us in the arm-chair, telling our simple story.

And is there not, for every soul, a deep and generous interest in the thought that millions of hearts as one can be simultaneously reminded of our universal kinship—touched and kindled by one common event? May every old form that is lifeless be cleared away! May every form that is filled with the life of evil die! May infidelity and superstition pass away together, and leave not a rack behind them in the heaven of our hope! But long, long remain those annual festivals—those secular sabbaths, which make the whole world kin, and give a renewed impulse to the charities that form the better portions of popular life! If, in this garrulous effort, we have been somewhat egotistical in our own recollections of New Years' Eves, so far from its arising out of a wish to draw attention from the experience of every other mind, we have a hope that it may have just the contrary effect. We trust it may awaken a thousand more beautiful and interesting analogues in the memories of all who read us; that it may teach to parents the value of happy periodical impressions on the hearts of their children; that it may teach to children the importance of storing their memories with things that will bear, not painful, but holy, useful and happy reflections, while life shall last; and that it may cause those of every age and class to study the character and value of—time. But let us also trust that while it quickens an interest in the passing season more especially, it will not tend to prevent our readers, one and all, from doing “all the good they can, in all the ways they can, to all the

people they can," every hour of their lives. To most of us another year is coming for this purpose. And on Saturday night, while dear old Eighteen-Hundred-and-Fifty-Three passes contentedly away to his Father Eternity, let us resolve to aid his successor, Eighteen-Hundred-and-Fifty-Four, in promoting all the good that time gone by has left imperfectly accomplished!—(*Written for the "Derbyshire Advertiser."*)

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### OUR OLD SHERWOOD GATHERINGS.

A GREAT change has come over the feelings, tastes, and pursuits of our English population during the last thirty years. At the commencement of that period, an assemblage of any magnitude, in a purely rural district, for a purely intellectual and moral purpose—unconnected with special considerations of rank, sect, or party—was one of the most surprising novelties, and such an one occurring at the village of Edwinstowe, Notts, November 3rd, 1841, was alluded to with something of wonder and much approbation by several of the leading journals of the day.

The announcement stated that the principal object of the feast was to honour those worthies who, by the pen, pencil, or otherwise, had contributed to the renown of Sherwood Forest. Mr. Christopher Thomson, the painter, (of whom a memoir is already included in these pages), was chairman, making a most manly and telling speech, which is given at length in his "Autobiography of an Artizan." Mr. Francis Fisher, of Sheffield, nobly followed him, in proposing as a toast—"The mighty and the good of the ages that are gone, whose virtues yet live though their names be forgotten." Another speech paid tribute to Robin Hood, who was regarded by the speaker as more of a patriot than a robber. Next (from Ben Hawkridge) came "The memory of Ben Jonson, Robert Dodsley, Lord Byron, Pemberton the Wanderer, and other departed writers, in whose works the woods of Sherwood wave, its plains expand and bloom, and its heroes live in immortal youth." "The memory of Robert Millhouse" was reverentially added, and a subscription set on foot for a monument near his grave. And then a beautifully carved and silver-mounted walking-stick, cut from native oak, was presented to me, with an inscription engraven on it, in terms too kindly and flattering to be copied here. More speeches followed, including a characteristic one from my father, then in his seventy-second year, who thrilled me through by saying thus publicly that I was "a lad after his own heart." Original and

other songs, fraught with fitting sentiments, varied and enlivened the proceedings; and reports by local papers, echoed by several metropolitan journals, left a memory of the whole affair not likely soon to die.

