

FOUR GENERATIONS  
OF A LITERARY FAMILY

HAZLITT. FOUR GENERATIONS OF A LITERARY FAMILY: The Hazlitts in England, Ireland and America—Their Friends and Their Fortunes. 1725-1896, by W. CAREW HAZLITT. With Portraits reproduced from miniatures by JOHN HAZLITT. Two large and handsomely printed octavo vols. of 350 pages each (9 x 6), cloth, uncut. London, 1897. ( Pub. \$9.60). \$4.00

It is not at all surprising that the work has been rigidly suppressed in England, because it has so many truthful allusions derogatory to deceased and living celebrities, and contains numerous bits of scabreuses histories, besides being terribly outspoken, in many instances, about Statesmen, Diplomats, Writers, Artists, Players, Savants, and, indeed, all manner of people of public prominence. Both author and publisher were threatened with endless suits for libel for wanton defamation of the characters mentioned in the work.









HAZLITT MEMOIRS







*William Hazlitt.*

FOUR GENERATIONS OF A  
LITERARY FAMILY

*THE HAZLITTS IN ENGLAND, IRELAND, AND  
AMERICA*

THEIR FRIENDS AND THEIR FORTUNES

1725—1896

BY

W. CAREW HAZLITT

*WITH PORTRAITS REPRODUCED FROM MINIATURES BY  
JOHN HAZLITT*

IN TWO VOLUMES

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## PREFACE

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I WAS not only in my own person the fourth generation of a family which had been connected with literature during upward of a century, and in the case of my grandfather had acquired a solid title to permanent, if not growing, distinction from such a source, but both my predecessors and myself had mixed with a number of noted men and women, whose names, characters, and works still remain a valued part of the household recollections of thousands of educated persons in Great Britain and the United States. Innumerable traits, which do not survive in memoirs or in ordinary books, seemed to accumulate on my hands, deriving their interest from those who were but lately in our midst, from spots in the suburbs of London, consecrated by their hardly yet forgotten presence, or from conditions which the swift course of time is beginning to modify.

Among literary people, it seldom, I think, occurs

that such a continuity of association and sympathy is found, as renders one family the storehouse and guardian of facts about individuals, and about places identified with them, during a space of years extending back from the present day to the second quarter of the eighteenth century.

The people who maintained an intercourse and friendship with the literary and artistic circles of the last quarter of the eighteenth, and the first half of the present, century, who were brought into contact with those circles either in the way of ordinary social relations or in the way of business, or who, again, as in my grandfather Hazlitt's case assuredly, were prominent members of them at that period—these were my forerunners and testifiers. My intimates, who have often—perhaps too often—been my seniors, represent another fruitful source in the development of my design and the enrichment of my notebooks.

My personal knowledge of Old Brompton, as it was before 1850, and of the celebrities who made it their residence, has constituted one of the pleasantest features in my life and thoughts, and in my conversation with such as had seen the place and its inhabitants under conditions almost incredibly different from those which at present exist.



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At a distance of nearly fifty years from the date which I mention, I could, if I were a draughtsman, trace on paper a chart of the village from my unassisted memory, with little more than an occasional clue to old landmarks to guide my hand.

This dual tie, during the last two generations of Hazlitt, may explain my wish and ability to impart to my enterprise a twofold character, so far as my father and myself are concerned, and to incorporate with my biographical experiences of this once sequestered hamlet some account of its topographical features, before it was parcelled out into building-land and virtually effaced.

It is to be regretted that, while the thing was possible, such a survey was not made of Old Brompton as Smith made and published of Westminster, or as Faulkner has left of all the region environing this particular district. Of course, Faulkner, in his account of Kensington, has necessarily approached very near to the immediate subject, since a part of Old Brompton is parochially within the boundaries of St. Mary Abbots. But a considerable residue appears to have been regarded, in a literary or descriptive sense, as a sort of No-Man's-Land. Several books come within an easy stone's-throw of it, and there pause.

So far as Hazlitt himself is concerned, I do not attempt to resuscitate any portion of the *Memoirs* of 1867, unless it should happen to be the elucidation or correction of some point on which I have succeeded since that date in discovering new light. The material found here, so far as it is immediately relevant to him, may be treated as supplementary to what I had to communicate on the former occasion.

The sources to which those interested in literary biography, and in tracing the origin or germ of the intellectual superiority which has raised some member of a family above all those of his kindred preceding him, and has lent to his name and lineage a new interest and importance, have been down to a comparatively recent date, in the case of Hazlitt, of a peculiarly meagre and unsatisfying kind. But within the last thirty years several unpublished letters from him to his relatives and to literary acquaintances have come, one by one, into the market, and in 1884 a very remarkable *Diary*, compiled by his sister from family papers and recollection between 1835 and 1838, added still further to the material at my command for any future labours in this direction.

The *Diary* in question was drawn up expressly for the use of Hazlitt's son, but owing to the

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circumstance that it remained in the hands of the writer, and was not even communicated to my father, or the particulars which it contains disclosed to him, while he was engaged in preparing the sketch of Hazlitt's life prefixed to the *Literary Remains* in 1836, and that it was wholly unknown to me in 1867, the fuller acquaintance with some essential points relating to our ancestors and descent was reserved for a later epoch of my career, when the manuscript was first brought under my notice by the daughter of the clergyman under whose roof the Diarist passed her last years.

The two salient features of interest in the *Diary* of Margaret Hazlitt are the notes on the history of our family, and the narrative of the visit of her father and mother and their children, including herself, to North America in 1783.

The *Diary* is written in a frank, unaffected style, and sets before us vividly enough many interesting circumstances which we should not have otherwise known, especially as to the aspect of certain spots in the United States, as they appeared to an intelligent observer immediately after the close of the War of Independence.

This and the new *Letters* have proved exceedingly helpful for the period between 1700

and 1830, occasionally reinforced by facts collected from my relatives and friends. But with the third and fourth generation the matter stands of course somewhat differently. The class of authority is equally beyond impeachment or objection ; but the date becomes more recent ; my papers and memoranda grow more abundant ; and where my main object was to illustrate the relationship of the Hazlitts during more than a century to many of the most distinguished persons of the time, it cannot be supposed that I should be able to avoid altogether here and there the mention of some incident which may be possibly unpleasant on a personal account or as a matter of personal judgment.

At the same time, there may have been of late, as a reaction from the opposite extreme, a tendency to a treatment of more or less public characters with a leniency at once effeminate and misleading, and to the introduction of a school of portraiture in which the darker lines are toned down in order to make the immediate object pass as the ostensible possessor of virtues *without any redeeming vices*.

My grandfather lived in days when the current of political feeling ran very strong, and when party animosities were intense to a degree which we can scarcely realize. It unluckily happened that the

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side which he espoused—the only one which he cared to espouse—was not then the winning side, and he laboured under the enormous and cruel disadvantage of struggling, with a sensitive and irritable temperament, against hopeless odds on behalf of a young and weak cause. Nor did his own position and prospects alone suffer from his election. His descendants have not yet come into enjoyment of the full benefit which such writings as his should and would have conferred on us all, had not he thrown the entire force of his energy as a publicist and an essay-writer into the scale against the Government of those days. We still live in the shadow of that policy. It has coloured more or less all our subsequent careers, and it reflects itself in many of the following pages. The blood of the Peterborough ironmonger, whose beautiful daughter Grace married the Rev. William Hazlitt, ran with unabated strength in the veins of the author of *Table Talk*.

It was open to Hazlitt to have followed in the footsteps of several of his literary contemporaries, who improved their fortunes by changing their opinions. But the Loftus blood was in him, and he threw in his lot—and ours—with the claims of freedom and truth.

When I first undertook the *Memoirs*, I found very few persons who could recollect facts relative to my grandfather and his family either on the father's or mother's side, or who possessed letters from him to his friends and literary correspondents. I judged it to be barely credible that so little could have survived of a man who had done so much, and who had so recently died; it has only been in consequence of my unwearying pursuit of the matter that, after the lapse of so many years, I have succeeded in accumulating the means of throwing clearer light on the origin of our family, on the early history of the most distinguished member of it, and on much of his later literary transactions. No document has come into the market, I believe, in all that long interval, without falling into my hands, and being utilized; and the aggregate result is now at length before the reader.

The paucity of correspondence is not apparently attributable to the destruction of letters, since the most trivial scraps have been carefully preserved by their recipients, except in the case, perhaps, of Lamb, who kept nothing, or next to nothing, after perusal. This shortcoming, which to a biographer is always a serious drawback, arose from the simple fact that Hazlitt was not a letter-writer; and from

1790 to 1830, the period representing that portion of his life when he was in constant touch both with his relatives and friends, I have never seen or heard of more than fifty or sixty letters, short notes inclusive, as being extant anywhere.

My grandfather, in point of fact, was *par excellence* a thinker, and wrote *under protest*. Gratuitous or private communications were therefore doubly against the grain, and the discovery has been made that his autograph productions are among the rarest of those of the era and circle of which he made part.

The visit of my ancestors to the United States in the very dawn of Independence, and their residence there during four years—a residence which it had been at one moment proposed and wished to make a permanent settlement—enabled them to form a fairly correct notion of the appearance and condition of the country while George Washington still lived, and while many localities, afterward populous and important centres, were still half built, or even unenclosed. The sympathy which Americans often manifest with our name and Hazlitt's writings cannot be warmer or more sincere than that entertained by my great-grandfather with their struggle for freedom and their ultimate triumph. This portion of my work should possess some features of value and

importance to Americans at the present time, from the numerous references to existing or distinguished families and to familiar localities.

When we come to the matter of more recent date, referring to incidents in the career of my father and his surroundings, or on the joint and parallel lives of him and myself, there will be much, I hope, to recommend my book to attention.

Very few of the personages named in the following pages still survive, and every season is thinning the ranks of those who were my late father's contemporaries or visiting circle. Setting aside the generation of which Hazlitt himself formed one, and of which the small and scattered salvage is, of course, vanishing fast, it is distressing to note what a slender proportion even of my father's more youthful associates, of his literary and journalistic colleagues, of his legal acquaintances, and, in short, of the set in which he and I during a considerable period of both of our lives mixed, remains ; and I can call to mind some whose places have not been filled up.

W. C. H.



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## ERRATA.

Vol. ii., page 143, for *Colman* read *Coleman*.

„ „ 371, for *worthless* read *worth less*.



FOUR GENERATIONS OF A  
LITERARY FAMILY



THE FIRST GENERATION



## CHAPTER I.

(1725—1780.)

Origin of the Hazlitt family—Education of the Rev. William Hazlitt and his brother at Glasgow University—Shronell and Coleraine branches—Migration of some of us to America—Service of two Colonel Hazlitts under Washington—Researches of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania on our descent—Diffusion of Hazlitts through the Union—The Loftus family of Wisbeach—Their intimacy with William Godwin—The Rev. W. Hazlitt's settlement at Wisbeach as a Presbyterian minister (1764)—His marriage to Grace Loftus (1766)—Connection between the families of Loftus and Pentlow of Oxfordshire—Removal of the Rev. W. Hazlitt to various places—Settlement at Maidstone—Acquaintance with Dr. Priestley, Dr. Franklin, and other distinguished persons—Mr. Hazlitt takes charge of a congregation at Bandon in Ireland (1780).

THE sole trustworthy source to which we have to go for an account of the ancestors of HAZLITT is the manuscript drawn up by his sister Margaret for the use of his only son, her nephew, and comprehending within its limits, with a biographical sketch of our more immediate precursors, a rather vivid glimpse of the state of Ireland in 1780, and a yet more

striking picture of the condition of the United States of America from 1783 to 1787.

It is to be collected from Margaret Hazlitt's narrative, compared with other guides or clues, that *John Hazlitt* and *Margaret* his wife were residing, in more or less humble circumstances, about 1735 at Shrone Hill, or Shronell, near Tipperary, in Ireland, and that there they brought up on a small farm a considerable family, of which the eldest was a daughter, Elizabeth, and the second a son, William (father of the diarist).

There were at least two other sons, James and John. The former took orders, and was chosen on the commission of the peace, and we hear that he acquired a strong distaste for his magisterial functions, because he felt that many who were brought before him, and whom he had to punish, were objects of compassion rather than of severity. He would have given them food and instruction instead of stripes and reproaches. The precise occupation of John Hazlitt, except that he was engaged in the flax trade, is not stated. In published\* documents of 1756 and 1762 he is described as *mercator*—a somewhat wide and vague term, more especially in Ireland at that period.

\* Comp. *Memoirs of Hazlitt*, 1867, chap. i.



The sons of John Hazlitt of Shronell were probably educated at the village grammar-school, but in due course William and his brother James had been sent to complete their course of studies at the University of Glasgow, where the former, at any rate, seems to have passed his time pleasantly, as his daughter relates that his college days formed a retrospect on which her father loved to dwell in later life. John, the remaining son, emigrated to America, where he served (with a cousin and namesake) under Washington, both attaining the rank of Colonel. He survived the war, but died shortly after, worn out by his exertions in the Republican cause.

I hardly know what credit is to be accorded to the statement of Miss Hazlitt from hearsay or tradition, that our ancestors had been formerly in a more affluent position, and had sustained losses in the Civil War of 1641, or during the Jacobite troubles of 1690.

It has been said that the Hazlitts, formerly Hasletts, came over to Ireland with William III. from Holland; but the name of John Haslett, a vaulter, occurs in the diary of Philip Henslowe in the time of Elizabeth. The same form is retained by the Irish branches to the present day; and the

father of Hazlitt himself seems to have changed the orthography in or before 1783. In the registers of Glasgow University (1756) *Hazelitt* is found. It was my father's idea that the name is Dutch (*Haesluyt*).

John Hazlitt of Shronell, and his wife, attained an advanced age ; they lie in Shronell churchyard.

As regards the collateral branch of the Hazlitts which I have just mentioned, and which left Ireland prior to ourselves, to settle in America, I understand that, before the war, four brothers, John, Joseph, James, and William, quitted Coleraine for the new country. Of these John was the senior, and was the other Colonel Hazlitt who, engaging in the American service, fell at the head of his regiment at the Battle of Preston in 1777.

These four Hazlitt emigrants from Coleraine, who were allied to the stock still remaining in Belfast and Londonderry, were cousins of those of Shronell, the latter having originally belonged to Antrim, and having in the first quarter of the eighteenth century sought a new home in the South of Ireland.

When our family visited Boston in or about 1785, there was a lady, whom I take to have been the widow of Colonel John Hazlitt of Coleraine, living there. She was still in the possession of her youth-

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ful beauty, and the miniature-painter, though much her junior, was smitten by her personal attractions. She subsequently visited England, and John Hazlitt painted her portrait.

Mrs. Harriet Hazlitt must have married very early in life, for the miniature, taken somewhere about the end of the century, represents her as a woman not even yet in her prime. It was through the Coleraine branch and this lady that we acquired consanguinity with the two Presidential families of Quincy and Adams. But from the account which succeeds we shall presently see that the Hazlitts in or about this time had spread themselves over several parts of the Union, and were to be found also in Philadelphia and New London.

One striking fact stands prominently out, however, from the rest, and it is that the Irish Hazlitts, more than one hundred years since, stanchly supported the cause of American Independence, which they regarded as closely bound up with the question of human liberty ; and we could not perhaps desire a prouder testimony to the purity of motive and singleness of purpose in my great-grandfather's case, if not in that of his kindred, than the readiness of the British Government, as we shall presently see, to comply with his representations and remonstrances

in regard to the treatment of American prisoners in Ireland.

It now becomes my leading aim to follow and narrate the fortunes of the eldest son of John and Margaret Hazlitt of Shronell, who had been sent, as we have seen, to a Scottish University, with his brother James, to complete his studies.

The certificates of the Professor of Greek at Glasgow, Dr. James Moor, testify that William Hazlitt, during the years 1757-58-59, acquitted himself of all his duties as a student satisfactorily, became proficient in Greek, and was a person of the most exemplary conduct. On quitting Glasgow he came to London, and officiated for different ministers of the Presbyterian persuasion, till he was able to gain preferment.

For a short time he was chaplain to Sir Giles Jocelyn. In 1764 he was invited to preach before the congregation at Wisbeach, in the Isle of Ely, and held the place till 1766. It was here that a highly-important event in his own life, and, I believe, in the intellectual history of the family, occurred; for the Rev. Mr. Hazlitt met during his term of ministry his future wife, Grace Loftus—'a very beautiful young girl,' says her daughter, 'elegant in her person and manners, and beloved by all who

knew her.' The lady had lost her father shortly before the union, which took place at Peterborough from the house of her intended sister-in law, Miss Coulson, on January 19, 1766.

Mr. Hazlitt's wife had been born July 21, 1746, and was nine years his junior. She used to be thought so like William Pitt about the mouth that she might have passed for his sister. She had the same thinness of lip.

Defoe, it appears, found the Loftus family in his time one of the leading Dissenting houses in Wisbeach. Mr. Loftus, Mrs. Hazlitt's father, was an ironmonger; his place of business was in the market-place. Miss Hazlitt notes: 'He was, I have been told, very handsome, and mild and gentle in his manners, never being moved to violent anger, except when anyone told him a falsehood—a thing he never could tolerate.'

Miss Hazlitt continues:

' . . . The father of Mr. Loftus was a watchmaker, and came from Hull in Yorkshire, with the grandfather of William Godwin, the author of *Political Justice*, to settle in Wisbeach. I have heard Godwin speak of a watch in his possession made by the elder Loftus . . . . Mr. Godwin, the father of William, was the minister at Wisbeach

when my mother was a little girl. I have heard her speak of going on a Saturday afternoon to draw the still younger Godwins in their little coach. They all rejoiced to see their friend Grace, and William had not yet dreamed of *Caleb Williams*.'

The Godwins quitted Wisbeach in 1758, and the tie between them and the future Mrs. Hazlitt and her family had been severed for the time.

'My grandfather, Thomas Loftus,' pursues the author of the narrative, 'in the year 1725, married Miss Grace Pentlow, the daughter of a gentleman in Oxfordshire. Mr. Pentlow was once possessed of an estate of £400 a year . . . near Henley-on-Thames, and he lived some time at Banbury, and afterwards at Oxford ; and I have heard my grandmother tell of two yew-trees cut into the shape of giants, standing at the entrance to the Botanical Gardens there, of whom she stood in great dread. . . . He was twice married. . . . My grandmother, who was the daughter of the second wife, had nothing to recommend her but good sense, prudence, a true heart, and a fair face. She was very pale, and her hair black, and her figure very good. She was eleven years old when Queen Ann[e] died. The news of her death came on a Sunday morning, and the Dissenters, who were waiting in fear of having

their meetings shut up, went joyfully to their prayers. . . . My grandmother was twenty-two when she married Mr. Loftus. . . . They had four children, but my uncle and mother only lived to grow up. . . .

‘My father and mother soon after their marriage went to Marshfield, in Gloucestershire. Here they lived four years with a poor but friendly people, whom they visited in a simple, old-fashioned manner, going without an invitation, when they had leisure or inclination to take their tea at whatever house they found to be disengaged, the hour four. . . . At Marshfield almost all the people were maltsters, and found a ready sale in Bristol and Bath for their malt. . . . At Marshfield John and Loftus were born. The latter died at Maidstone, in Kent, at the age of two years and a half. . . .

‘In June, 1770, my father removed to Maidstone, where he settled as the pastor of a large and respectable society. Here he and my mother were much beloved. When I paid a visit to Maidstone many years after we left it, I was told, by those who had known her when young, of the admiration her beauty and the elegance of her manners obtained. Here they remained ten years, and acquired the most firm and respectable friends (Dr. Priestley, Dr.

Price, Dr. Kippis, etc.). . . . But my father's nearest and most beloved friends were Mr. Wiche, a Baptist minister, who lived at Maidstone, Mr. Viny of Tenterden, and Mr. Thomas, minister of Eustace Street Chapel, Dublin. For these three he bore the love of a brother, and no cloud of dissension ever cast a shade over their friendship.'

'At his house (Mr. Viny's) Dr. Franklin was often a visitor, and here my father used to meet him. . . . Mr. Thomas was about my father's age, and died young. He and my father took different views of the politics of the time, and the American War was a fruitful source of dispute between them. . . . Besides these, my father enjoyed the friendship of many of his neighbours: Mrs. Lewis, the widow of his predecessor (the Rev. Israel Lewis). . . .

'Soon after my father's settlement at Maidstone I was born (December 11, 1771), and seven years afterwards your father (*i.e.*, her brother William, April 10, 1778).'

After saying that the Rev. W. Hazlitt remained at Maidstone till 1780, and left it solely in consequence of some disagreeable rupture among the congregation, his biographer continues: 'Accordingly he removed to Bandon, near Cork, in Ireland. This society would have chosen him from the



character they had heard of him ; but he would not accept it without first going to preach to them. We left Maidstone in March (1780), and spent a week in London at the house of Mr. Lewis. We then went on to Chester, and through Wales to Holyhead. At St. Asaph the first sight of the Welsh peasants, with their felt beaver hats and blue cloaks, struck us as singular. The road over Penmaenmawr I still recollect, and the grand and terrific appearance of the cliff that overhung the road, and the dreadful depth of the sea beneath. . . .

‘At Bandon began my father’s correspondence with Mr. Wiche, Mr. Viny, and the rest of his Maidstone friends . . . written during the course of the American War, and showing the steady and conscientious principles by which they were actuated both in religion and politics. . . . Here my father lived three years.

## CHAPTER II.

(1780—1783.)

Intellectual value of the alliance with the Loftuses—Troubles in Ireland—Cruel treatment of American prisoners by the British garrison at Kinsale—Mr. Hazlitt's active interference on their behalf—His representations to the Government, and change of the garrison—His untenable position—Determination to emigrate—Arrival at New York (July 26, 1783)—Immediate invitation to preach before the Jersey Assembly—The family proceeds to Philadelphia—Account of the city—Mr. Hazlitt declines the presidency of the new college at Carlisle—Acquisition of friends.

THE union in 1766 between the Loftus family and our own arose partly out of a conformity in religious opinions. The upright and sturdy character of Mr. Loftus of Wisbeach, as delineated for us by his grand-daughter, and the mental calibre of the son of John Hazlitt of Shronell, afforded high promise for the offspring of the alliance accomplished in the persons of my two ancestors; but reflection satisfies me that there was a good deal more here than a mere physiological evolution. An intellectual germ,

like one of disease, where it is assisted or fostered by some favourable agency, prospers and develops, while in the absence of any such agency it is apt to wither and disappear. Take the illustration at hand. We have the sterling moral qualities of Mr. Loftus of Wisbeach, and on them in his immediate female descendant are engrafted by marriage, in 1766, the strong masculine intelligence of William Hazlitt of Shronell—a man, by general acknowledgment of all who knew him, of far more than average brain-power; and the product of this fusion of Irish with English blood was my grandfather and his brother, the miniature-painter.

My authority proceeds to describe the successive congregations among whom the Rev. Mr. Hazlitt made his home from the period of his marriage in 1766 till the embarkation of the family in 1783 for New York. The broad facts are already familiar, but there is a good deal of detail which must be fresh, and which I imagine not to be without value on more than one account; for it not merely brings us nearer to the people by whom Hazlitt was surrounded and influenced in his earliest youth, but it portrays vividly enough the Nonconformist life and character of that now rather remote epoch. In the second half of the eighteenth century habits of

thought and education had not materially altered since the Stuart time. It was before 1789. The French Revolution had yet to lay down that indelible line which was to separate for ever what had gone before and what succeeded.

Miss Hazlitt writes :

‘ But though happily situated in many respects, some events happened at this time which served to strengthen the wish he had long entertained of transporting himself and family across the Atlantic, and seeking a haven of rest in the Western world. The feud between Whigs and Tories ran high, and my father, who never disguised his sentiments, gave great offence by his freedom in writing and speaking at a time when the unbridled license of the army (who took liberties in Ireland that they dared not do at home) made it dangerous to offend the haughty officers, who seemed to think wearing a sword entitled them to domineer over their fellow-subjects. The American prisoners, being considered as rebels, were most inhumanly treated, particularly in Kinsale prison, where some officers amused themselves by running their swords into the hammocks of the sick. These and similar practices my father exposed in the newspapers, and he and many friends made frequent journeys to Kinsale to see and assist the poor

prisoners, and three of them, escaping, were a long time concealed among our friends.

‘The conduct of the soldiers became so unbearable that Mr. Hazlitt wrote to the War Office. A court of inquiry was held, and the regiment was changed.’

Miss Hazlitt notes that, when her father’s letter to headquarters was read in court, they said, ‘Who could have thought a Presbyterian parson could have written such a letter?’

But it appears that Mr. Hazlitt also appealed to his friends in London, Dr. Price of Newington, and Mr. Palmer, and that at the request of the former, the Premier, Lord Shelburne, forwarded a letter from him to Colonel Fitzpatrick, the Commandant at Kinsale. The matter was settled for that time, but the feeling broke out again more strongly and bitterly than ever, and it was apprehended that if Mr. Hazlitt had not left Ireland, his life would have been sacrificed to the violence of party spirit.

Miss Hazlitt does not omit, at the same time, to testify to the cordiality of the circle in which they mixed during their stay at Bandon. ‘Most of the young men of our society,’ she tells us, ‘were enrolled in the volunteer corps, their uniforms dark green, turned up with black.’ While they remained

here a son Thomas and a daughter Harriet were born ; they both died in infancy.

The family quitted Bandon and proceeded to Cork, where they stayed a fortnight with friends ; and on April 3, 1783, the whole party embarked on board the *Henry*, Captain Jeffreys, for New York, carrying a very flattering testimonial signed by Dr. Price, Dr. Kippis, Mr. Palmer, and Dr. Rees, dated March 3, 1783. There were Mr. and Mrs. Hazlitt ; John, a boy of fifteen ; William, about five ; Margaret, seven years his senior, and Harriet, an infant. On the whole a rather notable group—at least, as one looks back at it after the lapse of years by the sort of dim light which is all that one has, and glances aside at very different careers then very possible for high names in letters and art in England. Not that the members of it entertained any such impression, for they were poor, anxious, and sad at the notion of leaving, perhaps for ever, the old country ; and the future was dark and full of incertitude. Still, the small band had a brave leader, a person of rare stability and sincerity of disposition, a man as strenuous and resolute in character as he was by temperament trusting and serene.

The diarist proceeds :

‘ We sailed with a fair wind and fine weather, and

with mingled feelings of hope and regret. I had just been reading the *American Farmer*, a book that gives a most delightful and romantic description of that country, and though true in the most essential points, was, to say the least, too highly coloured. I had formed to myself an ideal terrestrial paradise, and, with the love of liberty I had imbibed, looked forward to a perfect land, where no tyrants were to rule, no bigots to hate and persecute their brethren, no intrigues to feed the flame of discord and fill the land with woe. Of course, all the Americans were to be good and happy, and nothing was to hurt or destroy in all that holy mountain.'

New York was not reached till May 26. The story goes that the minister's lady, still in the possession of her original comeliness, was an object of more special attention on the part of the captain of the *Henry* than her husband quite approved. Just a little flirtation to beguile the monotony of the life. She was seven-and-thirty, let us remember. Mr. Hazlitt, born in 1737, was nine years her senior. At the same time, she always entertained the highest respect for him ; and in later days, when her sons were married, he was *my* Mr. Hazlitt.

'As soon as we cast anchor,' the writer observes, 'we were visited by some of the British officers,

who came on board eager to hear the news. Ours was the first ship that brought an account of the treaty of peace. And then how they raved and swore, cursing both the Congress and those at home, who had thus put a stop to their ravaging with fire and sword their brothers' land, and in this our most valiant captain most piously joined them. So much were their American brethren transformed in their eyes (by that little magical word *rebel*) into bands of lawless banditti, whom it would be meritorious to destroy.

'We landed at six in the evening, but it was some time before we could get a lodging. This was owing to an oversight of a friend who had given my father a letter to Mr. Tench Cox, a gentleman of New York, who was obnoxious to the Americans on account of his favouring the British cause; and his walking about with my father and John made us to be looked on as refugees, and no one would take us in. I remember my mother sitting down in the porch of some door with me, the children and servant, to wait with no very pleasant feeling the return of my father with his most unlucky though kindly-intentioned conductor.

'At last the mistake was cleared up, and we were admitted into the house of Mrs. Gregory. Here we



stayed two days, in order to receive our goods from the ship, and then set off for Philadelphia, that beautiful city of which we had heard so much. We went to Perth Amboy, and next to Burlington, a very pretty township by the side of a fine river. On the opposite side stood Bath and Bristol, which looked beautiful with their green woods on either side.

‘ It was Friday when we arrived there, and on Saturday the Jersey Assembly (sitting there at that time) sent an invitation to request my father to preach to them on the morrow, which he accordingly did.

‘ By what means they knew that a minister of the Gospel, and a warm friend to liberty and to them, was come over to cast in his lot amongst them, I do not know.

‘ The room he preached in had no pews, but only benches to sit on, as I have seen in some Quakers’ meetings. Here a house to let, which had belonged to a son of Dr. