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CORRESPONDENCE

OF

LORD BYRON.

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CORRESPONDENCE

OF

LORD BYRON,

WITH A FRIEND,

INCLUDING HIS LETTERS TO HIS MOTHER, WRITTEN FROM PORTUGAL,
SPAIN, GREECE, AND THE SHORES OF THE MEDITERRANEAN,
IN 1809, 1810 AND 1811.

ALSO

Recollections of the Poet.

BY THE LATE R. C. DALLAS, ESQ.

THE WHOLE FORMING

An Original Memoir of Lord Byron's Life,

FROM 1808 TO 1814.

AND

A CONTINUATION AND PRELIMINARY STATEMENT OF THE PROCEEDINGS
BY WHICH THE LETTERS WERE SUPPRESSED IN ENGLAND,
AT THE SUIT OF LORD BYRON'S EXECUTORS.

BY THE REV. A. R. C. DALLAS.

VOL. III.

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CORRESPONDENCE

OF

LORD BYRON.

I CONSIDER my correspondence with Lord Byron as ending here: for, though I have other letters from him, and have written more to him, they do not possess the character of a correspondence, being written for some occasion, and leading no further. As I was now near him, for he was at this time seldom absent from town, personal communications naturally superseded writing,

and except a few queries addressed to him on the proofs, his work went smoothly on through the press during the months of January and February, without further solicitation on my part, till we came to the shorter poems, when I urged him to omit the one entitled « Euthanasia,» which he was kind enough to consent to do, but which, I must add, he had not resolution enough to persist in suppressing, and it was inserted in the succeeding editions.

Lord Byron had excited in my heart a warm affection; I felt too some pride in the part I took in combating his errors, as well as in being instrumental to his reputation, and I anxiously wished to see a real change of mind effected in him. Though I could not flatter myself that I had made any successful invasion on his philosophical opinions, and was almost hopeless on the subject, I was still very desirous to keep as much as possible of his freethinking in a latent state, being as solicitous that he should acquire the esteem and affection of men, as I was eager in my anticipation

of the admiration and fame that awaited his genius. It was with this view I wished, and sometimes prevailed upon him to suppress some passages in his compositions: and it was with this view that I often spoke to him of the superior and substantial fame, the way to which lay before him through the House of Lords, expressing my hope of one day seeing him an active and eloquent statesman. He was alive to this ambition, and I looked accordingly for great enjoyment in the session of 1812, now approaching.

In spite of these prospects—in spite of genius—in spite of youth—Lord Byron often gave way to a depression of spirits, which was more the result of his peculiar position than of any gloomy tendency received from nature. The fact is, he was out of his sphere, and he felt it. By the death of his cousin William, who was killed at a siege in the Mediterranean, he unexpectedly became presumptive heir to his grand-uncle, and not long after succeeded to the barony, at a very early period of his minority. His immediate prede-

cessor had long given up society, and, after his fatal duel with Mr Chaworth, had never appeared either at court or in parliament, but shut himself up in Newstead Abbey, the monastic mansion of an estate bestowed upon one of his ancestors by Henry VIII at the suppression of the religious houses; or, if compelled to go to London on business, he travelled with the utmost privacy, taking the feigned name of Waters. From him, therefore, no connexion could spring. His brother, the admiral, was a man very highly respected: but he too, after distinguishing his courage and ability, had been unfortunate in his professional career, and equally avoided society. The elder son of the admiral was an officer of the Guards, who, after the death of his first wife, Lady Conyers, (by whom he had only one daughter), married Miss Gordon, of Gight, a lady related to a noble family in Scotland, of whom Lord Byron was born, and whom his lordship took a pleasure in stating to be a descendant of King James II of Scotland, through his daughter the princess Jane Stuart, who married the Marquis of Huntly. But

neither did she bring connexion. At the death of her husband, she found her finances in an impoverished state, and he consequently by no means associated in a manner suitable to the situation of a son who was one day to take a seat among the Peers of Great Britain. Captain George Anson Byron, whom I have mentioned in the introduction, the brother of her husband, had, a little before she became a widow, obtained the command of a frigate stationed in the East Indies, where, while engaged in a particular service, he received a blow which caused a lingering disorder and his death.¹

¹ I cannot resist the impulse I feel to introduce here the memorial of him, which was published in most of the public papers and journals at the time of his death.

« George Anson Byron was a captain in the British navy, and second son of the late admiral, the Honourable John Byron, by whom he was introduced very early into the service, in which, having had several opportunities of exerting personal bravery, and professional skill, he at-

This was the greatest loss Lord Byron, however unconscious of it, ever sustained. His uncle

tained a great degree of glory. In the war with France, previous to its revolution, he commanded the *Proserpine*, of 28 guns, in which he engaged the *Sphinx*, a French frigate, assisted by an armed ship, and some time after the *Alcmene*, another French frigate, both of which severally struck to his superior conduct and gallantry. In the course of the war he was appointed to the command of the *Andromache*, of 32 guns. He was present at Lord Howe's relief of Gibraltar, and at Lord Rodney's victory over Count de Grasse, to the action of which he was considerably instrumental; for, as it was publicly stated at the time, being stationed to cruise off the Diamond Rock, near Martinico, he kept the strictest watch upon the enemy, by sailing into the very mouth of their harbour, and gave the admiral such immediate notice of their motions, that the British squadron, then lying off St Lucia, were enabled to intercept and bring them to battle. In consequence of that important victory, he was selected by Lord Rodney to carry home Lord Cranstoun, with the account of it. In the dispatches, BYRON'S services were publicly and honourably noticed, and he had the gratification of being personally well received by his Majesty.

« Desirous of serving in the East Indies, and applying

George not only stood high in his profession, but was generally beloved and personally well

for a ship going to that quarter of the globe, he was appointed to the command of the *Phoenix*, of 36 guns, and sailed with a small squadron under the Hon. William Cornwallis, early in the year 1789. Ever active, he sought the first occasion of being serviceable in the war against Tippoo Saib, and at the very outset intercepted the Sultan's transports, loaded with military stores. After this he distinguished himself by landing some of his cannon, and leading a party of his men to assist in reducing one of the enemy's fortresses on the coast of Malabar. Unfortunately he fell a victim to his alacrity in that war.

« When General Abercrombie was on his march towards Seringapatam, the ship which Byron commanded lay off the mouth of a river, on which his assistance was required to convey a part of the army, and it was necessary that he should have an interview with the general. At the time that the interview was to take place, it blew fresh, and there was a heavy sea on the bar of the river; but the service required expedition, and danger disappeared before his eagerness. A sea broke upon the boat, and upset it: in rising through the waves the gunwale struck

connected. Had he returned from India with health, he would have made amends for the failure

him twice violently upon the breast, and when he was taken up, it was not supposed that he could survive the shock he had sustained. He was, however, for a time restored to life, but he was no more to be restored to his country. The faculty did what could be done to preserve him, and then ordered him to England, rather hoping than believing that he could escape so far with life.

« In England he lived above twelve months; during which he suffered the misery of witnessing the dissolution of a beautiful, amiable, and beloved wife, who died at Bath, on the 26th of February, 1793, at the age of twenty-nine years; upon which he fled with his children to Dawlish, and there closed his eyes upon them, just three months and a fortnight after they had lost their mother.

« In his public character he was brave, active, and skilful; and by his death his Majesty lost an excellent and loyal officer. In his private character, he was devout without ostentation, fond of his family, constant in friendship, generous and humane. The memory of many who read this will bear testimony to the justice of the praise; the memory of him who writes it will, as long as that memory lasts, frequently recall his virtues, and dwell with pleasure on his friendship.»

resulting from the supineness or faults of other parts of the family; and his nephew would have grown up in society that would have given a different turn to his feelings. The Earl of Carlisle and his family would have acted a different part. They received his sister kindly as a relation, and there could be no reason why their arms should not have been open to him also, had he not been altogether unknown to them personally, or had not some suspicion of impropriety in the mode of his being brought up attached to him or his mother. Be this as it may, certain it is, his relations never thought of him nor cared for him; and he was left both at school and at college to the mercy of the stream into which circumstances had thrown him. Dissipation was the natural consequence, and imprudences were followed by enmity, which took pains to blacken his character. His Satire had, in some degree, repelled the attacks that had been made upon him, but he was still beheld with a surly awe by his detractors; and that poem, though many were extolled in it, brought him no friends. He felt himself ALONE.—The town was now full; but in its con-

course he had no intimates whom he esteemed, or wished to see. The parliament was assembled, where he was far from being dead to the ambition of taking a distinguished part; there he was, if it may be said, still more *alone*.

In addition to this, his affairs were involved, and he was in the hands of a lawyer, a man of business. To these combined circumstances, more than either to nature, or sensibility on the loss of a mistress, I imputed the depressed state of mind in which I sometimes found him. At those times he expressed great antipathy to the world, and the strongest misanthropic feelings, particularly against women. He did not even see his sister, to whom he afterwards became so attached. He inveighed more particularly against England and Englishmen; talked of selling Newstead, and of going to reside at Naxos, in the Grecian Archipelago; to adopt the eastern costume and customs, and to pass his time in studying the Oriental languages and literature. He had put himself upon a diet, which other men would have called starving, and to which some

would have attributed his depression. It consisted of thin plain biscuits, not more than two, and often one, with a cup of tea, taken about one o'clock at noon, which he assured me was generally all the nourishment he took in the four-and-twenty hours. But he declared that, far from sinking his spirits, he felt himself lighter and livelier for it; and that it had given him a greater command over himself in every other respect. This great abstemiousness is hardly credible, nor can I imagine it a literal fact, though doubtless much less food is required to keep the body in perfect health than is usually taken. He had a habit of perpetually chewing mastic, which probably assisted his determination to persevere in this meagre regimen; but I have no doubt that his principal auxiliary was an utter abhorrence of corpulence, which he conceived to be equally unsightly and injurious to the intellect; and it was his opinion that great eaters were generally passionate and stupid.

As the printing of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage drew towards a conclusion, his doubt of its suc-

cess and consequences was renewed; he was occasionally agitated at the thought, and more than once talked of suppressing it. But while this was passing in his mind, the poem had begun to work its way by report, and the critical junto were prepared, probably through Mr Gifford, for something extraordinary. I now met more visitors, new faces, and some fashionable men at his lodgings; among others, Mr Rogers, and even Lord H. himself. Soon after the meeting of parliament, a bill was introduced into the House of Lords, in consequence of riots in Nottinghamshire, for the prevention of those riots, in which the chief object of the rioters was the destruction of the manufacturing frames throughout the country, so as to compel a call for manual labour. Lord Byron's estate lying in that county, he felt it incumbent on him to take a part in the debate upon the bill, and he resolved to make it the occasion of his first speech in the House. But this Nottingham frame-breaking bill, as it was called, was also interesting to the Recorder of Nottingham, Lord Holland, who took the lead in opposing it. Lord Byron's interest in the county, and

his intention respecting the bill, were made known to Mr Rogers, who, I understood, communicated it to Lord Holland, and soon after made them acquainted. In his Satire, Mr Rogers ranked, among the eulogized, next to Gifford; and Lord Holland, among the lashed, was just not on a par with Jeffrey. The introduction took place at Lord Byron's lodgings, in St James's-street. I happened to be there at the time, and I thought it a curious event. Lord Byron evidently had an awkward feeling on the occasion, from a conscious recollection, which did not seem to be participated by his visitors. Lord Holland's age, experience, and other acquired distinctions, certainly, in point of form, demanded that the visit should have been paid at his house. This, I am confident, Lord Byron at that time would not have done; though he was greatly pleased that the introduction took place, and afterwards waived all ceremony. It would be useless to seek a motive for Lord Holland's condescension, unless it could be shown that it was to overcome evil with good. Whether that was in his mind or not, the new acquaintance improving into

friendship, or something like it, had a great influence in deciding the fate of a new edition of *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, which the publisher, Cawthorn, was now actively preparing, to accompany the publication of the *Hints from Horace*, that was still creeping on in the press.

Meanwhile, the poem that was to be the foundation of Lord Byron's fame, and of the events of his future days, retarded nearly a month longer than was proposed, was now promised to the public for the end of February. The debate on the Nottingham frame-breaking bill was appointed for the 27th of the same month. It was an extraordinary crisis in his life. He had before him the characters of a poet and of an orator to fix and to maintain. For the former, he depended still upon his *Satires*, more than upon *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, which he contemplated with considerable dread; and, for the latter, he not only meditated but wrote an oration, being afraid to trust his feelings, in the assembly he was to address, with an extemporaneous effusion at first. He occasionally spoke parts of it when we

were alone, but his delivery changed my opinion of his power as to eloquence, and checked my hope of his success in parliament. He altered the natural tone of his voice, which was sweet and round, into a formal drawl, and he prepared his features for a part—it was a youth declaiming a task. This was the more perceptible, as in common conversation he was remarkably easy and natural; it was a fault contracted in the studied delivery of speeches from memory, which has been lately so much attended to in the education of boys. It may wear off and yield to the force of real knowledge and activity; but it does not promise well, and they who fall into it are seldom prominent characters in stations where eloquence is required. By the delay of the printer, Lord Byron's maiden speech preceded the appearance of his poem. It produced a considerable effect in the House of Lords, and he received many compliments from the opposition peers. When he left the great chamber, I went and met him in the passage; he was glowing with success, and much agitated. I had an umbrella in my right hand, not expecting that he would put out

his to me—in my haste to take it when offered, I had advanced my left hand—“What,” said he, “give your friend your left hand on such an occasion?” I showed the cause, and immediately changing the umbrella to the other hand, I gave him my right hand, which he shook and pressed warmly. He was greatly elated, and repeated some of the compliments which had been paid him, and mentioned two or three of the Peers who had desired to be introduced to him. He concluded with saying, that he had, by his speech, given me the best advertisement for Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage.

I really believe that I was more anxious than its author about the reception of the poem, the progress of which I had been superintending with great pleasure for some months, and by that anxiety I was led into a precipitate compliance with the solicitations of the printers of the last edition of the Satire, who were proprietors and editors of a literary journal, to favour them with an early review of the poem. I not only wrote

it, but gave it to them in the beginning of February, telling that the work would be out in the middle of that month, but at the same time charging them to take care not to print it before the poem was published. The first of March arrived—the poem did not appear—the review did—I was vexed—it had the appearance of an eulogium prematurely hurried before the public by a friend, if not by the author himself. I was uneasy, lest it should strike Lord Byron in this light, and it was very likely that some good-natured friend or other would expedite his notice of the review. It fortunately happened that the 1st of the month fell on a Sunday, and that Lord Byron spent it at Harrow, if I recollect rightly, with his old tutor Dr Drury, and did not return to St James's-street till Monday evening. On Tuesday I got a copy of the Pilgrimage and hastened with it to him. Lord Valentia had been beforehand in carrying him the review. "I shall be set down for the writer of it," cried he. I told him the fact as it stood. The flattering excitement to which I had yielded, and the examination

of the volume I then put into his hand, dispersed all unpleasant feeling on the occasion, and I assured him that I would take an opportunity of making it publicly known that I had done it without his knowledge. But this was unnecessary, for the publisher of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage had already spread it sufficiently, as I had informed him of it, and far from any harm resulting, it proved no bad advertisement of the publication, which was ready for every inquirer, as fast as the binder could put up the sheets into boards. The blunder passed unobserved, eclipsed by the dazzling brilliancy of the object which had caused it. The attention of the public was universally fixed upon the poem, and in a very few days the whole impression was disposed of. It was not till he had this convincing proof, that Lord Byron had confidence of its success. On the day he received the first copy in boards, he talked of my making an agreement at once with the publisher, if he would offer a hundred or a hundred and fifty guineas for the copyright. I declared I would not; and in three days after,

the publisher talked of being able perhaps to make an offer of three if not four hundred pounds, for he had not a doubt *now* of the sale, and that the edition would go off in less than three months. It went off in three days.

The rapidity of the sale of the poem, its reception, and the elation of the author's feelings, were unparalleled; but before I continue my account of it, I cannot refrain here from making some mention of Newstead Abbey, as it was at this juncture he again began to speak to me freely of his affairs. In spite of the pledge he had given me never to consent to the disposal of it, he occasionally spoke of the sale as necessary to clear him of embarrassments, and of being urged to it by his agent. I never failed to oppose it; but he did not like to dwell upon it, and would get rid of the subject by coinciding with me. I thought his elation at the success of his poem a favourable juncture to take more liberty on so delicate a point, and to avoid the pain of talking, I wrote him the following letter:—

« You cannot but see that the interest I take in all that concerns you comes from my heart, and I will not ask forgiveness for what I am conscious merits a kind reception. Though not acquainted with the precise state of your affairs, nor with those who have been employed in the management of them, I venture to say, in spite of your seeming to think otherwise, that there can be no occasion for the desperate remedies which have been suggested to you. It is an ungracious thing to suspect, but from my ignorance of the individuals by whom your business is conducted, my suspicion can only attach generally to that corrupt state of nature in which self-interest is too apt to absorb all other considerations. Every motion of an agent, every word spoken or written by a lawyer, are so many conductors of the fortunes of their employers into their coffers; consequently every advice from such persons is open to suspicion, and ought to be thoroughly examined before it is adopted. But who is to examine it? I would say *yourself*, did I not think your pursuits, your mind, your very attainments have by no means qualified you for the task. But there are

men, and lawyers too, to be found of disinterested minds, and pure hands, to whom it would not be difficult to save you the mortification of parting with a property so honourable in the annals of your house. For God's sake mistrust him who suggested it, and, if you are inclined to listen to it, mistrust yourself—pause and take counsel before you act.

“Your affairs should be thoroughly submitted to such a man or men as I have mentioned—that is, all the accounts of your minority, and all the transactions relative to your property, with every voucher, should be produced to them, and examined by them. Through them every thing equitable and honourable would be done, and a portion of your income appropriated to the disencumbering of your estates. I am persuaded that you may be extricated from your difficulties without the harsh alternative proposed. You mentioned the subject of your affairs to me on your arrival in England, but you appeared afterwards to wish it dropped; I have, however, frequently wished what, in consequence of your

recent communication, I have now again expressed. Think of it, I beseech you.»

I felt much anxiety at the thought of Newstead Abbey going out of the family—certainly not merely because my nephew was his heir presumptive, though a very natural motive; but I am chevaleresque enough to think the alienation of an estate so acquired, and so long possessed, a species of sacrilege. The following is part of a letter which I wrote home the next day (March 12th, 1812,) after I had seen him. Being written at the time, it is the best continuation of my narrative:—

«The intelligence which Charles brought you of the unparalleled sale of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage must have given you great pleasure, though I think it will be more than counterbalanced by the pain of the subject on which I wrote yesterday to Lord Byron. I still hope it will be avoided, nor, till he talked of it, did I in fact credit that he had the power of disposing of that estate. I was apprehensive that I had gone too far in interfering

in his private affairs; but, quite the contrary, he took my letter in very kind part, though, after a few observations, he dropped the subject. On parting with Charles, we drove to St James's-street, where I staid with him till near six o'clock, and had a good deal of pleasant conversation. I found the enclosed on his table directed to me. On opening it I was surprised at what he writes to me in it; ¹ and still more on finding the contents to be a copy of verses to him, with a letter beginning—'Dear Childe Harold,' expressing the greatest admiration, and advising him to be happy. Neither the letter nor the verses are badly written, and the lady concludes with assuring him, that though she should be glad to be acquainted with him, she can feel no other emotion for him than admiration and regard, as her heart is already engaged to another. I looked at him seriously, and said, that none of *my* family

¹ «I wish you to answer me *sincerely* if the enclosed letter is not from *one of your family*?

Yours,

B.»

would ever write an anonymous letter. I said, that you had all given your opinion *openly*, and I had shown him that opinion. 'You are right, you are right,' he said. 'I am sure it is not any of your family, but I really know nobody who I think care half so much about me as you do, and from many parts of the letter, it is no wonder I should suspect that it came from Mrs Dallas, who I know is a good friend of mine.' He is persuaded, he says, that it is written by somebody acquainted with us. I cannot think so—she says she should like to know if he has received her letter, and requests him to leave a note at Hookham's for Mr Sidney Allison. He says he will not answer it.»

I have found another of my letters immediately following this, from which I shall make such extracts as relate to Lord Byron or the poem. «I called on Mr Murray this morning, who told me that *the whole* edition was gone off. He begged me to arrange with Lord Byron for putting the poem to press again, which is to be done in the handsomest manner, in octavo. He showed me letters

from several of the most celebrated critics, and told me that Mr Gifford spoke with the highest admiration of the second Canto, which he had not seen before; the first he had seen in manuscript. From him I went to St James's-street, where I found Lord Byron loaded with letters from critics, poets, authors, and various pretenders to fame of different walks, all lavish of their raptures. In putting them into my hands he said—'I ought not to show such fine compliments, but I keep nothing from you.' Among his raptured admirers I was not a little surprised to find an elegant copy of verses to him from Mr Fitzgerald, the very first person celebrated in his Satire, of which he reminds him in a short preface note, adding, in a pleasing and amiable manner, that it was impossible to harbour any resentment against the poet of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. It is impossible to tell you half the applause either as to quantity or quality bestowed upon him directly and indirectly. The letter from Lord Holland places him on a par with Walter Scott. But to come to myself:—After speaking of the sale, and settling the new edition,

I said, 'How can I possibly think of this rapid sale, and the profits likely to ensue, without re-collecting'—'What?' 'Think what a sum your work may produce.' 'I shall be rejoiced, and wish it doubled and trebled; but do not talk to me of money. I never will receive money for my writings.' 'I ought not to differ in an opinion which puts hundreds into my purse, but others'—He put out his hand to me, shook mine, said he was very glad, and turned the conversation. The sentiment is noble, but pushed too far. It is not only in this, but in other points, I have remarked a superior spirit in this young man, and which, but for its native vigour, would have been cast away. I am happy to say that I think his successes, and the notice that has been taken of him, have already had upon his mind the cheering effect I hoped and foresaw, and I trust all the gloom of his youth will be dissipated for the rest of his life. He was very cheerful to-day. What a pleasing reflection is it to me that when, on his arrival in England, he put this poem into my hand, I saw its merits, and urged him to publish it. There are two copies binding ele-

gantly and alike : this I mentioned to him, and said, one was for him, 'and the other,' said he, 'for Mrs Dallas : let me have the pleasure of writing her name in it.'»

When I afterwards brought him the copies, he did write the name, and I had the pleasure of finding him ready to send one also to his sister. I handed him another copy to write her name in it, and I was truly delighted to read the following effusion, which I copied before I sent the volume off.

«To Augusta, my dearest sister, and my best friend, who has ever loved me much better than I deserved, this volume is presented by her *father's* son, and most affectionate brother,

«B.»

«*March 14th, 1812.*»

He was now the universal talk of the town : his speech and his poem had not only raised his fame to an extraordinary height, but had dis-

posed all minds to bestow upon him the most favourable reception, to disbelieve his own black account of himself, and to forget that he had been a most bitter satirist. Crowds of eminent persons courted an introduction, and some volunteered their cards. This was the trying moment of virtue, and no wonder it was shaken, for never was there such a sudden transition from neglect to courtship; glory darted thick upon him from all sides; from the Prince Regent and his admirable daughter, to the bookseller and his shopman; from Walter Scott to ****; from Jeffrey to the nameless critics of the *Satirist*, *Scourge*, etc. He was the wonder of greybeards, and the show of fashionable parties. At one of these, he happened to go early when there were very few persons assembled; the Regent went in soon after; Lord Byron was at some distance from him in the room. On being informed who he was, His Royal Highness sent a gentleman to him to desire that he would be presented. The presentation of course took place, the Regent expressed his admiration of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, and continued a conversation, which so fascinated

the Poet, that had it not been for an accidental deferring of the next levee, he bade fair to become a visitor at Carlton House, if not a complete courtier.

I called on him on the morning for which the levee had been appointed, and found him in a full-dress court suit of clothes, with his fine black hair in powder, which by no means suited his countenance. I was surprised, as he had not told me that he should go to Court; and it seemed to me as if he thought it necessary to apologize for his intention, by his observing that he could not in decency but do it, as the Regent had done him the honour to say that he hoped to see him soon at Carlton House. In spite of his assumed philosophical contempt of royalty, and of his decided junction with the opposition, he had not been able to withstand the powerful operation of royal praise, which however continued to influence him only till flattery of a more congenial kind diverted him from the enjoyment of that which for a moment he had been disposed to receive. The levee had been suddenly put off,

and he had dressed before he was informed of the alteration which had taken place. It was the first and last time he was ever so dressed, at least for a British Court. A newly-made friend of his

* * * * *

Lord Byron was more than half prepared to yield to this influence, and the harsh verses that proceeded from his pen were, I believe, composed more to humour his new friend's passions than his own: certain it is he gave up all idea of appearing at Court, and fell into the habit of speaking disrespectfully of the Prince.

But his poem flew to every part of the kingdom, indeed, of the world; his fame hourly increased, and he all at once found himself « translated to the spheres,» and complimented by all with an elevated character, possessing youthful brilliancy, alas! without the stamen necessary to support it.

Among the testimonies of the high feeling

which the blaze of his genius produced, I admired and selected a letter to him from Dr Clarke, which I have an additional pleasure in inserting here, as it does not appear in the doctor's correspondence lately given to the public.

Trumpington, Wednesday Morning.

DEAR LORD BYRON,

FROM the eagerness which I felt to make known my opinions of your poem before others had expressed *any* upon the subject, I waited upon you to deliver my hasty, although hearty, commendation. If it be worthy your acceptance, take it once more, in a more deliberate form! Upon my arrival in town I found that Mathias entirely coincided with me: "Surely," said I to him, "Lord Byron, at this time of life, cannot have experienced such keen anguish as those exquisite allusions to what older men *may* have felt seem to denote." This was his answer: "*I fear he has—he could not else have written such a poem.*" This

morning I read the second Canto with all the attention it so highly merits, in the peace and stillness of my study; and I am ready to confess I was never so much affected by any poem, passionately fond of poetry as I have been from my earliest youth. When, after the 9th stanza, you introduce the first line of the 10th,

Here let me sit upon the mossy stone,

the thought and the expression are so truly Petrarch's, that I would ask you whether you ever read

Poi quando 'l vero sgombra
 Quel dolce error, pur li medesimo assido
 Me freddo, pietra morta in pietra viva,
 In guisa d'uom che pensi, e pianga e scriva.

Thus rendered by Mr Wilmot, the only person capable of making Petrarch speak English—

But when rude truth destroys
 The loved illusion of the dreamed sweats,

*I sit me down on the cold rugged stone,
Less cold, less dead than I, and think and weep alone.*

The eighth stanza, "*Yet if as holiest men,*" etc., has never been surpassed. In the 23d, the sentiment is at variance with Dryden,

Strange cozenage! *none* would live past years again.

And it is perhaps an instance wherein, for the first time, I found not within my own breast an echo to your thought, for I would not "*be once more a boy;*" but the generality of men will agree with you, and wish to tread life's path again.

In the 12th stanza of the same Canto, you might really add a very curious note to these lines,

Her sons too weak the sacred shrine to guard,
Yet felt some portion of their mother's pains—

by stating this fact.—When the last of the Metopes was taken from the Parthenon, and, in

moving it, great part of the superstructure with one of the triglyphs, was thrown down by the workmen whom Lord Elgin employed, the Disdar, who beheld the mischief done to the building, took his pipe out of his mouth, dropped a tear, and, in a supplicating tone of voice, said to Lusieri—τέλος! I was present at the time.

Once more I thank you for the gratification you have afforded me.

Believe me,

Ever yours

Most truly,

E. D. CLARKE.

A gratifying compliment was paid him on the appearance of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, by the order given by the Princess Charlotte for its being magnificently bound. It was displayed for some days in Eber's shop, in Bond-street. The

binding was green morocco, with superfine gilt tooling on the exterior. Lord Byron was highly gratified when I described it to him.

Though flattery had now deeply inoculated him with its poison, he was at first unwilling to own its effects even to himself, and to me he declared that he did not relish society, and was resolved never to mix with it.

He made no resistance, however, to its invitations; and, in a very short time, he not only willingly obeyed the summons of fashion, but became a votary. One evening, seeing his carriage at his door in St James's-street, I knocked and found him at home. He was engaged to a party, but it was not time to go, and I sat nearly an hour with him. He had been reading *Childe Harold*, and continued to read some passages of it aloud; he enjoyed it, and I enjoyed it doubly. On putting it down, he talked of the parties he had been at, and of those to which he was invited, and confessed an alteration in his mind: "I own," said he, "I begin to like them."

Holland house, on which so much of the point of his Satire had been directed, being now one of his most flattering resorts, it was no longer difficult to persuade him to suppress his satirical writings. The fifth edition of *ENGLISH BARDS AND SCOTCH REVIEWERS* was now ready to issue from the press; the *HINTS OF HORACE* was far advanced; and the *CURSE OF MINERVA* was in preparation. He had not listened to me fully, but he had begun not only to be easy at the delay of the printing of these poems, but to desire it, as if he had it already in contemplation to be guided by the reception of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage: yet, even after this was clear, he continued the delay; but he did not immediately decide upon the suppression of them till some of his new friends requested it. Upon this, the bookseller who was to publish them, Cawthorn, was apprised of the author's intention, and desired to commit the whole of the new edition of *ENGLISH BARDS AND SCOTCH REVIEWERS* to the flames; and the carrying this into execution was entrusted entirely to him.

The expenses of the edition being defrayed, as

well as those attending the other poems that were also stopped in the press, and the bookseller having reaped all the profits of the four preceding editions, he had literally no right to complain on this subject; but, as far as respects the right attached to expectations raised, he had perhaps cause to think himself ill-used. He had undertaken to publish what had been refused by other publishers, had risked making enemies, and had not neglected the publication entrusted to him. He ought to have had the advantages attending the circulation of the author's other works. I wished it, and proposed it. Lord Byron had been directed to Miller, as the publisher in fashion, and from motives I have already stated, Cawthorn was deprived of a patronage which he reasonably expected. He naturally felt sore, but endeavoured to submit with a good grace. The suppression of the Satire was gratifying to Lord Byron's new friends, but it had the effect of raising the value of the copies that could be obtained. An Irish edition was circulated unadvertised, but it did not appear to renew animosity. He was completely forgiven as the venomous satirist, and

embraced as the successful poet of the Pilgrimage. I must not omit to say that he had some occasional doubts, or rather moments of assumed modesty, as to the merit of his new poem, in spite of its success.—“I may place a great deal of it,” said he, “to being a Lord.” And again—“I have made them afraid of me.” There may be something in both these remarks, as they regard the celerity of his fame, and the readiness of the “all hail” that was given to him; but the impression made by *Childe Harold* on reiterated perusals, and the nerve of his succeeding works, leave not a moment’s doubt of his success being indeed the just meed of his genius.

I was now to see Lord Byron in a new point of view. The town was full of company, as usual in the spring. Besides the speech he had made on the Frame-Breaking Bill, he again attracted notice on the Catholic question, which was agitated warmly by the Peers in the beginning of April. His name was in every mouth, and his poem in every hand. He converted criticism to adulation, and admiration to love. His stanzas abounded

with passages which impressed on the heart of his readers pity for the miserable feelings of a youth who could express so admirably what he felt; and this pity, uniting with the delight proceeding from his poetry, generated a general affection of which he knew not the value; for, while the real fruits of happiness clustered around him, he neglected them, and became absorbed in gratifications that could only tend to injure the reputation he had gained. He professedly despised the society of women; yet female adulation became the most captivating charm to his heart. He had not admitted the ladies of his own family to any degree of intimacy—his aunt and his cousins, were kept at a distance, and even his sister had hitherto shared the like fate. Among the admirers who had paid their tribute in prose or verse to the Muse of the Pilgrimage, I have already mentioned one who asked for an acknowledgment of the receipt of her letter. He had treated that letter lightly, and said he would not answer it. He was not able to keep his resolution, and on finding his correspondent to be distinguished for eccentric notions, he became so

enraptured, so intoxicated, that his time and thoughts were almost entirely devoted to reading her letters and answering them. One morning he was so absorbed in the composition of a letter to her, that he barely noticed me as I entered the room. I said, pray go on, and sat down at one side of the table at which he was writing, where I looked over a newspaper for some time. Finding that he did not conclude, I looked at him, and was astonished at the complete abstraction of his mind, and at the emanation of his sentiments on his countenance. He had a peculiar smile on his lips, his eyes beamed the pleasure he felt from what was passing from his imagination to his paper; he looked at me and then at his writing; but I am persuaded he did not see me, and that the thoughts with which he teemed prevented his discerning any thing about him. I said, "I see you are deeply engaged." His ear was as little open to sound as his eye to vision. I got up, on which he said, "Pray, sit." I answered that I would return: this roused him a little, and he said, "I wish you would." I do not think he knew what passed, or observed my

quitting him. This scene gave me great pain; I began to fear that his fame would be dearly bought. Previous to the appearance of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage his mind had gained some important conquests over his senses, and I also thought he had barred his heart against the grosser attacks of the passion of vanity. If these avenues of destruction to the soul were again to be thrown open by the publication of the poem, it were better that it never had been published. I called upon him the next day, when I found him in his usual good humour. He told me to whom he had been writing, and said he hoped I never thought him rude. I took my usual liberty with him, and honestly warned him against his new dangers. While I was with him the lady's page brought him a new letter. He was a fair-faced delicate boy of thirteen or fourteen years old; whom one might have taken for the lady herself. He was dressed in a scarlet hussar jacket and pantaloons, trimmed in front in much the same manner with silver buttons and silver twisted lace, with which the narrow slit cuffs of his jacket were also embroidered. He had light hair curl-

ing about his face, and held a feathered fancy hat in his hand, which completed the scenic appearance of this urchin Pandarus. I could not but suspect at the time that it was a disguise; if so, he never disclosed it to me, and as he had hitherto had no reserve with me, the thought vanished with the object of it, and I do not precisely recollect the mode of his exit. I wished it otherwise, but wishing was in vain.

Lord Byron passed the spring and summer of 1812 intoxicated with success, attentions of every kind, and fame. In the month of April he again promised me the letters to his mother, as a pledge that he would not part with Newstead; but early in the autumn he told me that he was urged by his man of business, and that Newstead *must* be sold. This lawyer appears to have had an undue sway over him. Newstead was brought to the hammer at Garraway's. I attended the auction. Newstead was not sold, only 90,000*l.* being offered for it. What I remember that day affected me considerably. The auctioneer was questioned respecting the title: he answered that, "the title

was a grant from Henry VIII. to an ancestor of Lord Byron's, and that the estate had ever since regularly descended in the family." I rejoiced to think it had escaped that day; but my pleasure did not last long. From Garraway's I went to St James's-street, where he told me that he had made a private agreement for it with Mr Cloughton for the sum of 140,000*l.* I saw the agreement; but some time after it turned out that the purchaser could not complete the purchase, and forfeited, I think, 20,000*l.*, the estate remaining Lord Byron's. It has been since sold, I know not for what sum, as I was abroad at the time, and my correspondence with Lord Byron had ceased. It is a legal maxim, that "the law abhors a perpetuity." I have nothing to say against opening the landed property of the kingdom to purchasers who may be more worthy of it than the sellers; but there are two considerations which cannot but affect the mind of a thinking man. It disgraces ancestry, and it robs posterity. A property bestowed, like Newstead, for deeds of valour and loyalty, is a sacred gift, and the inheritor that turns it into money commits a kind

of sacrilege. He may have a legal, but he has no moral, no honourable right to divert the transmission of it from the blood that gained it. I cannot but think that the reviewer in the Edinburgh Review, who speaks of Newstead, has overshot his aim in ornamenting the abbey with the bright reflections of its possessor's genius. In a poet, imagination requires the alliance of soul: without both no man can be a whole poet. Lord Byron should have eat his daily biscuit with his cup of tea to preserve Newstead. The reviewer's remarks arose from a perusal of the account given of it by Walpole. I will here insert the account and the critique:—

“As I returned,” says Walpole, “I saw Newstead and Althorpe; I like both. The former is the very abbey. The great east window of the church remains, and connects with the house: the hall entire; the refectory entire; the cloister untouched; with the ancient cistern of the convent, and their arms on it: it is a private chapel, quite perfect. The park, which is still charming,

has not been so much unprofaned. The present Lord has lost large sums, and paid part in old oaks; five thousand pounds of which have been cut near the house. In recompense, he has built two baby forts, to pay his country in castles for damage done to the navy; and planted a handful of Scotch firs, that look like plough-boys dressed in old family liveries for a public day. In the hall is a very good collection of pictures, all animals; the refectory, now the great drawing-room, is full of Byrons; the vaulted roof remaining, but the windows have new dresses making for them by a Venetian tailor.”

On this the reviewer remarks:—

“This is a careless but happy description of one of the noblest mansions in England; and it will *now* be read with a far deeper interest than when it was written. Walpole saw the SEAT of the BYRONS, old, majestic, and venerable: but he saw nothing of that magic beauty which Fame sheds over the habitations of Genius, and which

now mantles every turret of Newstead Abbey. He saw it when decay was doing its work on the cloister, the refectory, and the chapel; and all its honours seemed mouldering into oblivion. He could not know that a voice was soon to go forth from these antique cloisters, that should be heard through all future ages, and cry, 'Sleep no more,' to all the house. Whatever may be its future fate, Newstead Abbey must henceforth be a memorable abode. Time may shed its wild flowers on the walls, and let the fox in upon the courtyard and the chambers: it may even pass into the hands of unlettered pride or plebeian opulence—but it has been the mansion of a mighty poet. Its name is associated to glories that cannot perish, and will go down to posterity in one of the proudest pages of our annals."¹ This is rather a poetical effusion than a sober criticism. I have heard that the purchaser means to remove the abbey as rubbish, and to build a modern villa upon its site. It may be as well for the poet's fame, for though his genius might mantle every

¹ Edinburgh Review for Dec. 1818, No. 61, pages 90, 91.

stone from the foundation to the pinnacles, it would not cover the sale of it.¹

About this time Lord Byron began, I cannot say to be cool, for cool to me he never was, but I thought to neglect me, and I began to doubt whether I had most reason to be proud of, or to be mortified by, my connexion and correspondence with him. The pain arising from the mortification in this change was little compared to that which I felt in the disappointment of my hope that his success would elevate his character as well as raise his fame. I saw that he was gone, and it made me unhappy. With an imagination, learning, and language, to exalt him to the highest character of a poet, his mind seemed not sufficiently strong to raise him equally high in the not adventitious character of a great man.

In the autumn he took a place in the country, near Lord * * *s, where he again became absorbed

¹ I find that I have been misinformed, and that the present owner preserves the original appearance of the abbey with scrupulous exactness.

for a few months, and where he wrote his first dedication (a poetical one) of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.

In the beginning of the year 1813, he seemed to be a little recovered from his intoxication. He lived in a house in Bennet-street, St James's, where I saw him almost every day, by his own desire, and his kindness and attentions seemed uninterrupted. I confess, I suspected that the independence of my opinions had had some effect upon his mind. I have the copy of a letter by me written to him in the autumn of 1812, when he was going to the country-house he had taken, as I have just mentioned, and which I will insert here as another proof of that independence.

MY DEAR LORD BYRON,

You talked of going out of town in a few days; pray remember to leave St Simon's works for me. I will call again, but you may be gone: if so I shall be glad to hear from you. Wherever you are I most sincerely wish you happy; but let me,

with my old sincerity, add that I am confident you are not at present in the road of happiness. Do not hate me for this, for be assured that no man, nor *woman* either, more sincerely wishes you the enjoyment of every good than does

Your truly obliged and faithful

R. C. DALLAS.

Brickstables, August 19th, 1812.

He again became satiated with praise and pleasure, and turned his mind to composition: I was highly gratified, allowing it even to be flattery, at his acknowledgment of being pleased with the novels I had written, and I was still more flattered when he proposed to me to write one jointly. I thought the proposal made on a transient thought, and was rather surprised, when I next saw him, to receive from him two folio sheets of paper, accompanied with these words: «Now do you go on.» On opening the paper I read «Letter I., Darrel to G. Y.» and found it to be the com-

mencement of a novel. I was charmed to find his intention real; but my pleasure, which continued through the perusal, forsook me when I reflected on the impossibility of my adopting either the style or the objects he had in view, as he dwelled upon them.¹ I told him I saw that he meant to laugh at me; but I kept the manuscript, though at the time I had no intention of using it. However, in writing another novel, I was tempted to build a very different structure upon it than was originally planned, and it stands the first letter in my novel of Sir Francis Darrel.

I again enjoyed his friendship and his company with a pleasure sweet to my memory, and not easily expressed. He was in the habit of reading his poems to me as he wrote them. In the spring of this year, 1813, he read me the *Giaour*; he assured me that the verses containing the simile of the scorpion were imagined in his sleep,

¹ The letter, exactly as he wrote it, will appear at the end of this volume.

except the last four lines. At this time I thought him a good deal depressed in spirits, and I lamented that he had abandoned every idea of being a statesman. He talked of going abroad again, and requested me to keep in mind that he had a presentiment that he should never return. He now renewed a promise which he had made me of concluding *Childe Harold*, and giving it to me, and requested me to print all his works after his death. I considered all this as the effects of depression—his genius had but begun the long and lofty flight it was about to take, and he was soon awakened to the charm of occasional augmentations of fame. It was some time before he determined on publishing the *Giaour*; I believe not till Mr Gifford sent him a message, calling on him not to give up his time to slight compositions, as he had genius to send him to the latest posterity with Milton and Spenser. Meanwhile he had written the *Bride of Abydos*. Towards the end of the year his publisher wrote him a letter, offering a thousand guineas for these two poems, which he did not accept, but suffered him to publish them. He was so pleased with the flat-

tery at the shop, that he forgot his dignity, and once he even said to me, that money levelled distinction * * * * *

The American government had this year sent a special embassy to the court of Petersburg. Mr Gallatin was the ambassador, and my nephew George Mifflin Dallas was his secretary. When the business in Russia was finished they came to England. My nephew had brought over with him an American poem—American literature rated very low. The Edinburgh Review says: “The Americans have none—no native literature, we mean. It is all imported. They had a Franklin indeed, and may afford to live half a century on his fame. There is, or was, a Mr Dwight, who wrote some poems; and his baptismal name was Timothy. There is also a small account of Virginia by Jefferson, and an epic by Joel Barlow—and some pieces of pleasantry by Mr Irving. But why should the Americans write books, when a six weeks’ passage brings them, in their own tongue, our sense, science, and genius, in bales

and hogsheads?»¹—Much cannot be said for the liberality of this criticism. Some names, it is true, have been doomed by the spirit of ridicule to mockery; Lord Byron himself exclaims against both baptismal and surname—

Oh! Amos Cottle!—Phœbus! what a name
To fill the speaking-trump of future fame!

So, when it suited his satire, he split the southern smooth monosyllable of Brougham into the northern rough dissyllable of Brough-am :

Beware lest blundering Brough-am spoil the sale,
Turn beef to bannocks—cauliflowers to kail.

Yet we know that very unsonorous names have, by greatness of mind, by talents and by virtues, been exalted to the highest pitch of admiration.—Pitt, and Fox, and Petty, owe their grandeur to the men who have borne them. Tom Spratt and Tom Tickell were English poets and celebrated characters. Had Mr Dwight written the *Seasons*,

¹ Edinburgh Review, No. LXI, p. 144, Dec. 1818.

he would have been a far-famed poet, in spite of his name being Timothy. The reasoning is equally unintelligible when the reviewer decides it to be sufficient for the Americans to import sense, science, and genius, in bales and hogsheads. Might not the Americans as reasonably ask why the lawyers of Edinburgh should write reviews, when three days bring them, in the tongue they write in, all the criticism of England in brown paper packages?—Poetical genius is a heavenly spark, with which it pleases the Almighty to gift some men. It has shone forth in the other quarters of the globe: if it be bestowed on an American, the ability of importing English and Scotch poems is no good reason why it should be smothered.—The poem which my nephew brought to England was one of those pieces of pleasantry by an American gentleman.¹ It was a burlesque of a favourite fine poem of one of our most celebrated poets, and, as a specimen of a

¹ The gentleman to whom it was attributed is now said not to be the author of it. It was not denied at the time the Americans in London ascribed it to him.

promising nature, it was reprinted in London. With this motive, only the ingenuity of the writer was considered. It could not be thought more injurious to the real bard than Cotton's burlesque to Virgil; nor could the American hostility to a gallant British commander be suspected of giving a moment's pain—at least I did not think so.

I believe that the nature of this American poem was known to the proprietor of the Quarterly Review, so far as it was a burlesque on the Lay of the Last Minstrel. I know it; was yet was he as a publisher so anxious to get it, that he engaged Lord Byron to use his utmost influence with me to obtain it for him. The following is the letter his Lordship wrote to me on the occasion:

Dec. 18th, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR,

If you wish to do me the greatest favour possible, which I am soliciting for another, you will let Mr Murray (who is in despair about it) have

the publication of the S. F. if not absolutely impracticable. By so doing you will return *good* for evil; and, in the true gospel spirit, "heap coals of fire upon his head"—pray do. I am sure he will now *deal* liberally by you, and I see him so anxious on this subject, that I quite feel for him, and so will you. You shall have it all your own way. I have really no other motive whatever but to assist Murray, and certainly *not* to injure you. This will not only be a *triumph* to yourself, but will set all right between you and him, and I hope be of eventual service to both. Pray pardon my importunity, and, if you can, comply with it.

Ever most truly yours,

BYRON.

P. S. You can easily dispose of Cawthorn, if he has already arranged with you; don't be *embarrassed* about that. I will settle it, or ensure your doing so.

The following was my answer :—

Worton House, Dec. 19th, 1813.

MY DEAR LORD,

I WOULD not hesitate a moment to lay aside the kind of resentment I feel against Mr Murray, for the pleasure of complying with the desire you so strongly express, if it were in my power; but judge of the impracticability, when I assure you, that a considerable portion of the poem is in the printer's hands, and that the publication will soon make its appearance. It has indeed been *morally* impossible for me to do it for some time. I think I need not protest very eagerly to be believed when I say, that I should be happy to do what you would esteem a favour. I wish for no triumph over Murray. The post of this morning brought me a letter from him. I shall probably answer it at my leisure some way or other. I wish you a good night, and ever am,

My dear Lord,

Your attached and faithful

R. C. DALLAS.

In less than a fortnight, the current of satisfaction, arising from praise which had run thus high and thus strong in favour of his publisher, ebbed with equal rapidity, and so low that, in addition to the loss of this coveted American poem, the publication of his Lordship's future works had nearly gone into a different channel. On the 28th of December I called in the morning on Lord Byron, whom I found composing "The Corsair." He had been working upon it but a few days, and he read me the portion he had written. After some observations he said, "I have a great mind—I will." He then added that he should finish it soon, and asked me to accept of the copyright. I was much surprised. He had, before he was aware of the value of his works, declared that he never would take money for them, and that I should have the whole advantage of all he wrote. This declaration became morally void when the question was about thousands, instead of a few hundreds; and I perfectly agree with the admired and admirable Author of Waverley, that "the wise and good accept not gifts which are made in heat of blood,

and which may be after repented of.”¹—I felt this on the sale of Childe Harold, and observed it to him. The copyright of the Giaour and the Bride of Abydos remained undisposed of, though the poems were selling rapidly, nor had I the slightest notion that he would ever again give me a copyright. But as he continued in the resolution of not appropriating the sale of his works to his own use, I did not scruple to accept that of the Corsair, and I thanked him. He asked me to call and hear the portions read as he wrote them. I went every morning, and was astonished at the rapidity of his composition. He gave me the poem complete on new-year’s day, 1814, saying, that my acceptance of it gave him great pleasure, and that I was fully at liberty to publish it with any bookseller I pleased, independent of the profit. I was highly delighted with this confidential renewal of kindness, and he seemed pleased that I felt it so. I must however own, that I found kindness to me was not the sole motive of the gift. I asked him if he wished me

¹ Monastery, vol. iii, c. 7.

to publish it through his publisher? "Not at all," said he; "do exactly as you please: he has had the assurance to give me his advice as to writing, and to tell me that I should out-write myself.—I would rather you would publish it by some other bookseller."—The circumstance having lowered the pride of wealth, a submissive letter was written, containing some flattery, and, in spite of an awkward apology, Lord Byron was appeased. He requested me to let the publisher of the former poems have the copyright, to which I of course agreed.

While the *Corsair* was in the press, Lord Byron dedicated it to Mr Moore, and at the end of the poem he added "Stanzas on a Lady weeping." These were printed without my knowledge. They no sooner appeared, acknowledged by his name in the title-page, than he was violently assailed in the leading newspapers, in verse and in prose; his life, his sentiments, his works, the suppressed Satire, with the names of his new friends at length, was reprinted in great portions in the *Courier*, *Post*, and other papers. Among other

things, an attempt was made to mortify him, by assertions of his receiving large sums of money for his writings. He was extremely galled; and indeed the daily continued attempts to *écraser* him were enough to gall him. There was no cessation of the fire opened upon him. I was exceedingly hurt; but he had brought it upon himself, after having by his genius conquered all his enemies. He did not relish the *écraser* system when it was turned upon himself; and he derived no aid from those who had got him into the scrape. In the goading it occasioned he wrote to me. This was his letter:—

Feb. 17th, 1814.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE Courier of this evening accuses me of having « received and pocketed » large sums for my works. I have never yet received nor wished to receive a farthing for any. Mr Murray offered a thousand for the *Giaour* and *Bride of Abydos*, which I said was too much, and that if he could afford it at the end of six months, I would then direct how it might be disposed of; but neither

then, nor at any other period, have I ever availed myself of the profits on my own account. For the republication of the Satire I refused 400 guineas; and for the previous editions I never asked nor received a *sous*, nor for any writing whatever. I do not wish you to do any thing disagreeable to yourself; there never was nor shall be any conditions nor stipulations with regard to any accommodation that I could afford you: and, on your part, I can see nothing derogatory in receiving the copyright. It was only assistance afforded to a worthy man, by one not quite so worthy.

Mr Murray is going to contradict this; ¹ but your *name* will not be mentioned: for your own part, you are a free agent, and are to do as you please. I only hope that now, as always, you will think that I wish to take no unfair advantage of the accidental opportunity which circumstances permitted me of being of use to you.

Ever yours most truly,

BYRON.

¹ The statement of the Courier, etc.

P. S. It is a cruel and bitter thing on all parties to be obliged to notice this; but the statement is made in such a manner as requires it to be done away with, founded as it is on utter falsehood.

On receiving this letter, I immediately wrote one to be published in the morning papers; but I had hardly finished writing it when I received another from him, as follows.

Feb. 18th, 1814.

MY DEAR SIR,

SINCE I wrote to you last night, it is determined that Murray shall say nothing (and certainly I shall not), but allow them to rail on, and lie to the uttermost.—Do *not* you, therefore, think of involving yourself in the squabble by any statement, but let it rest.

Ever yours,

B.

In the first of these letters it is very evident that

Lord Byron wished me to interfere, though he was too delicate to ask it; and, in the second letter, nothing can be clearer than that he was hurt at the determination which had been taken, that his publisher should say nothing. I therefore resolved to publish the letter I had written, but at the same time to have his concurrence. I therefore took it to town, and read it to him. He was greatly pleased, but urged me to do nothing disagreeable to my feelings. I assured him that it was, on the contrary, extremely, agreeable to them; and I immediately carried it to the proprietor of the Morning Post, with whom I was acquainted. I sent copies to the Morning Chronicle, and other papers, and I had the satisfaction of finding the persecution discontinued.

The following is the letter :—

To the Editor of the Morning Post.

SIR,

I have seen the paragraph in an evening paper,

in which Lord Byron is *accused* of "receiving and pocketing" large sums for his works. I believe no one who knows him has the slightest suspicion of this kind; but the assertion being public, I think it a justice I owe to Lord Byron to contradict it publicly. I address this letter to you for that purpose, and I am happy that it gives me an opportunity at this moment to make some observations which I have for several days been anxious to do publicly, but from which I have been restrained by an apprehension that I should be suspected of being prompted by his lordship.

I take upon me to affirm that Lord Byron never received a shilling for any of his works. To my certain knowledge the profits of the *Satire* were left entirely to the publisher of it. The gift of the copyright of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* I have already publicly acknowledged in the dedication of the new edition of my novels; and I now add my acknowledgment for that of the *Corsair*, not only for the profitable part of it, but for the delicate and delightful manner of bestowing it while yet unpublished. With respect to

his two other poems, the Giaour and the Bride of Abydos, Mr Murray, the publisher of them, can truly attest that no part of the sale of them has ever touched his hands, or been disposed of for his use. Having said thus much as to facts, I cannot but express my surprise, that it should ever be deemed a matter of reproach that he should appropriate the pecuniary returns of his works. Neither rank nor fortune seems to me to place any man above this; for what difference does it make in honour and noble feelings, whether a copyright be bestowed, or its value employed in beneficent purposes. I differ with my Lord Byron on this subject, as well as some others; and he has constantly, both by word and action, shown his aversion to receiving money for his productions.

The pen in my hand, and affection and grateful feelings in my heart, I cannot refrain from touching upon a subject of a painful nature, delicate as it is, and fearful as I am that I shall be unable to manage it with a propriety of which it is susceptible, but of which the execution is not

easy. One reflection encourages me, for if magnanimity be the attendant of rank (and all that I have published proves such a prepossession in my mind), then have I the less to fear from *the most illustrious*, in undertaking to throw into its proper point of view a circumstance which has been completely misrepresented or misunderstood.

I do not purpose to defend the publication of the two stanzas at the end of *The Corsair*, which has given rise to such a torrent of abuse, and of the insertion of which I was not aware till it was published : but most surely they have been placed in a light which never entered the mind of the author, and in which men of dispassionate minds cannot see them. It is absurd to talk seriously of their ever being meant to disunite the parent and child, or to libel the sovereign. It is very easy to descant upon such assumed enormities; but the assumption of them, if not a loyal error, is an atrocious crime. Lord Byron never contemplated the horrors that have been attributed to him. The lines alluded to were an impromptu, upon a single well-known fact; I mean the failure

in the endeavour to form an administration in the year 1812, according to the wishes of the author's friends; on which it was reported that tears were shed by an illustrious female. The very words in the context show the verses to be confined to that one circumstance, for they are in the singular number, *disgrace, fault*. What disgrace?—what fault? Those (says the verse) of not saving a sinking realm (and let the date be remembered, March 1824), by taking the writer's friends to support it. Never was there a more simple political sentiment expressed in rhyme. If this be libel, if this be the undermining of filial affection, where shall we find a term for the language often heard in both Houses of Parliament?

While I hope that I have said enough to show the hasty misrepresentation of the lines in question, I must take care not to be misunderstood myself. The little part I take in conversing on politics, is well known among my friends to differ completely from the political sentiments which dictated these verses; but knowing their

author, better than most who pretend to judge of him, and with motives of affection, veneration, and admiration, I am shocked to think that the hasty collecting of a few scattered poems, to be placed at the end of a volume, should have raised such a clamour.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

R. C. DALLAS.

I was delighted, and Lord Byron was pleased, with the effect of my public Letter. I passed a very pleasant morning with him a day or two after it appeared, and he read me several letters he had received upon it. Some days after this, he received a letter from a friend, offering to write in his defence, to which he returned the following answer:—

February 28, 1814.

MY DEAR W——.

I have but a few moments to write to you.

Silence is the only answer to the things you mention; nor should I regard that man as my friend, who said a word more on the subject. I care little for attacks, but I will not submit to *defences*; and I do hope and trust that *you* have never entertained a serious thought of engaging in so foolish a controversy. Dallas's letter was to his credit merely as to facts which he had a right to state; *I* neither have nor shall take the least *public* notice, nor permit any one else to do so. If I discover the writer, then I may act in a different manner; but it will not be in writing.

An expression in your letter has induced me to write this to you, to intreat you not to interfere in any way in such a business,—it is now nearly over, and depend upon it *they* are much more chagrined by my silence than they could be by the best defence in the world. I do not know any thing that would vex me more than any further reply to these things.

Ever yours, in haste,

B.

The Corsair had an immediate and rapid sale;—as soon as it was printed, the publisher sent it to Mr E. at Sunning Hill, a gentleman of fortune and of talent, who patronized his review, informing him at the same time that he had sold thirteen thousand copies of the poem on the first day.

In the original manuscript of the Corsair, the chief female character was called « Francesca, » in whose person he meant to delineate one of his acquaintance; but before the poem went to the press he changed the name to « Medora. »

Through the winter and during the spring of 1814, he maintained an open and friendly intercourse with me;—I saw him very frequently.—Upon one occasion, as I admired his reply to a love-letter from some one with whom he had no acquaintance, he permitted me to copy it before he dispatched it; and it is so characteristic of him, that I cannot refrain from inserting it here.

March 31st, 1814.

If my silence « has hurt your pride or your

feelings," to use your own expressions, I am very sorry for it—be assured that such effect was far from my intention. Business, and some little bustle attendant on changing my residence, prevented me from thanking you for your letter, so soon as I ought to have done; if my thanks do not displease you now, pray accept them. I could not feel otherwise than obliged by the desire of a stranger to make my acquaintance. I am not unacquainted with your name, nor your beauty; and I have heard much of your talents, but I am not the person whom you would like either as a lover or a friend. I did not, and do not suspect you (to use your own words once more) of "any design of making love to me." I know myself well enough to acquit any one who does *not* know me, and still more those who *do*, of any such intention; I am not of a nature to be *loved*, and, so far luckily for myself, I have no wish to be so. In saying this, I do not mean to affect any particular stoicism, and may possibly, at one time or other, have been liable to those "follies" for which you sarcastically tell me I have now "*no time*;" but these and every

thing else are to me at present objects of indifference, and that is a good deal to say at six and twenty. You tell me, that you wished to know me because you "liked my writings." I think you must be aware that a writer is, in general, very different from his productions, and always disappoints those who expect to find in him qualities more agreeable than those of others. I shall certainly not be lessened in my vanity as a scribbler, by the reflection that a work of mine has given you pleasure,—and to preserve the impression in its favour, I will not risk your good opinion by inflicting my acquaintance upon you.

Very truly,

Your obliged servant,

B.

In May he began his poem of Lara. On the 19th I called upon him, when he read the beginning of it to me. I immediately said that was a continuation of the Corsair.

He was now so frank and kind, that I again ventured to talk to him of Newstead Abbey, which brought to his mind his promise of the pledge; and on June 10, 1814, after reading the continuation of Lara, he renewed the resolution of never parting with the abbey. In confirmation of which, he gave me all the letters he had written to his mother, from the time of his forming the resolution to go abroad, till his return to England, in July, 1811. The one he originally meant as a pledge for the preservation of Newstead, is that of the 6th of March, 1809.¹ In giving them to me, he said they might one day be looked upon as curiosities, and that they were mine to do as I pleased with.

I remained of opinion that Lara was the Corsair disguised, or rather that Conrad was Lara returned, after having embraced the life of a Corsair, in consequence of his crime. He had not determined the catastrophe when I left him. I wrote and urged it;—this was my letter on the subject :—

¹ Letter XVII.

“The beauties of your new poem equal, some of them perhaps excel, what we have enjoyed in your preceding tales. With respect to the narrative, the interest, as far as you have read, is completely sustained; yet to render *Lara* ultimately as interesting as *Conrad*, he ought, I think, to be developed of his mystery in the conclusion of the poem. Sequels to tales have seldom been favourites, and I see you are disposed to avoid one in *Lara*; but such a sequel as you would make with what you have begun, could not fail of success. Slay him in your proposed battle, and let Kalad’s lamentation over his body discover in him the Corsair, and, in his page, the wretched Gulnare. For all *this gloom*, pray give us after this a happy tale.”

He chose to leave it to the reader’s determination; but I think it is easy to be traced in the scene under the line where *Lara*, mortally wounded, is attended by Kalad.

“His dying tones are in that other tongue,
To which some strange remembrance wildly clung.

They spoke of other scenes, but what—is known
 To Kaled, whom their meaning reached alone ;
 And he replied, though faintly to their sound,
 While gazed the rest in dumb amazement round :
 They seemed even there—that twain—unto the last
 To half forget the present in the past ;
 To share between themselves some separate fate,
 Whose darkness none beside should penetrate.”

Canto II. Stanza 18.

In the next stanza, also, he speaks of remembered scenes. In the 21st stanza, the sex of Kaled is revealed. In the 22d, the reader is led to conclude that Kaled was Gulnare, though

“—— that wild tale she brook'd not to unfold.”

Lara was finished on the 24th of June 1814. He read it over to me; and while I was with him that day, he made me a present of four proof prints taken from Westall's picture of him. He also gave me the small engraving which was taken from the portrait painted by Phillips. These portraits combine all that depends upon the pencil to transmit of personal resemblance, and

all of mind that it can catch—for posterity or the stranger. The effect of utterance, and the living grace of motion, must still be left to the imagination of those who have not had opportunities of observing them; but the power with which no pencil is endowed is displayed by the pen of Byron himself, and to this must these pictures be indebted for the completion of their effect. I have seen him again and again in both the views given by the artists. That of Mr Phillips is simply the portrait of a gentleman: it is very like, but the sentiment which appears to me to predominate in it is haughtiness. If I judge aright, I am not the less of opinion, that there is no error attributable to the pencil by which the sentiment was marked. I have seen Lord Byron assume it on some occasions, and I have no doubt that the feeling which produced it was a fluctuation from his natural easy flexible look to one of intended dignity. Whether there be more of dignity or of haughtiness in the countenance, as there expressed, I mean not to contend: it strikes me as I have mentioned. But it is Westall's picture that I contemplate, at times with calm delight, and at

times with rapture. It is the picture of emanating genius—of Byron's genius—it needs not utterance; it possesses the living grace of thought, of intellect, of spirit, and is like a sun beaming its powerful rays to warm and vivify the imaginations and the hearts of mankind. From the free and unlimited egress he permitted me to his apartments, I saw him in every point of view. I have been with him when he was composing some of the additional stanzas of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*; and many lines of the *Corsair* and of *Lara* were composed in my presence. At his Chambers in Albany, there was a long table covered with books standing before the fireplace; at the one end of it stood his own easy chair, and a small round table at his hand; at the other end of the table was another easy chair, on which I have sat for hours reading or contemplating him; and I have seen him in the very position represented in Mr Westall's picture. I have already said that he gave me four of the earliest impressions of the print taken from it. It brings him completely to my mind. I have been in the habit of contemplating it with great affection,

though sometimes mixed with a sorrow for those opinions on which I found it impossible to accord with him, and for those acts which incurred the disapprobation of the good and the wise; but never did I look upon it with such sorrow as on the day I heard that he was no more.

I have little more to add. Peace with France being concluded in the year 1814, I resolved on going to Paris, and thence to the South; but as I did not immediately leave England, and Lord Byron returning to town, I had an opportunity of seeing him again. I sat some time with him on the 4th of October, and then took my leave of him; and here I think our intercourse may be said to terminate. Whilst I was at Bordeaux, his marriage took place. Napoleon's successful entry into Paris hurried me back to England; and on my arrival in London, I saw both Lord and Lady Byron, at their house in Piccadilly.

I think that, for some years, I possessed more of his affection than those who, after the establishment of his fame, were proud to call him friend.

This opinion is formed not only from the recollected pleasure I enjoyed, but from his own opinions in conversation long after he had entered the vortex of gaiety and flattery; and from what he read to me from a book in which he was in the habit of drawing characters, a book that was not to be published till the living generation had passed away. That book suggested to me these volumes; nor did I keep my intention a secret from him. In the year 1819, I informed him that my posthumous volume was made up, and said,

“I look into it occasionally with much pleasure, and I enjoy the thought of being in company with your spirit when it is opened on earth, towards the end of the nineteenth century, and of finding you pleased, even in the high sphere you may then, if you would but will it now, occupy, which it is possible you might not be, were you to see it opened by the world in your present sphere. I do not know whether you are able to say as much for your book, for if you do live hereafter, and I have not the slightest doubt

but you will, I suspect that you will have company about you at the opening of it which may rather afford occasion of remorse than of pleasure, however gracious and forgiving you may find immortal spirits. Of you I have written precisely as I think, and as I have found you; and, though I have inserted some things which I would not give to the present generation, the whole, as it stands, is a just portrait of you during the time you have honoured me with your intimacy and friendship, for I drop the pencil when the curtain dropped between us, and the picture is to me an engaging one.”

If his affection, his confidence, nay, I will boldly say, his preference on difficult occasions, were but flattery, or an illusion lasting for years, the remembrance of it is too agreeable to be parted with at the closing years of my life, especially as that remembrance is accompanied with a recollection of my anxiety and my efforts to exalt him as high in wisdom, as nature and education had raised him on the standard of genius. But it was no illusion; and at the very

moment of his quitting his country for ever, I received one more proof of his remembrance and his confidence. I had returned to the continent. Whatever was the cause of the breach between him and his lady, it appears to have been irreparable, and it attracted public notice and animadversion. All the odium fell on him, and his old enemies were glad of another opportunity of assailing him. Tale succeeded tale, and he was painted hideously, in prose and verse, and tittle-tattle. Publicly and privately he was annoyed and goaded, in such a manner that he resolved to go abroad. On taking this resolution, he sent a note to my son, who was then in London, requesting to see him. He immediately waited upon him. Lord Byron said to him, he was afraid that I thought he had slighted me; told him of his intention to go to Switzerland and Italy, and invited him to accompany him. My son expressed a wish to consult me, which Lord Byron said was right. This invitation doubly pleased me; it showed that I still possessed a place in his memory and regard, and I saw in it advantages for my son in travelling which he might not other-

wise enjoy; but, upon reflection, I was not sorry that, owing to the delay of my answer, the proposal fell to the ground.

Lord Byron left England on the—of 1816, and I trace him personally no farther. I continued to read his new poems with great pleasure as they appeared, till he published the first two cantos of Don Juan, which I read with a sorrow that admiration could not compensate. His muse—his British muse, had disdained licentiousness and the pruriency of petty wits; but with petty wits he had now begun to amalgamate his pure and lofty genius. Yet he did not long continue to alloy his golden ore with the filthy dross of impure metal: whatever errors he fell into, whatever sins lie at his door, he cleansed his lyre of obscene stains as he proceeded in that wonderful and extraordinary medley, in which we at once feel the poet and see the man. No eulogy will reach his towering height in the former character; no eulogy, dictated by friendship, and merited for claims truth can avow, will, I fear, cover the—I have no word, I will use none—

that has been fastened upon him in the latter. The fact is, that he was, like most men, a mixed character; and that, on either side, mediocrity was out of his nature. If his pen was sometimes virulent and impious, his heart was always benevolent, and his sentiments sometimes pious. Nay, he would have been pious—he would have been a christian, had he not fallen into the hands of atheists and scoffers.

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There was something of a pride in him which carried him beyond the common sphere of thought and feeling, and the excess of this characteristic pride bore away, like a whirlwind, even the justest feelings of our nature, but it could not root them entirely from his heart. In vain did he defy his country, and hold his countrymen in scorn—the choice he made of the motto for Childe Harold evinces that patriotism had taken root in his mind. The visions of an Utopia in his untravelled fancy deprived reality of its charm; but when he awakened to the state of the world, what

said he? "I have seen the most celebrated countries in the world, and have learned to prefer and to love my own." In vain too was he led into the defiance of the sacred writings. There are passages in his letters, and in his works, which show that religion was, though latent, in his soul. Could he cite the following lines, and resist the force of them? It is true, he marks them for the beauty of the verse, but no less for the sublimity of the conceptions; and I cannot but hope that, had he lived, he would have proved another instance of Genius bowing to the power of Truth.

Dim as the borrowed beams of moon and stars
To lonely, wandering, weary travellers,
Is Reason to the soul; and as on high
Those rolling fires discover but the sky,
Not light us here—so Reason's glimmering ray
Was lent, not to assure our doubtful way,
But guide us upward to a better day.
And as those nightly tapers disappear
When day's bright lord ascends our hemisphere,
So pale grows Reason at Religion's sight,
So dies—and so dissolves—in supernatural light.

DRYDEN, *quoted in the Liberal.*

When I planned this book, it was my intention to conclude it with remarks on the genius and writings of Lord Byron. Alas! I have suffered time to make a progress unfriendly to the subject to which I had attached so great an interest. Had Providence vouchsafed me the happiness of recording of him from my own knowledge the renovation of his mind and character, which has been an unvaried object of my prayers, my delight would have supplied me with energy, and with spirits to continue my narrative and my observations. His genius and his writings have already been widely and multifariously envied and acknowledged; but they will no doubt be treated of in a concentered manner by an abler pen than mine, and I therefore the more willingly relinquish this task. Of his course of life subsequent to his leaving England, I will not write upon hearsay—however he may have spent some portion of the time, the last part of it cannot but redound to his honour and his fame as a man, and he seemed to me building in Greece a magnificent road for his return to his own coun-

try. Had he lived and succeeded, one single word of contrition would have wiped away all offences, and the hearts and arms of his countrymen would have opened to receive him on his arrival. They would have drawn him in a triumphal car from the coast to the metropolis.



CONTINUATION

OF

MR DALLAS'S RECOLLECTIONS,

BY THE REV. A. R. C, DALLAS.

THIS work had proceeded thus far, when it pleased God to stop the pen of the writer, and bid to cease the current of recollections which had set it in motion. Mr Dallas had been attacked, in the month of July,¹ with an inflammatory fever, for which copious bleeding was necessary:

¹ See Preliminary Statement.

he recovered indeed from the immediate disease, but the debility occasioned by the remedy was too great for his constitution to overcome, and he gradually sank under its effects. On the 21st of October, 1824, he expired. On his death-bed, and with a near view of eternity before him, which was brightened by the firm hope of its being passed in the presence of his reconciled Maker, he confided to the writer of the following pages the task of closing these Recollections, and imparted to him his feelings and opinions upon the matter which should compose this concluding chapter.

While executing this sacred commission, I intreat the reader to remember that it is not the same person who writes; and not only that the writer is different, but to call to mind that it is a son who takes up the mantle which a father has cast down in leaving this world. Whoever has perused the foregoing pages, cannot but feel that the author has borne a part in the circumstances which are related of so honourable a nature, that a son may be well authorised to speak in other

terms than those which the person himself might use. And if, in any thing I may say, it should be thought that I have overstepped the reasonable licence which may be granted to the feelings of so near and dear a connexion, I trust that whatever may be counted as excess, will be pardoned in consideration of the fresh and powerful impulse which cannot but be given by the sense of so recent an event.

The character of Lord Byron, as it stands depicted in the preceding pages, will appear in a different light from that in which the public have recently been led to regard it. Piquant anecdotes, and scandalous chronicles, may serve to amuse for a time the unthinking; but their real tendency is to pander to the worst feelings of our nature, by dragging into light the corruptions which disgrace humanity. It is not difficult to form an estimate of what Lord Byron might have been, by attending to the causes which made him what he was.

To reason from hearsay, and form opinions

upon the unauthenticated annals of common conversation, can never bring us to truth, nor give to our judgments sufficient certainty for practical purposes. It will therefore be useless to attempt to estimate Lord Byron's original character from the events commonly related of his early life; nor to take into consideration the defects of his education, and the misfortunes of his boyhood. We have no authorized data upon which to conduct such an inquiry. But the pages of *this* book do contain authorized data. They contain opinions, and feelings, and facts, established by his own hand, although circumstances withhold from the British public the original records. These data will show us what he was, immediately before and immediately after the public development of his poetical powers had thrown him into a vortex which *decided* his character, whatever it might have been previously.

There might have been some difficulty in finding so reasonable a ground-work upon which to form an opinion of what he had continued to be in his subsequent progress through life; and the

fairest inference would have been that which his own later productions afford, had not a work been published purporting to be the record of *Conversations held with Lord Byron at Pisa, in the years 1821 and 1822*. This book appeared on the very day on which my father's remains were consigned to the grave, and I cannot be too thankful that he was spared the pain which he would have felt in reading it.

The perusal of this book rewards the reader, as he was rewarded who opened Pandora's box. It fills the mind with an unvaried train of miserable reflections; but there is one consolation at the end. As by a mathematical axiom the lesser is contained in the greater, so the comparatively smaller crime of falsehood is necessarily within the capability of one so depraved as Lord Byron appears in this book; and by the same argument, the man whose mind could be in such a state as to suppose that he was doing "the world" and "the memory of Lord Byron" a service, by thus laying bare the degradation to which a master-mind was reduced, must surely be unable to

restrain the tendency to exaggeration which would heighten the incredibility of what is already beyond belief. This opinion concerning the reporter of Lord Byron's conversations is in some degree confirmed, by the simplicity which he displays in stating, that when Lord Byron was applied to for some authentic particulars of his life, his lordship asked the reporter himself, "Why *he* did not write some, as he believed that *he knew more of him than any one else?*" This was after three or four months' acquaintance! ¹

¹ There are several things mentioned in this book of Conversations which prove, to say the least, that Lord Byron's memory was not correct, if what is reported of him be true. On one occasion his Lordship is stated to have said that his mother's death was one of the reasons of his return from Turkey, and this is repeated more strongly in another place. His mother's death did not take place until several weeks after his arrival in London, and he had not the slightest expectation of it when it happened. Lord Byron is also stated to have said, that after an absence of *three* years, he returned to London, and that the second canto of *Childe Harold* was just then published. The fact is, that he was absent *two* years, to a day, which

In my own case, after reading the book to which I allude, this solitary consolation on account of Lord Byron was accompanied by a feeling of great satisfaction on account of my father; for, if its contents be not only the truth, but the whole truth, Lord Byron afforded the highest testimony of his respect for my father's character, which in his unhappy situation he could possibly give. In such company, and conversing upon such subjects, he forbore to mention his name, although referring to matters upon which, the reader will have seen, it would have been natural to have spoken of him. I am willing to attribute this silence to the circumstance that, in Lord Byron's mind, my father's name must have been connected with the remembrance of all he had done, and said, and written, to turn him into the better path; and his Lordship could not have borne to recal that train of thought, after he had

he remarked himself in a very strong manner, returning in July, 1811, and that the first and second cantos of *Childe Harold* were published together eight months after, in March, 1812, in the manner related in this work.

decidedly chosen the worse. That my father's earnest exertions had been applied to this end, will sufficiently appear from the foregoing part of this work; and, perhaps, I shall be pardoned for inserting here the body of a letter which he wrote to Lord Byron at a much later period, to prove that he still retained that object in view. The letter is that alluded to in the last chapter, when, stating that he informed Lord Byron of his intention to leave a posthumous account of him, he extracted a short passage from it. The whole letter, which might not so well have been made public by the writer himself, cannot be considered as improperly published by his son.

It was dated the 10th of November 1819, and after some introductory remarks upon the cessation of his correspondence with Lord Byron, it proceeds as follows:—

“I am almost out of life, and I shall speak to you with the freedom of a spirit already arrived beyond the grave: what I now write you may suppose addressed to you in a dream, or by my

ghost, which I believe will be greatly inclined to haunt you, and render you even supernatural service.

“I take it for granted, my Lord, that when you excluded me from your friendship, you also banished me from your thoughts, and forgot the occurrences of our intimacy. I will, therefore, bring one circumstance to your recollection, as it is introductory to the subject of this letter. One day when I called upon you at your apartments in the Albany, you took up a book in which you had been writing, and having read a few short passages, you said that you intended to fill it with the characters of those then around you, and with present anecdotes, to be published in the succeeding century, and not before; and you enjoyed, by anticipation, the effect that would be produced on the fifth and sixth generations of those to whom you should give niches in your posthumous volume. I have often thought of this fancy of yours, and imagined the wits, the belles, and the beaux, the dupes of our sex, and the artful and frail ones of the other, figuring at

the beginning of the twentieth century in the costume of the early part of the nineteenth. I remember well that, after one or two slight sketches, you concluded with, 'This morning Mr Dallas was here, etc. etc.' You went on no farther, but the smile with which you shut your book gave me to understand that the colours you had used for my portrait were not of a dismal hue, and I was inclined enough at the time to digest the flattery, as I was conscious that I deserved your kindness, and believed that you felt so too. But, however that may be, whether the words were a mere flattering impromptu or not, whatever character you may have doomed me to figure in, a hundred years hence, you certainly have not done me justice in this age: it will not, therefore, appear extraordinary if I should not have depended altogether for my character on the smile with which you put your volume down.

“Lest you should suspect some inconsistency in this, and that although I began by assuring you that I did not mean to complain, my letter has been imagined for no other purpose; I will

pause here, to declare to you solemnly that the affection I have felt for you, that the affection I do feel for you, is the motive by which I am at present actuated; and that but for the desire I feel to be of some service to you, you never would have heard from me again while I remained in this life. Were not this the case, this letter would deserve to be considered as an impertinence, and I would scorn to write it. I would give the world to retrieve you; to place you again upon that summit which you reached, I may say on which you alighted, in the spring of 1812. It may be a more arduous attempt, but I see no impossibility; nay, to place you much higher than ever. You are yet but little beyond the dawn of life; it is downright affectation—it is, I was going to say, folly, to talk of grey hairs and age at twenty-nine. This is free language, my Lord, but not more than you formerly allowed me, and my increased age and nearer view of eternity confirm the privilege. As a *Poet* you have indeed wonderfully filled up the years you have attained—as a man you are in your infancy. Like a child you fall and dirt yourself, and your last

fall has soiled you more than all the rest. I would to heaven you had not written your last unaccountable work,¹ and which, did it not here and there bear internal incontestible evidence, I would suffer no man to call yours. Forgive my warmth—I would rather consider you as a child slipping into mire, that may be washed away, than as a man

Stept in so far, that should he wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er.

Your absence, and the distance of your abode, leave your name at the mercy of every tatter and scribbler, who, even without being personal enemies, attack character for the mere pleasure of defamation, or for gain; and the life you are said to lead, and I grieve to say the work you have published, leave you no defenders. However you may stand with the world, I cannot but believe that at your age you may shake off all that clogs you in the career for which you were born. The very determination to resume it would be an

¹ The first Cantos of Don Juan.

irresistible claim to new attention from the world; and unshaken perseverance would effect all that you could wish. Imagination has had an ample range. No genius ever attained its meed so rapidly, or more completely; but manhood is the period for reality and action. Will you be content to throw it away for Italian skies and the reputation of eccentricity? May God grant me power to stir up in your mind the resolution of living the next twenty years in England, engaged in those pursuits to which Providence seems more directly to call every man who by birth is entitled to take a share in the legislation of his country. But what do I say? I believe that I ought first to wish you to take a serious view of the subjects on which legislation turns. Much has been argued in favour of adopting and adhering to a party—I have never been convinced of this—but I am digressing. At all events, I beseech you to think of reinstating yourself in your own country. Preparatory to this, an idea has come into my mind, which it is time for me to state to you; to do which I must return to the seemingly querulous style from which I have

digressed. Well then, my Lord, I did some time ago think of your treatment of me with pain; and reflection, without lessening my attachment, showed me that you had acted towards me very ungenerously, and, indeed, very unjustly—you ought to have made more of me. I say this the more freely now, because I have lived till it is become indifferent to me. It is true that I benefited not inconsiderably by some of your works; but it was not in the nature of money to satisfy or repay me. I felt the pecuniary benefit as I ought, and was not slow in acknowledging it as I ought. The six or seven hundred pounds paid by the purchaser of *Childe Harold* for the copyright was, in my mind, nothing in comparison with the honour that was due to me for discerning the genius that lay buried in the *Pilgrimage*, and for exciting you to the publication of it, in spite of the damp which had been thrown upon it in the course of its composition, and in spite of your own reluctance and almost determination to suppress it; nothing in comparison with the kindness that was due to me for the part I took in keeping back your *Hints from Horace*, and the

new edition of the *Satire*, till the moment I impressed conviction on your mind that your fame and the choice of your future career in life depended upon the suppression of these, and on the publication of *Childe Harold*. I made an effort to render you sensible that I was not dead to that better claim, but it was unsuccessful; and though you continued your personal kindness whenever we met, you raised in my mind a jealousy which I was perhaps too proud, if not too mean-spirited, to betray. The result of the feeling, however, was, that I borrowed from you the hint of a posthumous volume, for after awhile I did not much care for the present, and I have indulged meditations on you and on myself for the amusement and judgment of future generations, but with this advantage over you, that I am convinced, that I shall participate in whatever effect they produce; and without this conviction I cannot conceive how the slightest value can be attached to posthumous fame. This is a topic on which I feel an inclination to dwell, but I will conquer the impulse, for my letter is already advanced beyond the limits I proposed. My Lord,

my posthumous volume is made up—I look into it occasionally with much pleasure, and I enjoy the thought of being, when it is opened, in the year 1900, in company with your spirit, and of finding you pleased, even in the high sphere you may, if you will, then occupy, which it is possible you would not be, were you to see it now opened to the public in your present sphere. I do not know, my Lord, whether you are able to say as much for your book, for if you do live hereafter, and I have not the slightest doubt but you will, I suspect that you will have company about you at the opening of it, which may rather afford occasion of remorse than of pleasure, however gracious and forgiving you may find immortal spirits. Of you I have written precisely as I think, and as I have found you; and though I have inserted some things which I would not give to the present generation, the whole, as it stands, is a just portrait of you during the time I knew you; for I drop the pencil where you dropped the curtain between us, and the picture is to me an engaging one. I contemplate it together with some parts of your works, and I cannot help breaking forth

into the exclamation of 'And is this man to be lost!' You, perhaps, echo, in a tone of displeasure, 'Lost!'—Yes, lost.—Nay, unclench your hand—remember it is my ghost that is addressing you; not the being of flesh and blood whom you may dash from you at your will, as you have done. The man whose place is in the highest council of the first nation in the world, who possesses powers to delight and to serve his country, if he dissipates years between an Italian country-house and opera-box, and murders his genius in attempts to rival a Rochester or a Cleland,—for I will not, to flatter you, say a Boccacio or a La Fontaine, who wrote at periods when, and in countries where, indecency was wit—*that man is lost.* Gracious Heaven! on what lofty ground you stood in the month of March, 1812! The world was before you, not as it was to Adam, driven in tears from Paradise to seek a place of rest, but presenting an elysium, to every part of which its crowded and various inhabitants vied in their welcome of you. 'Crowds of eminent persons,' says my posthumous volume, 'courted an introduction, and some volunteered their cards. This was the trying

moment of virtue, and no wonder if that were shaken, for never was there so sudden a transition from neglect to courtship. Glory darted thick upon him from all sides; from the Prince Regent, and his admirable daughter, to the bookseller and his shopman; from Walter Scott to——; from Jeffrey to the nameless critics of the *Satirist* and *Scourge*; he was the wonder of wits, and the show of fashion.' I will not pursue the reverse; but I must repeat, 'And is this man to be lost!' My head is full of you, and whether you allow me the merit or not, my heart tells me that I was chiefly instrumental, by my conduct, in 1812, in saving you from perpetuating the enmity of the world, or rather in forcing you, against your will, into its admiration and love; and that I once afterwards considerably retarded your rapid retrograde motion from the envied station which genius merits, but which even genius cannot preserve without prudence. These recollections have actuated me, it may be imprudently, to write you this letter, to endeavour to impel you to reflect seriously upon what you ought to be, and to beseech you to take steps to render your

manhood solidly and lastingly glorious. Will you once more make use of me? I cannot believe that there is an insurmountable bar to your return to your proper station in life,—a station which, let me be bold enough to say, you have no right to quit. All that I have heard concerning you is but vague talk. The breach with Lady Byron was evidently the ground of your leaving England; and I presume the causes of that breach are what operate upon your spirit in keeping you abroad. In recollecting my principles, you will naturally imagine that the first thing that would occur to my mind in preparing the way for your return, is an endeavour to close that breach—but I am not sufficiently acquainted with her to judge of the force of her opposition. At any rate, I would make the blame rest at her door, if reconciliation is not obtainable; I would be morally right; and this it is in your power to be, on whichever side the wrong at first lay, by a manly severity to yourself, and by declaring your resolution to forgive, and to banish from your thought for ever all that could interrupt a cordial reconciliation. This step, should it not produce a de-

sirable effect on the mind of Lady Byron, would infallibly lead to the esteem of the world. Is it too much for me to hope that I might, by a letter to her, and by a public account of you, and of your intended pursuits in England, make such a general impression, as once more to fix the eyes of your country upon you with sentiments of new admiration and regard, and usher you again to a glory of a nature superior to all you ever enjoyed. It has, I own, again and again come into my mind, to model my intended posthumous work for present publication, so as to have that effect; could I but prevail upon you to follow it up by a return to England, with a resolution to lead a philosophical life, and to turn the great powers of your mind to pursuits worthy of them; and, among those, to a candid search after that religious Truth which often, as imagination sobers, becomes more obvious to the ordinary vision of Reason. Once more, my dear Lord Byron, forgive, or, rather, let me say, reward, my warmth, by listening again to the affection which prompts me to express my desire of serving you. I do not expect the glory of making a religious convert

of you. I have still a hope that you will yourself have that glory, if your life be spared to the usual length—but my present anxiety is to see you restored to your station in this world, after trials that should induce you to look seriously into futurity.”

Such was the affectionate interest with which the author of this letter continued to regard Lord Byron! But it was too late; he had hardened his heart, and blunted his perception of the real value of such a friend. This was the last communication that ever took place between them, although an accidental circumstance afforded the assurance that this letter had reached its destination.

To return to the original character of Lord Byron. Whoever has read these pages attentively, cannot fail to have perceived, that in his Lordship's early character there were the seeds of all the evil which has blossomed and borne fruit with such luxuriance in his later years. Nor will it be attempted here, to show that in any

part of his life he was without those seeds; but I think that a candid observer will also be ready to acknowledge, after reading this work, that there was an opposing principle of good acting in his mind, with a strength which produced opinions that were afterwards entirely altered. The coterie into which he unfortunately fell at Cambridge familiarized him with all the sceptical arguments of human pride. And his acquaintance with an unhappy atheist—who was suddenly summoned before his outraged Maker, while bathing in the streams of the Cam, was rendered a severe trial, by the brilliancy of the talent which he possessed, and which imparted a false splendour to the principles which he did not scruple to avow. Yet, when Lord Byron speaks of this man, as being an atheist, he considers it offensive;—when he remarks on the work of Mr Townsend, who had attempted in the sketch of an intended poem to give an idea of the last judgment, he considered his idea as *too daring*;—in opening his heart to his mother he shows that he believed that *God knew, and did all things*

for the best;—after having seen mankind in many nations and characters, he unrestrainedly conveys his opinion, that human nature is every where corrupt and despicable. These points are the more valuable, because they flowed naturally and undesignedly from the heart; while, on the contrary, his sceptical opinions were expressed only when the subject was before him, and as it were by way of apology.

When, in this period of his life, there is any thing like argument upon this subject advanced by him in his correspondence, it is miserably weak and confused. The death of his atheistical friend bewildered him: he thought there was the stamp of immortality in all this person said and did—that he seemed a man created to display what the Creator could make—and yet, such as he was, he had been gathered into corruption, before the maturity of a mind that might have been the pride of posterity. And this bewildered him! If his opinion of his friend were a just one, ought not this reasoning rather to have pro-

duced the conviction, that a such *a mind* could not be gathered into the corruption which awaited the perishable body? Accordingly, Lord Byron's inference did not lead him to produce this death as a support to the doctrine of annihilation; but his mind being tinctured previously with that doctrine, he confesses that it bewildered him.

When about to publish *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, containing sceptical opinions, the *decided* expression of which he was then induced to withdraw, he wrote a note to accompany them, which has been inserted in this work: Its main object is to declare, that his was not sneering, but desponding scepticism—and he grounds his opinions upon the most unlogical deduction that could be formed: that, because he had found many people abuse and disgrace the religion they professed, that therefore religion was not true. This is like saying, that because a gamester squanders his guineas for his own destruction, they are therefore not gold, nor applicable for good pur-

poses. Weak as this was, he called it *an apology* for his scepticism.

It cannot be said that, up to this period, Lord Byron was decidedly an unbeliever; but, on the contrary, I think it may be said, that there was a capability in his mind for the reception of Divine Truth,—that he had not closed his eyes to the light, which therefore forced its way in with sufficient power to maintain some contest with the darkness of intellectual pride; and this opinion is strengthened, by observing the effects of that lingering light, in the colouring which it gave to vice and virtue in his mind. His conduct had been immoral and dissipated; but he knew it to be such, and acknowledged it in its true colours. He regretted the indulgence of his passions as producing criminal acts, and bringing him under their government. He expressed these feelings;—he did more, he strove against them. He scrupled not publicly to declare his detestation of the immorality which renders the pages of Mr Moore inadmissible into decent society;

and he severely satirizes the luxurious excitements to vice which abound in our theatrical importation of Italian manners.¹ When a circumstance occurred in which one of his tenants had given way to his passions, Lord Byron's opinion and decision upon the subject were strongly expressed, and his remarks upon that occasion are particularly worthy of notice. He thought our first duty was not do evil, though he felt that was impossible. The next duty was to repair the evil we have done, if in our power. He would not afford his tenants a privilege he did not allow himself.—He knew he had been guilty of many excesses, but had laid down a resolution to reform, and latterly kept it.

I mention these circumstances to call to the reader's mind the general tenor of Lord Byron's

¹ Then let Ausonia, skilled in every art
To soften manners, but corrupt the heart,
Pour her exotic follies o'er the town,
To sanction vice, and hunt decorum down.

estimate of moral conduct, as it appears in the present work; because I think it may be said that he had a lively perception of what was right, and a strong desire to follow it; but he wanted the regulating influence of an acknowledged standard of sufficient purity, and, at the same time, established by sufficient authority in his mind. The patience of God not only offered him such a standard in religion, but kept his heart in a state of capability for receiving it. In spite of his many grievings of God's spirit, still, it would not absolutely desert him as long as he allowed a struggle to continue in his heart.

But the publication of *Childe Harold* was followed by consequences which seemed to have closed his heart against the long-tarrying spirit of God, and at once to have ended all struggle. Never was there a more sudden transition from the doubtings of a mind to which Divine light was yet accessible, to the unhesitating abandonment to the blindness of vice. Lord Byron's vanity became the ruling passion of his mind. He made himself his own god; and no eastern

idol ever received more abject or degrading worship from a bigotted votary.

The circumstances which have been detailed in this work respecting the publication of *Childe Harold*, prove sufficiently how decided and how lamentable a turn they gave to a character which, though wavering and inconsistent for want of the guide I have referred to, had not yet passed all the avenues which might take him from the broad way that leadeth to destruction, into the narrow path of life. But Lord Byron's unresisting surrender to the first temptation of intrigue, from which all its accompanying horrors could not affright him, seems to have banished for ever from his heart the Divine influence, which could alone defend him against the strength of his passions and the weakness of his nature to resist them; and it is truly astonishing to find the very great rapidity with which he was involved in all the trammels of fashionable vice.

With proportionable celerity his opinions of moral conduct were changed; his power of esti-

imating virtue at any thing like its true value ceased; and his mind became spiritually darkened to a degree as great perhaps as has ever been known to take place from the results of one step. Witness the course of his life at this time, as detailed in the Conversations lately published, to which I have before alluded. Witness the fact of his being capable of detailing such a course of life in familiar conversation to one almost a stranger.

What must have been the change in that man who could at one time write these lines,—

Grieved to condemn, the muse must still be just,
Nor spare melodious advocates of lust;
Pure is the flame that o'er her altar burns,
From grosser incense with disgust she turns;
Yet kind to youth, this expiation o'er,
She bids thee mend thy line, and sin no more—

and at another become the author of *Don Juan*, where grosser, more licentious, more degrading images are produced, than could have been ex-

pected to have found their way into any mind desirous merely of preserving a decent character in society;—than could have been looked for from any tongue not habituated to the conversation of the most abandoned of the lowest order of society? What must have been the change in him who, from animadverting severely upon the licentiousness of a village intrigue, could glory in the complication of crimes which give zest to fashionable adultery; and even in the excess of his glorying could forego his title to be called a *man of honour* or a *gentleman*, for which the merest coxcomb of the world will commonly restrain himself within some bounds after he has overstepped the narrower limits of religious restraint? For who can venture to call Lord Byron either one or the other after reading the unrestrained *disclosures* he is said, in his published Conversations, to have made, «without any injunctions to secrecy?» Who could have imagined that the same man who had observed upon the offensiveness of the expression of another's irreligious principles, should ever be capable of offending the world with such awfully fearless impiety as is

contained in the latter Cantos of *Don Juan*, and boldly advanced in *Cain*? Who can read, in his own hand-writing, the opinion that a sublime and well intentioned anticipation of the Last Judgment is too daring, and puts him in mind of the line—

“ And fools rush in where angels fear to tread, ”

and conceive that the same hand wrote his *Vision of Judgment*?

Yet such a change did take place, as any one may be convinced of, who will take the trouble to read the present work, and the Conversations to which I have alluded, and compare them together. For, let it be observed, that the few pages in the latter publication which refer to Lord Byron's religious opinions, state only his old weak reasoning, founded upon the disunion of professing christians; some faint, and, I may say, childish wishes; and a *disowning* of the principles of Mr Shelley's school. So also that solitary reference to a preparation for death, when death stood

visibly by his bed-side ready to receive him, which is related by his servant,¹ and upon which I have known a charitable hope to be hung, amounts to just as much—*an assertion*. It can only be the most puerile ignorance of the nature of religion, which can receive assertion for proof in such a matter. The very essence of real religion is to let itself be seen in the life, when it is really sown in the heart; and a man who appeals to his assertions to establish his religious character, may be his own dupe, but can never dupe any but such as are like him—just as the lunatic in Bedlam may call himself a king, and believe it; but it is only those who are as mad as himself who will think themselves his subjects. There is no possibility of hermetically sealing up religion in the heart; if it be there, it cannot be confined.—it must extend its influence over the principle of thought, of word, and of action.

When we see wonderful and rapid changes

¹ Lord Byron is stated to have said to his servant, "I am not afraid of dying—I am more fit to die than people think."

take place in the physical world, we naturally seek for the cause; and it cannot but be useful to trace the cause of so visible a change in the moral world, as that which appears upon the comparison I have pointed out. It will not, I think, be too much to say, that it took place immediately that the resistance against evil ceased in Lord Byron's mind. Temptation certainly came upon him in an overpowering manner; and the very first temptation was perhaps the worst; yet he yielded to it almost immediately. I refer to the circumstance recorded in these pages, which took place little more than a week after the first appearance of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage, when he received an extraordinary anonymous letter, which led immediately to the most disgraceful *liaison* of which he has not scrupled to boast. There was something so disgusting in the forwardness of the person who wrote, as well as deterring in the enormity of the criminal excesses of which this letter was the beginning, that he should have been roused against such a temptation at the first glance. But the sudden gust of public applause had just blown

upon him, and having raised him in its whirlwind above the earth, he had already begun to deify himself in his own imagination; and this incense came to him as the first offered upon his altar. He was intoxicated with its fumes; and, closing his mind against the light that had so long crept in at crevices, and endeavoured to shine through every transparent part, he called the darkness light, and the bitter sweet, and said "Peace, 'when there was no peace."

As long as Lord Byron continued to resist his temptations to evil, and to refrain from exposing publicly his tendency to infidelity, so long he valued the friendship of the author of the foregoing chapters, who failed not to seize every opportunity of supporting the struggle within him, in the earnest hope that the good might ultimately be successful. The contents of this book may give some idea of the nature and constancy of that friendship, and cannot fail of being highly honourable to its author, as well as of reflecting credit on Lord Byron, who, on so many occasions gave way to its influence. But it is a strong proof of

the short-sightedness of man's judgment, that upon the most remarkable occasion on which this influence was excited, by inducing him to publish *Childe Harold* instead of the *Hints from Horace*, though the best intentions guided the opinion, it was made the step by which Lord Byron was lost; and he who, in a literary point of view, had justly prided himself upon having withheld so extraordinary a mind from encumbering its future efforts with the dead weight of a work which might have altogether prevented its subsequent buoyancy, and who was alive to the glory of having discerned the neglected merit of the real poem, and of having spread out the wings which took such an eagle flight—having lived to see the rebellious presumption which that towering flight occasioned, and to anticipate the destruction that must follow the audacity, died deeply regretting that he had, even though unconsciously, ever borne such a part in producing so lamentable a loss. One of the last charges which he gave me upon his death-bed, but a few days before he died, and with the full anticipation of his end, was, not to let this work go forth into the world with-

out stating his sincere feeling of sorrow that ever he had been instrumental in bringing forward *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* to the public, since the publication of it had produced such disastrous effects to one whom he had loved so affectionately, and from whom he had hoped so much good—effects which the literary satisfaction the poem may afford to all the men of taste in the present and future generations, can never, in the slightest degree, compensate.

In obeying this solemn charge I should have concluded these remarks, had I not found, in looking over the manuscript of the work upon this subject, which was first intended to have been left to posterity as a posthumous offering, and which was written about the year 1819, a passage which appears to me to form a fitter conclusion to this chapter, and which, therefore, I copy from the author's writing:—

“ I have suffered Time to make a progress unfriendly to the subject to which I had attached so great an interest. Had Providence vouchsafed

me the happiness of recording of Lord Byron, from my own knowledge, the renovation of his mind and character, which was the object of my last letter to him, my delight would have supplied me with energy and spirits to continue my narrative, and my observations. Of his course of life subsequent I will not write upon hearsay; but I cannot refrain from expressing my grief, disappointment, and wonder, at the direction which was given to it by the impulse of his brilliant success as a Poet. It seemed not only to confirm him in his infidelity, but to set him loose from social ties, and render him indifferent to every other praise than that of poetical genius. I am not singular in the cooling of his friendship, if it be not derogatory to call by that name any transient feeling he may have expressed; and his intended posthumous volume will, probably, show this, if he has not, in consequence of what I said to him in my last letter, altered or abandoned it. In the dedications of his poems there is no sincerity; he had neither respect nor regard for the persons to whom they are addressed; and Lord Holland, Rogers, Davies, and Hobhouse, if

earthly knowledge becomes intuitive on retrospection, will see on what grounds I say this, and nod the recognition, and I trust forgiveness of heavenly spirits, if heavenly their's become, to the wondering Poet with whose works their names are swimming down the stream of Time. He and they shall have *my* nod too on the occasion, if, let me humbly add, my prayers shall have availed me beyond the grave.»

APPENDIX.

THE REMAINDER

OF

MR DALLAS'S RECOLLECTIONS

OF THE

Life of Lord Byron,

NOT ALREADY PRINTED WITH THE CORRESPONDENCE.

I.

AT the end of the year 1807, some of my family observed in the newspapers extracts from Lord Byron's *Juvenile Poems*, which he had published under the title of *Hours of Idleness*. I ordered the

volume, which I received on the 27th of December. I read it with great pleasure; and, if it is not saying too much for my own judgment, discerned in it marks of the genius which has been since so universally acknowledged. Though sensible of some personal gratification from this proof of superior talents breaking forth in the nephew of my friend and brother, it did not enter my mind to make it the occasion of seeking the author, till I was urged to compliment him upon his publication, which I did in the first letter, dated January 6th, 1808.—(See vol. i. p. 5.)

II.

Lord Byron conveyed to me in a flattering manner the pleasure which he had received from this letter, as far as it contained a tribute to his muse; but declared that he must in candour decline such praise as he did not deserve, and that therefore, with respect to his virtue, he could not accept of my applause.—(See Letter II. vol. i. p. 11.)

III.

This communication, while it highly gratified me, was calculated to excite a strong desire to know more of the character and feelings of a young man who evinced so much genius, and who gave such an account of the results of a life which had not yet occupied twenty years. I immediately expressed my feelings in the letter dated January 21, 1808.—(See Letter III. vol. i. p. 15.)

IV.

By the return of the post which took this letter to him, I received a reply, professing to give a more particular account of his studies, opinions, and feelings, written in a playful style, and containing rather flippant observations made for the sake of antitheses, than serious remarks intended to convey information.—(See Letter IV. p. 18.) The letter may be considered as characteristic of his prose style in general, possessing the germ of his satire without the bitterness of its maturity,

and the pruriency of his wit uncorrected by the hand of experience. Though written in so light and unserious a tone as prevents the possibility of charging him gravely with the opinions he expresses, still the bent of his mind is perceptible in it; a bent which led him to profess that such were the sentiments of the *wicked* George Lord Byron.

V.

The work which Lord Byron put into my hands consisted of a number of loose printed sheets in quarto, and was entitled THE BRITISH BARDS, A SATIRE. It contained the original ground-work of his well known poem, such as he had written it at Newstead, where he had caused it to be printed at a country press; and various corrections and annotations appeared upon the margin in his own hand. Some of these are exceedingly curious, as tending to throw a light upon the workings of his mind at that early period of his career. To the poem, as it then stood, he added

a hundred and ten lines in its first progress through the press; and made several alterations, some upon my suggestion, and others upon his own. I wrote to him the letter dated January 24, 1809, immediately upon reading it over.— (See Letter V. p. 25.)

In his answer to this letter Lord Byron declined adopting the enclosed lines spoken of at p. 27, because they were not his own, quoting at the same time what Lady Wortley Montague said to Pope, “No touching,—for the good will be given to you, and the bad attributed to me.”

VI.

The couplet to which I referred as having been given by his Muse to his noble relation, was one of panegyric upon Lord Carlisle. It is curious that this couplet must have been composed in the short interval between his printing the poem at Newstead and his arrival in town, perhaps under the same feelings which induced him to

write to Lord Carlisle, and at the same time. The lines do not appear in the print, but are inserted afterwards in Lord Byron's hand-writing.

Immediately upon receiving my letter, he forwarded four lines to substitute for this couplet.— (See his Letter VI. vol. i. p. 33.)

He said that this alteration would answer the purposes of concealment; but it was other feelings than the desire of concealment which induced him afterwards to alter the last two lines into

No muse will cheer with renovating smile
The paralytic puling of Carlisle ;

—and to indulge the malice of his Muse adding these—

The puny school-boy, and his early lay,
We pardon, if his follies pass away.
Who, who forgives the senior's ceaseless verse,
Whose hairs grow hoary as his rhymes grow worse ?

What heterogeneous honours deck the peer,
 Lord, rhymester, petit-maitre, pamphleteer!
 So dull in youth, so drivelling in his age,
 His scenes alone might damn our sinking stage;
 But managers, for once, cried hold, enough!
 Nor drugged their audience with the tragic stuff.

Yet at the $\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{fiat} \\ \text{judgment} \\ \text{nausea} \end{array} \right\}$ let his lordship laugh,

And case his volumes in congenial calf.

Yes! doff that covering where morocco shines,
 « And hang a calf-skin on those recreant » lines.

This passage, together with the two notes which accompanied it in the publication of the Poem, and in which Lord Byron endeavoured, as much as possible, to envenom his ridicule, he sent to me, in the course of the printing, for insertion, as being necessary, according to him, to complete the poetical character of Lord Carlisle. Six lines upon the same subject, which he also sent me to be inserted, he afterwards consented to relinquish

¹ I have here given the exact copy of the original manuscript which is before me.

at my earnest entreaty, which, however, was unavailing to procure the sacrifice of any other lines relating to this point. Under present circumstances they are become curious, and there can hardly be any objection to my inserting them here. They were intended to follow the first four lines upon the subject, and the whole passage would have stood thus—

Lords too are bards—such things at times befall,
And 'tis some praise in peers to write at all ;
Yet did not taste or reason sway the times,
Ah, who would take their titles with their rhymes.
In these, our times, with daily wonders big,
A lettered peer is like a lettered pig ;
Both know their alphabet ; but who, from thence,
Infers that peers or pigs have manly sense ?
Still less that such should woo the graceful nine !
Parnassus was not made for lords and swine.
Roscommon ! Sheffield, etc. etc.

Besides the alteration of the panegyric couplet upon Lord Carlisle, he readily acquiesced in my suggestions of placing Crabbe amongst the genuine sons of Apollo, and sent me these lines ;

beginning "There be."—(See Letter VI. vol. i. p. 33.)

VII.

Upon taking the Satire to my publishers, Messrs Longman and Co., they declined publishing it in consequence of its asperity, a circumstance to which he afterwards adverted in very strong language, making it the only condition with which he accompanied his gift to me of the copyright of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, that it should not be published by that house. I then gave it to Mr Cawthorn, who undertook the publication.

In reading Lord Byron's Satire, and in tracing the progress of the alterations which he made in it as it proceeded, it is impossible not to perceive that his feelings rather than his judgment guided his pen; and sometimes he seems indifferent whether it should convey praise or blame. The influence of his altered feelings towards his noble

relation has been already shown; and an instance likewise occurred where he, on the contrary, substituted approbation for censure, though not of so strong a nature as in the former case. Towards the end of the Poem, where he, inconsiderately enough, compares the poetical talent of the two Universities, in the first printed copy that he brought from Newstead the passage stood thus :

Shall hoary Granta call her sable sons,
 Expert in science, more expert in puns?
 Shall these approach the Muse? ah, no! she flies,
 And even spurns the great Seatonian prize :
 Though printers condescend the press to soil
 With odes by Smythe, and epic songs by Hoyle—
 Hoyle, whose learn'd page, if still upheld by whist,
 Required no sacred theme to bid us list.—
 Ye who in Granta's honours would surpass,
 Must mount her Pegasus, a full-grown ass ;
 A foal well worthy of her ancient dam,
 Whose Helicon is duller than her Cam.
 Yet hold—as when by Heaven's supreme behest,
 If found, ten righteous had preserved the rest
 In Sodom's fated town, for Granta's name
 Let Hodgson's genius plead, and save her fame.

But where fair Isis rolls her purer wave,
 The partial muse delighted loves to lave ;
 On her green banks a greener wreath is wove,
 To crown the bards that haunt her classic grove,
 Where Richards wakes a genuine poet's fires,
 And modern Britons justly praise their sires.

Previously, however, to giving the copy to me, he had altered the fifth line with his pen, making the couplet to stand thus :

Though printers condescend the press to soil
 With rhyme by Hoare, and epic blank by Hoyle !

and then he had drawn his pen through the four lines, beginning

Yet hold, as when by Heaven's supreme behest,

and had written the following in their place.

Oh dark asylum of a Vandal race !
 At once the boast of learning and disgrace ;
 So sunk in dulness, and so lost in shame,
 That Smythe and Hodgson scarce redeem thy fame.

I confess I was surprised to find the name of Smythe, uncoupled from its press-soiling companion, to be so suddenly ranked with that of Hodgson in such high praise. When, however, the fifth edition, which was suppressed, was afterwards preparing for publication, he again altered the last two lines to—

So lost to Phœbus that not Hodgson's verse
Can make thee better, or poor Hewson's worse.

In another instance, his feeling towards me induced him carefully to cover over with a paper eight lines, in which he had severely satirized a gentleman with whom he knew that I was in habits of intimacy, and to erase a note which belonged to them.

It is not difficult to observe the working of Lord Byron's mind in another alteration which he made. In the part where he speaks of Bowles, he makes a reference to Pope's deformity of person. The passage was originally printed in the country, thus:—

Bowles! in thy memory let this precept dwell,
 Stick to thy sonnets, man! at least they'll sell;
 Or take the only path that open lies
 For modern worthies who would hope to rise—
 Fix on some well-known name, and, bit by bit,
 Pare off the merits of his worth and wit;
 On each alike employ the critic's knife,
 And where a comment fails, prefix a life;
 Hint certain failings, faults before unknown,
 Revive forgotten lies, and add your own;
 Let no disease, let no misfortune 'scape,
 And print, if luckily deformed, his shape.
 Thus shall the world, quite undeceived at last,
 Cleave to their present wits and quit the past,
 Bards once revered no more with favour view,
 But give these modern sonnetteers their due:
 Thus with the dead may living merit cope,
 Thus Bowles may triumph o'er the shade of Pope!

He afterwards altered the whole of this passage
 except the first two lines, and in its place appear-
 ed the following:—

Bowles! in thy memory let this precept dwell,
 Stick to thy sonnets, man! at least they sell

But if some new-born whim, or larger bribe,
 Prompt thy crude brain, and claim thee for a scribe;
 If chance some bard, though once by dunces feared,
 Now prone in dust can only be revered;
 If Pope, whose fame and genius from the first
 Have foiled the best of critics, needs the worst,
 Do thou essay,—each fault, each failing scan;
 The first of poets was, alas! but man.
 Rake from each ancient dunghill every pearl,
 Consult Lord Fanny, and confide in Curll;
 Let all the scandals of a former age
 Perch on thy pen, and flutter o'er thy page;
 Affect a candour which thou canst not feel,
 Clothe envy in the garb of honest zeal,
 Write as if St John's soul could still inspire,
 And do from hate what Mallet did for hire.
 Oh! hadst thou lived in that congenial time,
 To rave with Dennis, and with Ralph to rhyme,
 Throng'd with the rest around his living head,
 Not raised thy hoof against the lion dead,
 A meet reward had crown'd thy glorious gains,
 And link'd thee to the Dunciad for thy pains.

I have very little doubt that the alteration of the
 whole of this passage was occasioned by the re-
 ference to Pope's personal deformity which Lord

Byron had made in it. It is well known that he himself had an evident defect in one of his legs, which was shorter than the other, and ended in a club foot. On this subject he generally appeared very susceptible, and sometimes when he was first introduced to any one, he betrayed an uncomfortable consciousness of his defect by an uneasy change of position; and yet at other times he seemed quite devoid of any feeling of the kind, and once I remember that, in conversation, he mentioned a similar lameness of another person of considerable talents, observing, that people born lame are generally clever. This temporary cessation of a very acute susceptibility, is a phenomenon of the human mind for which it is difficult to account; unless perhaps it be that the thoughts are sometimes carried into a train where, though they cross these tender cords, the mind is so occupied as not to leave room for the jealous feeling which they would otherwise excite. Thus, Lord Byron, in the ardour of composition, had not time to admit the ideas which, in a less excited moment, would rapidly have risen in connexion with the thought of Pope's deformity

of person ; and the greater vanity of talent superseded the lesser vanity of person, and produced the same effect of deadening his susceptibility in the conversation to which I allude.

In Lord Byron's original Satire, the first lines of his attack upon Jeffrey were these—

Who has not heard, in this enlighten'd age,
 When all can criticise th' historic page ;
 Who has not heard, in James's bigot reign,
 Of Jefferies ! monarch of the scourge and chain ?

These he erased, and began,—

Health to immortal Jeffrey ! once, in name,
 England could boast a judge almost the same !

With this exception, and an omission about Mr Lambe towards the end, the whole passage was published as it was first composed ; indeed, as this seems to have been the inspiring object of the Satire, so these lines were most fluently written, and required least correction afterwards.

Respecting the propriety of the note which is placed at the end of this passage, I had much discussion with Lord Byron. I was anxious that it should not be inserted, and I find the reason of my anxiety stated in a letter written to him after our conversation on the subject.—(See Letter VII. vol. i. p. 35.)

VIII.

LORD BYRON, in accordance with this letter, sent me a choice of couplets to supersede the one to the rhyme of which I had objected.—(See Letter VIII. vol. i. p. 38.)

IX.

BUT he protested against giving up his note of notes, as he called it, his solitary pun. I answered him in a letter dated February 7, 1809:—(See Letter IX. vol. i. p. 40.)

X.

HE inserted the following couplet, after Dryden:—

Then Congreve's scenes could cheer, or Otway's melt,
For nature then an English audience felt.

The line objected to was printed thus—

Tweed ruffled half his waves to form a tear.

XI.

DURING the printing of the Satire, my intercourse with Lord Byron was not only carried on personally, but also by constant notes which he sent me, as different subjects arose in his mind, or different suggestions occurred. It was interesting to see how much his thoughts were bent upon his Poem, and how that one object gave a colour to all others that passed before him at the time, from which in turn he drew forth subjects for his Satire. After having been at the Opera one night, he wrote those couplets, beginning,

Then let Ausonia, skill'd in every art,
To soften manners, but corrupt the heart, etc.

and he sent them to me early on the following morning, with a request to have them inserted after the lines concerning *Naldi* and *Catalani*: so also other parts of the Satire arose out of other circumstances as they passed, and were written upon the spur of the moment.

XII.

RECAPITULATION OF THE CONTENTS OF THE LETTERS OF LORD BYRON TO HIS MOTHER.

THE Letters which Lord Byron had given to me, see vol. i. p. 77, were twenty in number. They consisted of two short ones written from Newstead, at the end of 1808; one written from London, in March, 1809; fifteen written during his travels, from Falmouth, Gibraltar, Malta, Previsa, Smyrna, Constantinople, Athens, and Patras, in 1810 and 1811; one written on board the *Volage* frigate, on his approach to England

when returning; and a short note from London, to announce his intention of going down to Newstead.

These letters were the only ones Lord Byron wrote during his travels, with the single exception of letters of business to his agent. Letter-writing was a matter of irksome duty to him, but one which he felt himself bound to perform to his mother. The letters are sometimes long and full of detail, and sometimes short, and mere intimations of his good health and progress, according as the humour of the moment overcame or not his habitual reluctance to the task. I cannot but lament that any circumstances should deprive the British public of such lively and faithful delineations of the mind and character of Lord Byron as are to be found in these letters. They do not, it is true, contain the information which is usually expected from a talented traveller through an interesting country; but they do contain the index and guide which enables the reader to travel into that more interesting region—the mind and heart of such a man as Lord Byron;

and though it might be desirable that he should have given a fuller description of his travels, it is highly satisfactory that he should unconsciously have left the means of penetrating into the natural character of so singular a being.

Lord Byron's letters to his mother are more likely to furnish these means than any thing else that he has left us; because they contain the only natural expression of his feelings, freely poured forth in the very circumstances that excited them, with no view at the time to obtain or keep up a particular character, and therefore with no restraint upon his own character. This was never afterwards the case.

From the moment that the publication of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* placed him, as it were, by the wand of an enchanter, upon an elevated pedestal in the Temple of Fame, he could not write any thing, even in familiar correspondence, which was not in some degree influenced by the idea of supporting a character; especially as, after the death of his mother, he had no correspondent to whom

he made it a duty, at certain intervals, to communicate his thoughts.

It is, therefore, in the natural turn of thought, not shown forth by any expression of decided opinions, but rather permitted to be seen in the light touches and unpremeditated indications of feeling, with which these letters abound, that the original character of Lord Byron is more surely to be traced. I say his *original* character, because so great an alteration took place, at least in the degree, if not in the nature of it, after the publication of his first great poem, that the traits which might give us an insight into his mind at the one period, will scarcely afford us ground to form any judgment of it at the other. I deeply regret that, being prevented from making any thing like quotations from these letters, it is impossible for me to convey in any adequate degree the spirit of the character which they display.

At Newstead, just before his coming of age, he planned his future travels; and his original intention included a much larger portion of the

world than that which he afterwards visited. He first thought of Persia, to which idea indeed he for a long time adhered. He afterwards meant to sail for India; and had so far contemplated this project as to write for information from the Arabic Professor at Cambridge, and to ask his mother to inquire of a friend who had lived in India, what things would be necessary for his voyage. He formed his plan of travelling upon very different grounds from those which he afterwards advanced. All men should travel at one time or another, he thought, and he had then no connexions to prevent him; when he returned he might enter into political life, for which travelling would not incapacitate him, and he wished to judge of men by experience. He had been compared by some one to Rousseau, but he disclaimed any desire to resemble so illustrious a lunatic; though he wished to live as much by himself and in his own way as possible.

While at Newstead at this time, and in contemplation of his intended departure, he made a will, which he meant to have formally executed as

soon as he came of age. In it he made a proper provision for his mother, bequeathing her the manor of Newstead *for her life*. How different a will from that which, with so different a mind and heart, he really executed seven years afterwards!

A short time after this a proposal was made to him by his man of business, to sell Newstead Abbey, which made his mother uneasy upon the subject. To set her mind at ease he declared, in the strongest terms, that his own fate and Newstead were inseparable; stating, at the same time, the fittest and noblest reasons why he should never part with Newstead, and affirming that the finest fortune in the country should not purchase it from him. The letter in which he had written his sentiments on this subject, was that which he gave to me to keep as a pledge that he never would dispose of Newstead. Nor was it, indeed, until he had abandoned himself to the evil influence which afterwards beset him, that he forgot his solemn promise to his mother, and the pledge of honour which he voluntarily put into my

hands, and then bartered the last vestige of the inheritance of his family.

He left London in June, 1809; and his acute sensibility being deeply wounded at his relation's conduct when taking his seat in the House of Lords, and by the disappointment he had experienced on parting with the friend whom he had believed to be so affectionately attached to him, he talked of a regretless departure from the shores of England, and said he had no wish to revisit any thing in it, except his mother and Newstead Abbey. The state of his affairs annoyed him also much. He had consented to the sale of his estate in Lancashire, and if it did not produce what he expected, or what would be sufficient for his emergencies, he thought of entering into some foreign service; the Austrian, the Russian, or even the Turkish, if he liked their manners. Amongst his suite was a German servant, who had been already in Persia with Mr Wilbraham, and a lad whom he took with him, because he thought him, like himself, a friendless creature; and to the few regrets that he had felt on leaving his

native country, his heart made him add that of parting with an old servant, whose age prevented his master from hoping to see him again.

The objects that he met with in his journey as far as Gibraltar, seemed to have occupied his mind, to the exclusion of his gloomy and misanthropic thoughts; for the letter which he wrote to his mother from thence contains no indication of them, but, on the contrary, much playful description of the scenes through which he had passed. The beautiful Stanzas, from the 16th to the 30th of the first Canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, are the exact echoes of the thoughts which occurred to his mind at the time, as he went over the spot described. In going into the library of the convent of Mafra, the monks conversed with him in Latin, and asked him whether the *English* had *any books* in their country. From Mafra he went to Seville, and was not a little surprised at the excellence of the horses and roads in Spain, by which he was enabled to travel nearly four hundred miles in four days, without fatigue or annoyance.

At Seville Lord Byron lodged in the house of two unmarried ladies, one of whom, however, was going to be married soon; and though he remained there only three days, she did not scruple to pay him the most particular attentions, which, as they were women of character, and mixing in society, rather astonished him. His Sevillian hostess embraced him at parting with great tenderness, cutting off a lock of his hair, and presenting him with a very long one of her own, which he forwarded to his mother in his next letter. With this specimen of Spanish female manners, he proceeded to Cadiz, where various incidents occurred to him, calculated to confirm the opinion he had formed at Seville of the Andalusian belles, and which made him leave Cadiz with regret, and determine to return to it.

Lord Byron kept no journal; while his companion, Mr Hobhouse, was occupied without ceasing in making notes: His aversion to letter-writing also occasions great chasms in the only account that can be obtained of his movements from himself. He wrote, however, to his mother

from Malta, merely to announce his safety; and forwarded the letter by Mrs Spencer Smith, whose eccentric character and extraordinary situation very much attracted his attention. He did not write again until November, 1809, from Previsa.

Upon arriving at Yanina, Lord Byron found that Ali Pacha was with his troops in Illyricum besieging Ibrahim Pacha in Berat; but the Vizier, having heard that an English nobleman was in his country, had given orders at Yanina to supply him with every kind of accommodation free of all expense. Thus he was not allowed to pay for any thing whatever, and was forced to content himself with making presents to the slaves. From Yanina he went to Tepaleen, a journey of nine days, owing to the autumnal torrents which retarded his progress. The scene which struck him upon entering Tepaleen, at the time of the sun's setting, recalled to his mind the description of Branksome Castle, in Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*. The different objects which presented themselves to his view when arriving at the Pacha's palace,—the Albanians, in their superb

costume—the Tartars and the Turks, with their separate peculiarities of dress—the row of two hundred horses, ready caparisoned, waiting in a large open gallery—the couriers, which the stirring interest of the neighbouring siege made to pass in and out constantly—the military music—the boys repeating the hour from the Minaret of the Mosque,—are all faithfully and exactly described as he saw them, in the 55th and following stanzas, to the 60th of the second Canto of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*.

He was lodged in the palace, and the next day introduced to Ali Pacha.—Ali said, that the English minister had told him that Lord Byron's family was a great one; and he desired him to give his respects to his mother, which his Lordship faithfully delivered immediately. The Pacha declared that he knew him to be a man of rank from the smallness of his ears, his curling hair, and his little white hands; and told him to consider himself under his protection as that of a father while he remained in Turkey, as he looked on him as his son; and, indeed, he showed how

much he considered him as a child, by sending him sweetmeats, and fruit, and nice things repeatedly during the day.

In going in a Turkish ship of war, provided for him by Ali Pacha, from Previsa, intending to sail for Patras, Lord Byron was very nearly lost in but a moderate gale of wind, from the ignorance of the Turkish officers and sailors—the wind, however, abated, and they were driven on the coast of Suli. The confusion appears to have been very great on board the galliot, and somewhat added to by the distress of Lord Byron's valet, Fletcher, whose natural alarms upon this, and other occasions,^g and his untravelled requirements of English comforts, such as tea, etc., not a little amused his master, and were frequently the subject of good-humoured jokes with him. An instance of disinterested hospitality, in the chief of a Suliote village, occurred to Lord Byron, in consequence of his disasters in the Turkish galliot. The honest Albanian, after assisting him in the distress in which he found himself, supplying his wants, and lodging him and his suite,

consisting of Fletcher, a Greek, two Athenians, a Greek priest, and his companion, Mr Hobhouse, refused to receive any remuneration ; and only asked him for a written acknowledgment that he had been well-treated. When Lord Byron pressed him to take money, he said, "I wish you to love me, not to pay me."

At Yanina, on his return, he was introduced to Hussian Bey and Mahmout Pacha, two young grand-children of Ali Pacha, very unlike lads, having painted faces, large black eyes and regular features. They were nevertheless very pretty, and already instructed in all the court ceremonies. Mahmout, the younger, and he were friends without understanding each other, like a great many other people, though for a different reason.

Lord Byron wrote several times to his mother from Smyrna, from whence he went in the Salsette frigate to Constantinople. It was while this frigate was lying at anchor in the Dardanelles, that he swam from Sestos to Abydos,—an exploit which he seemed to have remembered ever after

with very great pleasure, repeating it and referring to it in no less than five of his letters to his mother, and in the only two letters he wrote to me while he was away.

It was not until after Lord Byron arrived at Constantinople that he decided not to go on to Persia, but to pass the following summer in the Morea. At Constantinople, Mr Hobhouse left him to return to England, and by him he wrote to me and to his mother. He meant also to have sent back his man, Fletcher, with Mr Hobhouse; as, however good a servant in England, he found him an incumbrance in his progress. Lord Byron had now tasted the delights of travelling; he had seen much, both of country and of mankind; he had neither been disappointed nor disgusted with what he had met with; and though he had passed many a fatiguing, he had never spent a tedious hour. This led him to *fear* that these feelings might excite in him a gipsy-like wandering disposition, which would make him uncomfortable at home, know-

ing such to be frequently the case with men in the habit of travelling. He had mixed with persons in all stations in life, had lived amongst the most splendid, and sojourned with the poorest, and found the people harmless and hospitable. He had passed some time with the principal Greeks in the Morea and Livadia, and he classed them as inferior to the Turks, but superior to the Spaniards, whom he placed before the Portuguese. At Constantinople, his judgment of Lady Mary Wortley was, that she had not overstepped the truth near so much as would have been done by any other woman under similar circumstances; but he differed from her when she said "St Paul's would cut a strange figure by St Sophia's." He felt the great interest which St Sophia's possesses from various considerations, but he thought it by no means equal to some of the Mosques, and not to be written on the same leaf with St Paul's. According to his idea, the Cathedral at Seville was superior to both, or to any religious edifice he knew. He was enchanted with the magnificence of the walls of the city, and the beauty of

the Turkish burying-grounds; and he looked with enthusiasm at the prospect on each side from the Seven Towers, to the end of the Golden Horn.

When Lord Byron had lost his companion at Constantinople, he felt great satisfaction at being once more alone; for his nature led him to solitude, and his disposition towards it increased daily. There were many men there and in the Morea who wished to join him; one to go to Asia, another to Egypt. But he preferred going alone over his old track, and to look upon his old objects, the seas and the mountains, the only acquaintances that improved upon him. He was a good deal annoyed at this juncture by the persevering silence of *his man of business*, from whom he had never once heard since his departure from England, in spite of the critical situation of his affairs; and yet, it is remarkable with how much patience he bore with circumstances, which certainly were calculated to excite the anger of one of less irritable disposition than his own.

Whether it were owing to his having been left

alone to his own reflections, or whether it be merely attributable to the uneven fluctuations of an unsettled mind, it appears that Lord Byron's thoughts at this time had some tendency towards a recovery from the morbid state of moral apathy which upon some important points he had evinced. He felt the advantage of looking at mankind in the original, and not in the picture—of reading themselves, instead of the account of them in books; he saw the disadvantageous results of remaining at home with the narrow prejudices of an islander, and wished that the youth of our country were forced by law to visit our allied neighbours. He had conversed with French, Italians, Germans, Danes, Greeks, Turks, Armenians, etc. etc., and without losing sight of his own nation, could form an estimate of the countries and manners of others; but, at the same time, he felt *gratified* when he found that England was *superior* in any thing. This shows the latent spark of patriotism in his heart.

He wished, when he returned to England, to lead a quiet and retired life; in thinking of which,

his mind involuntarily acknowledged that God knew, but arranged the best for us all. This acknowledgment seemed to call forth the remembrance of his acquired infidelity; and, for the sake of consistency, he qualified it by giving it as the general belief, and he had nothing to oppose to such a doctrine, as upon the whole he could not complain of his own lot. He was *convinced* that mankind did more harm to themselves than Satan could do to them. These are singular assertions for Lord Byron, and show that, at that time at least, his mind was in a state which might have admitted of a different result than that which unhappily followed.

I have already said, that Lord Byron took no notes of his travels, and he did not intend to publish any thing concerning them; but it is curious that, while he was in Greece, he made a determination that he would publish no more on any subject—he would appear no more as an author—he was quite satisfied, if by his Satire he had shown to the critics and the world that he was something above what they supposed him to be,

nor would he hazard the reputation that work might have procured him by publishing again. He had, indeed, other things by him, as the event proved; but he resolved, that if they were worth giving to the public, it should be posthumously, that the remembrance of him might be continued when he could no longer remember.

Previous to his return to England, the proposal to sell Newstead was renewed. His mother again showed her feeling upon the subject. His own feelings and determinations were unchanged. If it was necessary that money should be procured by the sale of land, he was willing to part with Rochdale. He sent Fletcher to England with papers to that effect. He, besides, had no reliance on the funds; but the main point of his objection to the proposal was, that the only thing that bound him to England was Newstead—if by any extraordinary event he should be induced to part with it, he was resolved to pass his life abroad. The expenses of living in the East, with all the advantages of climate, and abundance of luxury, were trifling in compa-

riſon with what was neceſſary for competence in England. He was reſolved that Newſtead ſhould not be ſold: he had fixed upon the alternative—if Newſtead remained with him, he would come back—if not, he never would.

Lord Byron returned to England in the *Volage* frigate, on the 2d July, 1811, after having been abſent two years exactly to a day. He experienced very ſimilar feelings of indifference in approaching its ſhores, to thoſe with which he had left them. His health had not ſuffered, though it had been interrupted by two ſharp fevers; he had, however, put himſelf entirely upon a vegetable diet, never taking either fiſh or fleſh, and drinking no wine.

XIII.

EARLY in July, 1811, I received a letter from Lord Byron, written on board the *Volage* frigate, at ſea, on the 28th of June (ſee vol. ii, p. 40), in which, after informing me of his approaching return, he ſhortly recapitulates the principal

countries he has travelled through, and does not forget to mention his swimming from Sestos to Abydos. He expected little pleasure in coming home, though he brought a spirit still unbroken. He dreaded the trouble he should have to encounter in the arrangement of his affairs. His Satire was at that time in the fourth edition; and at that period, being able to think and act more coolly, he affected to feel sorry that he had written it. This was, however, an immense sacrifice to a vague sense of propriety, as is clear from his having even then in his possession an imitation of Horace's Art of Poetry, ready for the press, which was nothing but a continuation of the Satire; and also from the subsequent preparation of a fifth edition of the very work which he professed to regret having written.¹

¹ In the long narrative and criticism which follows about *Blacket*, the poetical shoemaker, vol. ii, pp. 32, 39; the other poetical shoemaker, mentioned at p. 35, was *Woodhouse* not *Wordsworth*.—This *Woodhouse* was many years valet to Mrs Montagu, of Portman Square.—

XIV.

UPON receiving Lord Byron's letter from on-board the Volage, I wrote him the Letter, dated 13th July, 1811.—(See vol. ii, p. 44).

XV.

AT every step which I take in my task of submitting to the public my Recollections of Lord Byron, I feel that the letters, which I received from him while he was at Newstead, give a complete picture of his mind, under circumstances peculiarly calculated to call forth its most interesting features. Our correspondence was kept up without interruption. Upon arriving at Newstead he found that his mother had breathed her last. He suffered much from this loss, and the disappointment of not seeing her before her death; and while his feelings were still very acute, within a few days of his arrival at the abbey, he received the intelligence that Mr M***, a very intimate friend of his friend Mr Hobhouse, and one whom he highly estimated himself, had

been drowned in the Cam. He had not long before heard of the death of his school-fellow, Wingfield, at Coimbra, to whom he was much attached. He wrote me an account of these events in a short but affecting letter (See vol. ii, p. 70). They had all died within a month, he having just heard from all three, but seen none. The letter from Mr M*** had been written the day previous to his death. He could not restore them by regret, and therefore, with a sigh to the departed, he struggled to return to the heavy routine of life, in the sure expectation that all would one day have their repose. He felt that his grief was selfish. He wished to think upon any subject except death—he was satiated with that. Having always four skulls in his library, he could look on them without emotion: but he could not allow his imagination to take off the fleshy covering from those of his friends, without a horrible sensation; and he thought that the Romans were right in burning their deceased friends. I wrote to him an answer on 18th August—(See vol. ii, p. 73).

XVI.

LORD BYRON disclaimed the acuteness of feeling I attributed to him, because, though he certainly felt unhappy, he was nevertheless attacked by a kind of hysterical merriment, or rather a laughing without merriment, which he could neither understand nor overcome, and which gave him no relief, while a spectator would think him in good spirits. He frequently talked of M*** as of a person of gigantic intellect—he could by no language do justice to his abilities—all other men were pigmies to him. He loved Wingfield indeed more—he was an earlier and a dearer friend, and one whom he could never regret loving—but in talent he knew no equal to M***. In him he had to mourn the loss of a guide, philosopher, and friend, while in Wingfield he lost a friend only, though one before whom he could have wished to have gone his long journey. Lord Byron's language concerning Mr M*** was equally strong and remarkable. He affirmed that it was not in the mind of those who did not know him, to conceive such a man; that his superiority was too great to excite envy—that he was awed

by him—that there was the *mark of an immortal creature in whatever he did*, and yet he was gone—that such a man should have been given over to death, so early in life, bewildered him. In referring to the honours M*** acquired at the University, he declared that nevertheless he was a most confirmed atheist, *indeed offensively so*, for he did not scruple to avow his opinions in all companies.

Once only did Lord Byron ever express, in distinct terms to me, a direct attack upon the tenets of the Christian Religion; I postponed my answer, saying upon this I had much to write to him. He afterwards reminded me of my having said so, but, at the same time, begged me not to enter upon metaphysics, upon which he never could agree with me.—(See vol. ii. p. 124, for the answer).

XVII.

LORD BYRON noticed what I had written, but in a very discouraging manner. He would have nothing to do with the subject—we should all go

down together, he said; "So," quoting St Paul, "let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die;"—he felt satisfied in his creed, for it was better to sleep than to wake.

Such were the opinions which occasionally manifested themselves in this unhappy young man, and which gave me a degree of pain proportioned to the affection I could not but feel for him; while my hopes of his ultimately breaking from the trammels of infidelity, which were never relinquished, received from time to time, fresh excitement from some expressions that appeared to me to have an opposite tendency. He frequently recurred to his playful raillery upon the subject of my co-operation in the murder, as he called it, of poor Blackett. Upon one occasion, he mentioned him in opposition to Kirke White, whom, setting aside what he called his bigotry, he classed with Chatterton. He expressed wonder that White was so little known at Cambridge, where he said nobody knew any thing about him until his death. He added that, for himself, he should have taken pride in making his acquaintance,

and that his very prejudices were calculated to render him respectable. Such occasional expressions as these, in spite of the inconsistency which they displayed, furnished food for my hope that I should one day see him sincerely embracing Christianity, and escaping from the vortex of the atheistical society, in which, having entered at all, it was only wonderful to me that he was so moderate in his expressions as in general he had hitherto been. He told me that both his friend, Juvenal Hodgson, and myself, had beset him upon the subject of religion, and that my warmth was nothing, compared to his fire—his reward would surely be great in heaven, he said, if he were half as careful in the matter of his own salvation, as he was voluntarily anxious concerning his friends. Lord Byron added, that he gave honour to us both, but conviction to neither.

The mention of Kirke White brought to his mind an embryo epic poet who was at Cambridge, Mr Townsend, who had published the plan and specimen of a work, to be called "Armageddon." Lord Byron's opinion of this is

already given in his own note, to a line in his Hints from Horace; but in referring to him, he thought that perhaps his anticipating the day of judgment was too presumptuous—it seemed something like instructing the Lord what he should do, and might put a captious person in mind of the line,

“And fools rush in where angels fear to tread.”

This he said, without wishing to cavil himself, but other people would; he nevertheless hoped, that Mr Townsend would complete his work, in spite of Milton.

Lord Byron's moral feelings were sometimes evinced in a manner which the writings and opinions of his later life render remarkable. When he was abroad, he was informed that the son of one of his tenants had seduced a respectable young person in his own station in life. On this he expressed his opinion very strongly. Although he felt it impossible strictly to perform what he conceived our first duty, to abstain from doing

harm, yet he thought our second duty was to exert all our power to repair the harm we may have done. In the particular case in question, the parties ought forthwith to marry, as they were in equal circumstances—if the girl had been the inferior of the seducer, money would be even then an insufficient compensation. He would not sanction in his tenants what he would not do himself. He had, indeed, *as God knew*, committed many excesses but; as he had determined to amend, and latterly kept to his determination, this young man must follow his example. He insisted that the seducer should restore the unfortunate girl to society.

The manner in which Lord Byron expressed his particular feelings respecting his own life, was melancholy to a painful degree. At one time, he said, that he was about to visit Cambridge, but that M*** was gone, and Hobhouse was also absent; and, except the person who had invited him, there was scarcely any to welcome him. From this his thoughts fell into a gloomy channel—he was alone in the world, and only

three-and-twenty; he could be no more than alone, when he should have nearly finished his course; he had, it was true, youth to begin again with, but he had no one with whom to call back the laughing period of his existence. He was struck with the singular circumstance that few of his friends had had a quiet death; but a quiet life, he said, was more important. He afterwards acknowledged that he felt his life had been altogether opposed to propriety, and even decency; and that it was now become a dreary blank, with his friends gone, either by death or estrangement.

While he was still continuing at Newstead, he wrote me a letter, which affected me deeply, upon the occasion of another death with which he was shocked—he lost one whom he had dearly loved in the more smiling season of his earlier youth; but he quoted—“I have almost forgot the taste of grief, and supped full of horrors.” He could not then weep for an event which a few years before would have overwhelmed him. He appeared to be afflicted in youth, he thought,

with the greatest unhappiness of old age, to see those he loved fall about him, and stand solitary before he was withered. He had not, like others, domestic resources; and his internal anticipations gave him no prospect in time or in eternity, except the selfish gratification of living longer than those who were better. At this period he expressed great wretchedness; but he turned from himself, and knowing that I was contemplating a retirement into the country, he proposed a plan for me, dictated by great kindness of heart, by which I was the more sensibly touched, as it occupied his mind at such a moment. He wished me to settle in the little town of Southwell, the particulars of which he explained to me. Upon these subjects I wrote to him on the 27th of October.—(See vol. ii, p. 149).

XVIII.

IT was not without great difficulty that I could induce Lord Byron to allow his new poem to be published with his name. He dreaded that the old enmity of the critics in the north which had

been envenomed by his Satire, as well as the Southern scribblers, whom he had equally enraged, would overwhelm his "Pilgrimage." This was his first objection—his second was, that he was anxious the world should not fix upon himself the character of Childe Harold. Nevertheless he said, if Mr Murray positively required his name, and I agreed with him in opinion, he would venture; and therefore he wished it to be given as "By the Author of English Bards and Scotch Reviewers." He promised to give me some smaller poems to put at the end; and though he originally intended his Remarks on the Romaic to be printed with the Hints from Horace, he felt they would more aptly accompany the Pilgrimage. He had kept no journals while abroad, but he meant to manufacture some notes from his letters to his mother. The advertisement which he originally intended to be prefixed to the poem was something different from the preface that appeared. The paragraph beginning "a Fictitious Character is introduced, for the sake of giving some connexion to the piece, which, however, makes no pretensions to regularity,"—

was continued thus at first, but was afterwards altered :—

“It has been suggested to me by friends, on whose opinions I set a high value, that in the fictitious character of ‘Childe Harold,’ I may incur the suspicion of having drawn ‘from myself.’ This I beg leave once for all to disclaim. I wanted a character to give some connexion to the poem, and the one adopted suited my purpose as well as any other. In some very trivial particulars, and those merely local, there might be grounds for such an idea; but in the main points, I should hope none whatever. My reader will observe, that when the author speaks in his own person, he assumes a very different tone from that of

“The cheerless thing, the man without a friend.”

I crave pardon for this egotism, which proceeds from my wish to discard any probable imputation of it to the text.”

This it appears had been written before the death of his mother, and his mournful sojourn at Newstead afterwards. It was during that period that he sent me the advertisement, upon which he had interlined after his quotation of

“ The cheerless thing, the man without a friend, ”

“ at least till death had deprived him of his nearest connexions. ”

While Childe Harold was preparing to be put into the printer's hands, Lord Byron was very anxious for the speedy appearance of the Imitation of Horace, with which Cawthorn was desirous of proceeding with all dispatch, but which I was nevertheless most desirous of retarding at least, if not of suppressing altogether. Lord Byron wrote to me from Newstead several times upon the subject. I forbore to reply until I could send him the first proof of the Pilgrimage, when I wrote the Letter dated Sept. 5. 1811. (See vol. ii. p. 91.)

XIX.

PREVIOUS to receiving this letter, Lord Byron had written to Mr Murray, forbidding him to show the manuscript of *Childe Harold* to Mr Gifford, though he had no objection to letting it be seen by any one else; and he was exceedingly angry when he found that his instructions had come too late. He was afraid that Mr Gifford would think it a trap to extort his applause, or a hint to get a favourable review of it in the *Quarterly*. He was very anxious to remove any impression of this kind that might have remained on his mind. His praise, he said, meant nothing, for he could do no other than be civil to a man who had extolled him in every possible manner. His expressions about Mr Murray's deserts for such an obsequious squeezing out of approbation, and deprecation of censure, were quaint, and though strong, were amusing enough. Still, however, the praise, all unmeaning as he seemed to consider it, had the effect of strengthening my arguments concerning the delay of the "Hints from Horace;" and when, in a letter soon after-

wards, I said, « Cawthorn's business detains him in the North, and I will manage to detain the 'Hints,' first from, and then in, the press—'the Romaunt' *shall* come forth first,» I found, so far from opposing my intention, he concurred with and forwarded it. He acknowledged that I was right, and begged me to manage, so that Cawthorn should not get the start of Murray in the publication of the two works.

I cannot express the great anxiety I felt to prevent Lord Byron from publicly committing himself, as holding decidedly sceptical opinions. There were several stanzas which showed the leaning of his mind; but, in one, he openly acknowledged his disbelief of a future state; and against this I made my stand. I urged him by every argument I could devise, not to allow it to appear in print; and I had the great gratification of finding him yield to my entreaties, if not to my arguments. It has, alas! become of no importance, that these lines should be published to the world—they are exceedingly moderate com-

pared to the blasphemy with which his suicidal pen has since blackened the fame that I was so desirous of keeping fair, till the time came when he should love to have it fair—a period to which I fondly looked forward, as not only possible, but near. The original stanza ran thus—

« Frown not upon me, churlish Priest! that I
Look not for life, where life may never be ;
I am no sneerer at thy Phantasy :
Thou pitiest me,—alas ! I envy thee,
Thou bold discoverer in an unknown sea,
Of happy isles and happier tenants there ;
I ask thee not to prove a Sadducee.
Still dream of Paradise, thou know'st not where,
But lov'st too well to bid thine erring brother share.»

The stanza that he at length sent me to substitute for this, was that beautiful one—

« Yet if, as holiest men have deemed, there be
A land of souls beyond that sable shore,
To shame the doctrine of the Sadducee,
And sophists, madly vain of dubious lore,
How sweet it were in concert to adore,

With those who made our mortal labours light !
To hear each voice we fear'd to hear no more !
Behold each mighty shade reveal'd to sight,
The Bactrian, Samian Sage, and all who taught the
right !”

The stanza which follows this (the 9th of the 2d Canto), and which applies the subject of it to the death of a person for whom he felt affection, was written subsequently, when the event to which he alludes took place; and was sent to me only just in time to have it inserted. He made a slight alteration in it, and enclosed me another copy.

As a note to the stanzas upon this subject, beginning with the 3d, and continuing to the 9th, Lord Byron had originally written a sort of prose-apology for his opinions; which he sent to me for consideration, whether it did not appear more like an attack than a defence of religion, and had therefore better be left out. I had no hesitation in advising its omission, though for the reasons above stated, I now insert it here.

“ In this age of bigotry, when the puritan and priest have changed places, and the wretched catholic is visited with the ‘sins of his fathers,’ even unto generations far beyond the pale of the commandment, the cast of opinion in these stanzas will doubtless meet with many a contemptuous anathema. But let it be remembered, that the spirit they breathe is desponding, not sneering, scepticism; that he who has seen the Greek and Moslem superstitions contending for mastery over the former shrines of Polytheism,—who has left in his own country ‘Pharisees, thanking God that they are not like publicans and sinners,’ and Spaniards in theirs, abhorring the heretics, who have holpen them in their need,—will be not a little bewildered, and begin to think, that as only one of them can be right, they may most of them be wrong. With regard to morals, and the effect of religion on mankind, it appears, from all historical testimony, to have had less effect in making them love their neighbours, than inducing that cordial christian abhorrence between sectaries and schismatics. The

Turks and Quakers are the most tolerant; if an infidel pays his heratch to the former, he may pray how, when, and where he pleases; and the mild tenets, and devout demeanour of the latter, make their lives the truest commentary on the Sermon of the Mount.”

This is a remarkable instance of false and weak reasoning, and affords a key to Lord Byron's mind, which I shall take occasion to notice more particularly in my concluding chapter.

XX.

In consequence of this letter, Lord Byron consented to omit the 25th, 27th, and 28th stanzas, but retained the 24th, 26th, and 29th, making, however, some alterations in them.—(See vol. ii. p. 137.)

XXI.

To these stanzas was attached a long note, which,

though nothing but a wild tirade against the Portuguese, and the measures of government, and the battle of Talavera, I had great difficulty in inducing him to relinquish. I wrote him the letter dated 1st December 1811, upon the subject.—(See vol. ii. p. 165.)

XXII.

The note I alluded to was as follows:—

NOTE ON SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.

IN the year 1809, it is a well-known fact, that the assassinations in the streets of Lisbon and its vicinity were not confined by the Portuguese to their countrymen; but Englishmen were daily butchered; and so far from the survivors obtaining redress, they were requested "not to interfere" if they perceived their compatriot defending himself against his amiable allies. I was once stopped in the way to the theatre, at eight in the evening, when the streets were not more empty than they generally are, opposite to an *open shop*,

8.

and in a carriage with a friend, by three of our *allies*; and had we not fortunately been armed, I have not the least doubt we should have "adorned a tale," instead of telling it. We have heard wonders of the Portuguese lately, and their gallantry,—pray heaven it continue; yet, "would it were bed-time, Hal, and all were well!" They must fight a great many hours, by "Shrewsbury clock," before the number of their slain equals that of our countrymen butchered by these kind creatures, now metamorphosed into "Caçadores," and what not. I merely state a fact not confined to Portugal, for in Sicily and Malta we are knocked on the head at a handsome average nightly, and not a Sicilian and Maltese is ever punished! The neglect of protection is disgraceful to our government and governors, for the murders are as notorious as the moon that shines upon them, and the apathy that overlooks them. The Portuguese, it is to be hoped, are complimented with the "Forlorn Hope;"—if the cowards are become brave (like the rest of their kind, in a corner), pray let them display it. But there is a subscription for these "θρασύ δειλον" (they need

not be ashamed of the epithet once applied to the Spartans), and all the charitable patronymics, from ostentatious A. to diffident Z., and *1 l. 1 s. 0 d.* from "an admirer of valour," are in requisition for the lists at Lloyd's, and the honour of British benevolence. Well, we have fought and subscribed, and bestowed peerages, and buried the killed by our friends and foes; and lo! all this is to be done over again! Like "young The." (in Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*), as we "grow older, we grow never the better." It would be pleasant to learn who will subscribe for us, in or about the year 1815, and what nation will send fifty thousand men, first to be decimated in the capital, and then decimated again (in the Irish fashion, *nine* out of *ten*), in the "bed of honour," which, as Serjeant Kite says, is considerably larger and more commodious than the "bed of Ware." Then they must have a poet to write the "Vision of Don Perceval," and generously bestow the profits of the well and widely-printed quarto to re-build the "Backwynd" and the "Canon-gate," or furnish new kilts for the half-roasted Highlanders. Lord Wel-

lington, however, has enacted marvels; and so did his oriental brother, whom I saw charioteering over the French flag, and heard clipping bad Spanish, after listening to the speech of a patriotic cobbler of Cadiz, on the event of his own entry into that city, and the exit of some five thousand bold Britons out of this "best of all possible worlds." Sorely were we puzzled how to dispose of that same victory of Talavera; and a victory it surely was somewhere, for every body claimed it. The Spanish dispatch and mob called it *Cuesta's*, and made no great mention of the Viscount; the French called it *theirs* (to my great discomfiture, for a French consul stopped my mouth in Greece with a pestilent Paris Gazette, just as I had killed Sebastiani "in buckram," and king Joseph in "Kendal green,")—and we have not yet determined *what* to call it, or *whose*, for certes it was none of our own. Howbeit, Massena's retreat is a great comfort, and as we have not been in the habit of pursuing for some years past, no wonder we are a little awkward at first. No doubt we shall improve, or if

not, we have only to take to our old way of retrograding, and there we are at home.

There were several stanzas in which allusions were made of a personal nature, and which I prevailed upon Lord Byron to omit. The reasons which induced their suppression, continue still to have equal force as at the time of the first publication of the poem.

As the poem went through the press, we had constant communication upon the subject.—(See vol. ii. p. 16.)

XXIII.

A short time afterwards, he made me a present of the original manuscript of his speech, *which he had previously written.*

XXIV.

The first letter of Sir Francis Darrel, mentioned vol. ii. pp. 49, 50, is here inserted.

“ ——— J——, 180—.

“ ——— DARRELL TO G. Y.

(The first part of this letter is lost.)

“ ***** So much for your present pursuits. I will now resume the subject of my last. How I wish you were upon the spot; your taste for the ridiculous would be fully gratified; and if you felt inclined for more serious amusement, there is no ‘lack of argument.’ Within this last week our guests have been doubled in number, some of them my old acquaintance. Our host you already know—absurd as ever, but rather duller, and I should conceive troublesome to such of his very good friends as find his house more agreeable than its owner. I confine myself to observation, and do not find him at all in the way, though Veramore and Asply are of a different opinion. The former, in particular, imparts to me many

pathetic complaints on the want of opportunities (nothing else being wanting to the success of the said Veramore), created by the fractious and but ill-concealed jealousy of poor Bramblebear, whose Penelope seems to have as many suitors as her namesake, and for aught I can see to the contrary, with as much prospect of carrying their point. In the mean time, I look on and laugh, or rather, I should laugh were you present to share in it: Sackcloth and sorrow[?] are excellent wear for Soliloquy; but for a laugh there should be two, but not many more, except at the first night of a modern tragedy.

“ You are very much mistaken in the design you impute to myself; I have *none* here or elsewhere. I am sick of old intrigues, and too indolent to engage in new ones. Besides, I am, that is, I used to be, apt to find my heart gone at the very time when you fastidious gentlemen begin to recover yours. I agree with you that the world, as well as yourself, are of a different opinion. I shall never be at the trouble to undeceive either; my follies have seldom been of

my own seeking. 'Rebellion came in my way, and I found it.' This may appear as coxcombical a speech as Veramore could make, yet *you* partly know its truth. You talk to me too of 'my character,' and yet it is one which you and fifty others have been struggling these seven years to obtain for yourselves. I wish you had it, you would make so much *better*, that is *worse*, use of it; relieve me, and gratify an ambition which is unworthy of a man of sense. It has always appeared to me extraordinary that you should value women so highly, and yet love them so little. The height of your gratification ceases with its accomplishment; you bow—and you sigh—and you worship—and abandon. For my part I regard them as a very beautiful but inferior animal. I think them as much out of their place at our tables as they would be in our senates. The whole present system, with regard to that sex, is a remnant of the chivalrous barbarism of our ancestors; I look upon them as grown up children, but, like a foolish mamma, am always the slave of some *only* one. With a contempt for the race, I am ever attached to the individual, in spite of *myself*.

You know, that though not rude, I am inattentive; any thing but a 'beau garçon.' I would not hand a woman out of her carriage, but I would leap into a river after her. However, I grant you that, as they must walk oftener out of chariots than into the Thames, you gentlemen Servitors, Cortejos, and Cicisbei, have a better chance of being agreeable and useful; *you* might, very probably, do both; but, as you can't swim, and I can, I recommend you to invite me to your first water-party.

«Bramblebear's Lady Penelope puzzles me. She is very beautiful, but not one of my beauties. You know I admire a different complexion, but the figure is perfect. She is accomplished, if her mother and music-master may be believed; amiable, if a soft voice and a sweet smile could make her so; young, even by the register of her baptism; pious and chaste, and doting on her husband, according to Bramblebear's observation; equally loving, *not* of her husband, though rather less pious, and *t'other* thing, according to Vera-

more's; and, if mine hath any discernment, she detests the one, despises the other, and loves—herself. That she dislikes Bramblebear is evident; poor soul, I can't blame her; she has found him out to be mighty weak, and *little-tempered*; she has also discovered that she married too early to know what she liked, and that there are many likeable people who would have been less discordant and more creditable partners. Still she conducts herself well, and in point of good-humour, to admiration.—A good deal of religion (*not* enthusiasm, for that leads the contrary way), a prying husband who never leaves her, and, as I think, a very temperate pulse, will keep her out of scrapes. I am glad of it, first, because, though Bramblebear is bad, I don't think Vera-more much better; and next, because Bramblebear is ridiculous enough already, and it would only be *thrown* away upon him to make him more so; thirdly, it would be a pity, because no body *would pity* him; and, fourthly (as Scrub says), he would then become a melancholy and sentimental harlequin, instead of a merry, fretful,

pantaloon, and I like the pantomime better as it is now cast.

“ More in my next.

“ Yours, truly,

“ ——— DARRELL.”

XXV.

M. BEYLE'S LETTER, AND SIR WALTER SCOTT'S EULOGY.

I cannot omit the opportunity which accident has afforded me of giving to the public Lord Byron's opinion of the author of the character I am about to subjoin, which, in the particular circumstances that gave rise to it, bears the stamp of sincerity, as well as of the ready jealousy of friendship. It is contained in a letter written to M. Beyle, the author of a work entitled *Rome, Naples, and Florence*, in 1817, which he published under the name of *De Stendhal*, and was occasioned by Lord Byron's reading that

work. M. Beyle has had the kindness to allow the letter to be published. It is as follows:—

To Monsieur,

MONSIEUR BEYLE,

Auditeur au Conseil d'État.

Genoa, May 29, 1823.

SIR,

At present that *I know* to whom I am indebted for a very flattering mention in the Rome, Naples, and Florence, in 1817, by M. de Stendhal, it is fit that I should return my thanks (however undesired or undesirable) to M. Beyle, with whom I had the honour of being acquainted at Milan, in 1816. You only did me too much honour in what you were pleased to say in that work—but it has hardly given me less pleasure than the praise itself, to become at length aware (which I have done by mere accident) that I am indebted for it to one, of whose good opinion I was really ambitious. So many changes have taken place since that period in the Milan circle, that I hard-

ly dare recur to it—some dead—some banished—and some in the Austrian dungeons. Poor Pellico! I trust that in his iron solitude, his muse is consoling him in part—one day to delight us again, when both she and her poet are restored to freedom.

Of your works, I have only seen « Rome, etc. » the lives of Haydn and Mozart, and the *brochure* on Racine and Shakspeare:—the « *Histoire de la Peinture,* » I have not yet the good fortune to possess.

There is one part of your observations in the pamphlet, which I shall venture to remark upon:—It regards Walter Scott. You say, that his « character is little worthy of enthusiasm, » at the same time that you mention his productions in the manner they deserve. I have known Walter Scott long and well, and in occasional situations which call forth the *real* character, and I can assure you that his character *is* worthy of admiration; that of all men he is the most *open,*

the most *honourable*, the most *amiable*. With his politics I have nothing to do—they differ from mine, which renders it difficult for me to speak of them. But he is *perfectly sincere* in them:—and sincerity may be humble, but she cannot be servile. I pray you, therefore, to correct or soften that passage. You may, perhaps, attribute this officiousness of mine to a false affectation of *candour*, as I happen to be a writer also:—attribute it to what motive you please, but *believe the truth*. I say that Walter Scott is as nearly a thorough good man as man can be, because I know it by experience to be the case.

If you do me the honour of an answer, may I request a speedy one, because it is *possible* (though not yet decided) that circumstances may conduct me once more to Greece. My present address is Genoa, where an answer will reach me in a short time, or be forwarded to me wherever I may be.

I beg you to believe me, with a lively recollec-

tion of our brief acquaintance, and the hope of
one day renewing it,

Your ever obliged,

And obedient

Humble Servant,

(Signed) NOEL BYRON.

P. S.—I offer no excuse for writing to you in
English, as I understand you are well acquainted
with that language.

SIR WALTER SCOTT'S CHARACTER OF LORD BYRON.

« Amidst the general calmness of the political atmosphere, we have been stunned, from another quarter, by one of those death-notes which are pealed at intervals, as from an archangel's trumpet, to awaken the soul of a whole people at once. Lord Byron, who has so long and so amply filled the highest place in the public eye, has shared the lot of humanity. That mighty genius which walked amongst men as something superior to ordinary mortality, and whose powers are beheld with wonder, and something approaching to terror, as if we knew not whether they were of good or evil, is laid as soundly to rest, as the poor peasant whose ideas never went beyond his daily task. The voice of just blame and of malignant censure are at once silenced; and we feel almost as if the great luminary of heaven had suddenly disappeared from the sky, at the moment when every telescope was levelled for the examination of the spots which dimmed its brightness. It is not now the question, what were Byron's faults, what his mistakes; but how

is the blank which he has left in British literature to be filled up? Not we fear in one generation, which among many highly-gifted persons, has produced none that approached Byron in ORIGINALITY—the first attribute of genius. Only thirty six years old—so much already done for immortality—so much time remaining, as it seemed to us short-sighted mortals, to maintain and to extend his fame, and to atone for errors in conduct and levities in composition—who will not grieve that such a race has been shortened, though not always keeping the straight path,—such a light extinguished, though sometimes flaming to dazzle and to bewilder? One word more on this ungrateful subject ere we quit it for ever. The errors of Lord Byron arose neither from depravity of heart—for nature had not committed the anomaly of uniting to such extraordinary talents an imperfect moral sense,—nor from feelings dead to the admiration of virtue. No man had ever a kinder heart for sympathy, or a more open hand for the relief of distress; and no mind was ever more formed for the enthusiastic admiration of noble actions, providing he was convinced that

the actors had proceeded on disinterested principles. Lord Byron was totally free from the curse and degradation of literature—its jealousies, we mean, and its envy. But his wonderful genius was of a nature which disdained restraint, even when restraint was most wholesome. When at school, the tasks in which he excelled were those only which he undertook voluntarily; and his situation as a young man of rank, with strong passions, and in the uncontrolled enjoyment of a considerable fortune, added to that impatience of strictures or coercion which was natural to him. As an author, he refused to plead at the bar of criticism; as a man, he would not submit to be morally amenable to the tribunal of public opinion. Remonstrances from a friend, of whose intentions and kindness he was secure, had often great weight with him: but there were few who could venture on a task so difficult. Reproof he endured with impatience, and reproach hardened him in his error; so that he often resembled the gallant war-steed, who rushes forward on the steel that wounds him. In the most painful crisis of his private life, he evinced this.

irritability and impatience of censure in such a degree, as almost to resemble the noble victim of the bull-fight, which is more maddened by the squibs, darts, and petty annoyances of the unworthy crowds beyond the lists, than by the lance of his nobler, and, so to speak, his more legitimate antagonist. In a word, much of that in which he erred was in bravado and scorn of his censors, and was done with the motive of Dryden's despot, to 'show his arbitrary power.' It is needless to say, that his was a false and prejudiced view of such a contest; and that if the noble bard gained a sort of triumph by compelling the world to read poetry, though mixed with baser matter, because it was his, he gave in return an unworthy triumph to the unworthy, besides deep sorrow to those whose applause, in his cooler moments, he most valued. It was the same with his politics, which on several occasions assumed a tone menacing and contemptuous to the constitution of his country; while, in fact, Lord Byron was in his own heart sufficiently sensible, not only of his privileges as a Briton, but of the distinction attending his high

birth and rank; and was peculiarly sensitive of those shades which constitute what is termed the manners of a gentleman: indeed, notwithstanding his having employed epigrams, and all the petty war of wit, when such would have been much better abstained from, he would have been found, had a collision taken place between the aristocratic and democratic parties in the state, exerting all his energies in defence of that to which he naturally belonged. His own feelings on these subjects he has explained in the very last canto of *Don Juan*, and they are in entire harmony with the opinions which we have seen expressed in his correspondence, at a moment when matters appeared to approach a serious struggle in his native country.

“ We are not, however, Byron’s apologists; for *now*, alas! he needs none. His excellencies will *now* be universally acknowledged, and his faults (let us hope and believe) not remembered in his epitaph. It will be recollected what part he has sustained in British literature, since the first appearance of *Childe Harold*, a space of more

than twelve years. There has been no reposing under the shade of his laurels, no living upon the resource of past reputation, none of that *coddling* and petty precaution which little authors call 'taking care of their fame.' Byron let his fame take care of itself. His foot was always in the arena,—his shield hung always in the lists; and although his own gigantic renown increased the difficulty of the struggle, since he could produce nothing, however great, which exceeded the public estimate of his genius, yet he advanced to the honourable contest again and again, and came always off with distinction, almost always with complete triumph.

« As various in composition as Shakspeare himself (this will be admitted by all who are acquainted with his *Don Juan*), he has embraced every topic of human life, and sounded every string on the divine harp, from its slightest to its most powerful and heart-astounding tones. There is scarce a passion or a situation which has escaped his pen; and he might be drawn, like Garrick, between the weeping and the laughing

Muse, although his most powerful efforts have certainly been dedicated to Melpomene. His genius seemed as prolific as various. The most prodigal use did not exhaust his powers, nay, seemed rather to increase their vigour: neither *Childe Harold*, nor any of the most beautiful of Byron's earlier tales, contain more exquisite morsels of poetry than are to be found scattered throughout the cantos of *Don Juan*, amidst verses which the author appears to have thrown off with an effort as spontaneous as that of a tree resigning its leaves to the wind. But that noble tree will never more bear fruit, or blossom. It has been cut down in its strength, and the past is all that remains to us of Byron. We can scarce reconcile ourselves to the idea—scarce think that the voice is silent for ever, which, bursting so often on our ear, was often heard with rapturous admiration, sometimes with regret, but always with the deepest interest.

All that's bright must fade,
The brightest still the fleetest!

«With a strong feeling of awful sorrow, we take leave of the subject. Death creeps upon our most serious as well as upon our most idle employments; and it is a reflection solemn and gratifying, that he found out Byron in no moment of levity, but contributing his fortune, and hazarding his life, in behalf of a people only endeared to him by their past glories, and as fellow-creatures suffering under the yoke of a heathenish oppression. To have fallen in a crusade for freedom and humanity, as, in olden times, it would have been an atonement for the blackest crimes, may, in the present, be allowed to expiate greater follies than ever exaggerating calumny has propagated against Byron.»

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