The success of this experiment suggested another for the summer, on a much larger scale. Of this the *Sheffield Iris*, of July 12, 1842, thus spoke:—"Our readers will remember with pleasure the report last year of the first of these social demonstrations, which we predicted would be the forerunner of still greater, going on till a new feeling of life, love, and intellectuality, should be spread by their influence throughout the rural districts of the whole island. That prediction is materially strengthened by the Gathering we have now to record, which took place near the rural village of Edwinstowe, Nottinghamshire, on Tuesday last, in an immense booth on the Forest-side, where little less than 500 people participated in the proceedings. It was a scene in which noble, or yeoman, or peasant might equally glory;—no patriot, philanthropist, or christian, could have beheld it without deep and joyful emotion; nor could any man, however deficient in patriotic or philanthropic principles, depart from it without having his heart happily imbued and expanded.

"The spot chosen for the booth was just on the outside of the village, upon a fine pastoral strip of land that belts the ancient woods of Bilhagh and Birkland; the oaks of which might be seen tossing their mighty antlers above the brow of a gentle heathery slope on one hand; whilst on the other hand, above the dark trees surrounding Lady Scarborough's mansion and the rectory, the old church lifted up its sunshine-loving spire; and down far away to the east stretched the fine open country in which stands the little town of Ollerton, with not a single object to break the prospect. Would we could present our readers with an accurate sketch of the interior of the rural pavilion! It would form a picture as beautiful as curious. We never saw any artificial contrivance so utterly sylvan yet convenient in its character. It was just some such place that Thomas Miller dreamed about when he sang—

See how the roof from clustering columns sprung,  
Like some high forest-walk, embower'd and lone;  
No branch is there in wild disorder flung,  
But each arch'd bough has with its fellow grown,  
Looking as if, while they in beauty hung,  
Their growth was checked,—

\* \* \* \*

The bundled stems of each low arm bereft,  
And their wide-spreading boughs for spanning arches left.

And lovely devices in flowers of all hues were loosely strung from bough



to bough, and column to column, significant of the objects of the meeting, and of persons it was intended to honour."

In this immense arbour were spread ample tables; instrumental music and vocal minstrelsy of a superior character added to the enjoyment; literary and scientific people from near and far were there. Again, picturesque and noble old Christopher Thomson presided; the routine of loyal toasts, from the Queen to the neighbouring Lord Lieutenant, were honoured; and then—continues the newspaper—

"The Chairman said they were not now assembled for political discussion—they recognised no politics, but those of the amelioration and advancement of the whole human family. They were met to do honour to literature, science, art, and moral worth. And what could be a more laudable object? They had thrown aside for the day the shovel, the pick-axe, the spade, and the loom, and all connected with their every-day employment, for the purpose of making glad their hearts, and of rejoicing together at that shrine. Without the literature of their country they must have been themselves as mere blocks, and in no better situation than the aborigines of Africa or other desert regions. And ought they not to honour that science which could now waft them from the shores of their own country across the Atlantic in eleven days? which could transport them in a few hours from the centre of the midland counties to the metropolis of the kingdom, a journey which only a few years ago it was thought necessary to make their wills before undertaking? They were met to honour that march of civilization, which enabled the traveller who found it necessary to traverse the deserts of Suez to do it with the same ease as he could once walk through those beautiful glades of Sherwood Forest. They were met to honour that moral worth which had clothed this country with its many benefits, and had called up mechanics' institutes and other benevolent associations, and which had in effect assembled them together this day. These were among the objects they met to venerate; and whilst they revered them generally, they must feel especial regard for those who had added to the renown of that locality—their own beloved Sherwood. Who that had passed but a few hours in those beautiful haunts but must have found his whole soul ready to pour forth in adoration before the great Architect of the universe, and to exclaim, "Great and glorious are thy works, O Lord!" Who that had travelled through these glades but must have felt the glow of inspiration rising within him, and his whole soul raised "from nature up to nature's God?" Yes, they had drawn inspiration from these time-honoured and rugged trees; they had gazed upon them, and had, as it were, heard from them tales of distant days and times long past. They had found tongues in those

trees, which had spoken to them of the great and wonderful works of God, from generation to generation, to their especial enjoyment and gratification. They had also by association with them felt themselves as if holding converse with that great hero of the woods, Robin Hood, and his famous

“ Band of gallant Sherwood men,  
Whose like those glades would never greet again.”

They hoped by such innocent demonstrations as this to supersede the pleasures (if such they could be called) of the cockpit, and those other demoralizing amusements which had so greatly and fatally influenced the human character. By their exertions they hoped to cause the soul to be lifted with thankfulness to the Giver of every good; and whilst they were true and reverent to the state, to be just and honest to themselves. He would now give a toast, which he was sure would meet with a hearty response from all present—Health and long life to the Duke of Portland and Earl Manvers, the noble conservators of Old Birkland and Bilhagh.”

Poems written for the occasion, or bearing closely upon it, including a very chaste, glowing, and powerful one by Miss Elizabeth Sheridan Carey; and a sweet lyric by gentle William Hardy, who could not come because he was then dying at Mansfield, were afterwards read, and eloquent—sometimes merry speeches, made—droll, hearty H. S. Wake, a solicitor, from Worksop, saying that, in his younger days, he had regarded Quintillian, not Pestalozzi, as the father of education, and old Mother Shipton as its mother, whilst the birch-rod, of which the neighbouring trees forcibly reminded him, was one of their most powerful ushers;—that though he had not done much in literature, he had contrived to write his own epitaph, which ran—

Beneath this stone lies H. S. W.  
Who from this hour will no more trouble you ;—

And that as he had to propose the toast of “The Countess of Scarborough and the Ladies,” he would just observe that he thought the man who passed woman by and said the grandest object in creation was the Falls of Niagara, must have had a tremendous *cataract* in his eye!

In a very different strain was a beautiful and impressive address from Thomas Lister, “Bard of the Rustic Wreath,” who was called upon for the next sentiment. He described in joyous language the release afforded by this meeting from the toils and cares of everyday life, and expatiated at length upon the probable advantageous results of such popular and animated assemblages. He next detailed

his views of the excellence of modern education over that of old times, ascribing its rise and progress in a great measure to the efforts and perseverance of the benevolent and enlightened Pestalozzi; and then gave a luminous history of the Pestalozzian system from its first establishment in Switzerland, by the Lake of Lucerne, on the shores of which he had lovingly lingered himself with pilgrim-like feelings—for to such education he had paid much attention, though not professionally, and he felt convinced that it was one of the greatest boons that could be bestowed on man. Though not a Forester born, he was one in heart, and his impressions the first time he viewed this county would never be obliterated. Their living laureate, Spencer Timothy Hall, was the guide of himself and his friends, who began their tour from the fine Pestalozzian establishment of Dr. Heldenmaier, at Worksop, and proceeded from thence by Welbeck Abbey and Clumber, and were struck with astonishment on their arrival at old Birkland by the majesty of the scene. They visited Edwinstowe, Clipstone, Hardwick, and Bolsover, and he must confess, although he had only just returned from the cloud-capped mountains of Switzerland, he did not turn up his nose in affected disdain of Old England; but with pride could truly say that amidst orange-groves and spicy-scented flowers, he had ever thought lovingly of England's oaks. He concluded in a strain of impassioned poesy, by proposing "The undying memory of Pestalozzi, and the great and good of past times; and the health and happiness of all the living apostles of popular improvement: may their career be untiring as their aim is glorious!"

It was Dr. G. Calvert Holland, author of "Vital Statistics," and other distinguished works, who then spoke, proposing my health, and alluding in most warm and kindly terms to my own writings, which he was pleased to say had, with those of Pemberton, done more than anything else towards attracting that vast assemblage thither,—a scene from which he should return to his diurnal duties improved in his own heart and mind.

The following is the *Iris's* report of my spontaneous reply—"hear, hears" and "cheers" omitted:—

"Mr. Hall came forward, evidently much affected by the manner in which his health had been received. Although he understood before that some compliment would be paid him, he did not expect anything like what had been said; and should he fail in making a suitable acknowledgment, he hoped they would take it as they would have it, and not as he might utter it. 'If,' said he, 'there be any here who, born in one of the homes of Sherwood Forest, has from earliest youth cherished in his breast the hope that those better days

would come when the humble man turning one talent into two should not be despised on account of the more gifted one making twenty of his ten, let that man exult and sympathise with me, for he is my brother! You have done me the honour to call me a bard, and as one of the least deserving the name I feel thankful and proud that you have; because from the manner in which it was cheered, it is an evidence that in this utilitarian age there is some fresh spring of poetic feeling and appreciation of poetry bursting up among the universal people. Yet, let us not be mistaken. What is poetry, and who are poets? Ebenezer Elliott—the man perhaps who has expressed greater ideas in less compass than any other living writer—who in four words has made us feel how “dimensionless is God’s infinity,” has told us most forcibly that “Poetry is impassioned truth!” This assertion itself is the embodiment of a beautiful, great, and impassioned thought, worthy of a wide though not limitless acceptance. For while we put it in our bosoms, let us not forget that, to the poet all things are poetical. Look at the dimensionless universe full of bright suns, surrounded by their subordinate worlds, and these again by their satellites, all receiving light and heat from the great radiant centre: and beautifully reflecting it to him and to one another! How complicated are their movements,—yet how harmonious! They thread each others courses, but never jostle. They attract and repel, but never draw or drive each other from their spheres. They speed perpetually on their unmarked tracks with the might of the whirlwind, but with the peace of sleep. Great God! is not this a poem for man’s deepest reading? In vegetation we see the tree of the forest, of which we have so many noble specimens around us, if it have free room for growth, sending out the tips of its branches precisely as far as the fibres of its roots, that those branches may shed the moisture of life caught by their leaves during the showers, just where the fibres open their little lips to suck it in. What a happy and instructive poem is this providential interchange! In the progress of mankind, let us mark how, in some particular age and region of the world, an event is prophesied for some far distant age and place; and after the lapse of centuries the prophecy is found to fit the event with the same nice exactitude as that with which a key fits its lock. Is not this the poetry of the Book of Life? Again we see the green bowery dells of our country pouring their little musical rills into the brooks of the valleys, and the brooks combining to form the great rivers of the plains, which flow into the ocean that sends back its vapours again to replenish the land with moisture. Is not this poetry? Could there ever be more delightful poetry than is manifested in all these examples? O, yes! there is still better, richer, sweeter, and

more important poetry than all these—that which is displayed in those affections that spring from the hidden depths of the human heart, and flow in pure delicious rills of feeling from soul to soul among mankind, forming by their combinations first lesser and then greater streams of social love, that all tend at last in one mighty flood to God, as the brooks to the rivers, and the rivers to the sea! And if such be poetry, who are poets? Let us remember what Elliott says of

‘ Scott, whose invention is a magic loom;  
Baillie, artificer of deathless dreams;  
Moore, the Montgomery of the drawing-room;  
Montgomery, the Moore of solemn themes;  
Crabbe, whose dark gold is richer than it seems;  
Keats, that sad name which time shall write in tears;  
Poor Burns, the Scot that would not be a slave;  
Campbell, whom Freedom’s deathless Hope endears;  
White, still remember’d in his cruel grave;  
Ill-fated Shelley, vainly great and brave;  
Wordsworth, whose thoughts acquaint us with our own;  
Didactic, earnest Cowper, grave and gay;  
Wild Southey, flying like the her’n alone;  
And dreamy Coleridge, of the wizard lay;  
With Byron, fervour all, and rivalless  
In might and passion!’

Such are the men of whom we might long discourse; as well as of our own—the Howitts, who have walked forth, and drawn their most fervent inspiration from the lovely scenes that now surround us; or poor Pemberton—Pemberton, the man all heart and soul, of whom our feelings will not let us speak, unless our tears were words;—Thomas Miller, the bard of gentle feelings and bright fancies, whom so many of us remember weaving baskets and songs at one time in Nottingham, and who possesses all as a writer that we love in Morland as a painter. Then, there is Samuel Plumbe, so famed at once for “a random shot o’ country wit,” and for the most simple and tender pathos; and his nephew, our friend, Charles Plumbe, now present, whose “Mornings in June” you have so lately read, and whose poems are ever lovely as *Mornings in June*. Nor should we forget Joanna Williams, whose kindly spirit is rejoicing with Pemberton’s in the “land o’ the leal.” Philip Bailey, who has taken a flight for Fame’s highest pinnacle; and Henry S. Sutton, Sidney Giles, John Westby Gibson, too—and others; all true bards—but is poetic feeling confined to such? Thanks to Heaven and Nature, no! Just in proportion as we commune with our own hearts and with one another on whatever is beautiful and good, our thoughts kindled by tender emotion, or our emotions by good thoughts—inasmuch as we give utterance to our perceptions of the

harmonies of nature, or contribute to that sweet flow of universal affection just symbolised, and bathe our own souls in it often, deep, and long,—believe me, my friends, we are *all* poets in our degree, and not only poets but christians. Go, then, and cultivate this principle everywhere,—by your cottage firesides; in your social assemblies; in your solitary walks through this beautiful country. Let it influence you alike in your avocations and recreations. And if anything I have done has given—as you tell me it has—an impulse to this disposition, so in like manner give it one another. In doing this you will realise my sincerest and most affectionate wish—my most ardent hope—and we shall none of us have lived, or written, or spoken in vain.\*

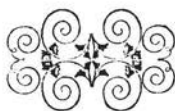
“T. A. Ward, Esq., Town Regent of Sheffield, said he had been induced to attend this meeting by seeing the interesting report of the proceedings last year. He was extremely surprised to see so large an attendance on this occasion. Thankful for the pleasure he had received, he now begged to propose the health of their honoured Chairman. They could not, he said, have had so good a meeting had it not been presided over by a genius who commanded and ensured success.

“This toast, cordially received and acknowledged, it was now suggested that the company should visit ‘the Major Oak;’ and the band having formed outside, they marched across the Forest in the direction of old Birkland. The scene was exhilarating in the extreme, and well-calculated to strike all present with feelings of reverence not unmingled with joy. There were the fern-clad slopes—the old and stately gnarled oak around which the big entombment, as though seeking to shield its only friend against some storm to come—and the footpaths, with their green velvet carpeting woven in nature’s loom; whilst the solemn silence was broken only by the sweet strains of the band. The Major Oak,—or as it is sometimes denominated, the ‘Cock-pen Tree,’ from the fowls of the villagers formerly resorting to it as a roosting place—is a great attraction for all forest pilgrims. It is in the centre of a beautiful

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\* Fourteen or fifteen years after the delivery of this all but unpremeditated address, I was one evening astounded by hearing a young and eloquent speaker, at Derby, quoting its most pithy passages, he believing that he was quoting the Rev. Canon Stowell. He was himself equally astonished the next morning when I showed him the printed report of the old newspaper. I take it for granted that the Rev. Canon would be too much of a christian and a gentleman to commit a wilful plagiarism. Passages of the speech appeared in many newspapers, and he might have read them and copied while forgetting the source; or he might have given them as quotations in some address of his own, his reporter supposing them at the time to be original. Be that as it might, I venture to make this memorandum, lest the reader of to-day should suspect me of having myself committed a wilful plagiarism on the Rev. Canon.—S. T. H.

opening, near to the riding which separates the wood of Bilhagh from the sister wood of Birkland, or the land of birches. It is supposed from good authority to be at least nine hundred years of age, and was in the prime of life when some six hundred years ago Robin Hood and his famous band of outlaws made use of this Forest of Sherwood as one of their haunts. Its trunk, externally, at six inches from the ground, is ninety feet in circumference; at six feet from the ground its circumference is thirty feet; the circumference at the extent of its branches is 240 feet; the interior of the trunk, which is quite hollow, is twenty feet in circumference, and fifteen feet in height, and will contain twelve grown people. It was one of the most beautiful sights ever dreamed of, as the long procession threaded the green and winding wood-walks towards this majestic object. The sky above was serene, and dappled over with soft, sunny cloudlets; the heather below was just bursting into its first purple tint of bloom; the gnarled Forest patriarchs of a thousand years, on every hand, mingled with a profusion of young and lissome birch-trees, glowed most gloriously in that golden evening light; and the whole scene was more like a procession to some popular shrine in the old days of 'merrie England' than a 'demonstration' of the nineteenth century."





FROM CRITICISMS OF  
THE AUTHOR'S EARLIER WORKS.

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"Go on! go on!"—JAMES MONTGOMERY, the poet, to Spencer T. Hall, on reading his first work, "*The Forester's Offering*," in 1841.

"A volume of sterling good sense, pure English, and native poetry, appealing not to our charity but to our perception of excellence."—From a Review by WILLIAM NEWMARCH, Esq., F.R.S.

"It has a sparkling richness and graphichness of description, which rivet the attention and delight the mind. . . . The appearance of this work at the present time is a striking and flattering characteristic of the age.—SHEFFIELD IRIS.

"The effusion of a healthful fancy and a kindly heart, worthy of a wide celebrity."—SPECTATOR.

"He possesses a fine natural taste and great ability, and gives utterance to his thoughts with such truthful earnestness, that by this one little work he holds no inconsiderable place in the ranks of living authors."—From a Review by Mr. JOHN FOWLER, the Biographer of Pemberton.

"Mr. Hall is no common observer of things and men—he sees with the eye of a poet and a philosopher—and his descriptions of scenes and characters are worthy of special attention. He has faith in the strength as well as in the beauty of goodness, and all his efforts are directed to the promotion of right feeling among his fellow men. . . . He writes as if his heart were in his pen.—LEEDS TIMES.

"— One of Nature's gentlemen. . . . The confession of his experiences at the end reminds us of Franklin, and has a noble and impressive moral."—THE ATLAS, March 19, 1842.

"He is one of Nature's freemasons, and knows all her secret signs—one of her high priests, who is at home in her innermost shrines, where he pays his vows and calls upon his fellows to pay theirs. He is her poet and sings her praises—and her champion too, who vindicates her right."—TAIT'S MAGAZINE.

Dr. Hall's later works have been spoken of in similar terms by the Press; while the late Dr. SAMUEL BROWN, a grandson of the celebrated commentator on the Bible, and himself one of the most distinguished minds of his time, thus wrote in 1852:—"Spencer Hall is not unworthy of his names, like Spenser, a poet, like Hall, addicted to philosophy, like both a christian gentleman. His woodland poems have made him amiably known to all his countrymen as the Sherwood Forester; and his scientific experiences have commended him to the respect of many of the true lovers of science, both at home and abroad. His poems are affectionate, sunny, graceful, true to English nature, and also spiritual in their tendency; his scientific narratives and descriptions are ingenious, vigorous and clear. As a man I know him to be a lover of man, given to self-help, enthusiastic, industrious, dutiful, brave, and altogether honourable."

IN deference to the advice of "Friends in Council," the Author has resolved on extending this Volume to SEVEN PARTS, for the purpose of including matter essential to its greater completeness. Should any *bona fide* Subscriber not feel quite satisfied with this arrangement, and will address DR. HALL, care shall be taken that he is not charged for the additional Part.

PART VII, (completing the Volume,) will contain "LAYS FROM THE LAKES;" "A DAY-DREAM ON FOX-CLOUD—or the History of a Derbyshire Landscape;" "THE OUTLAWS' EXCURSION TO CLIPSTON—a Tale of Sherwood Forest;" and other Poems.

South Parade, Burnley,  
August 22nd, 1871.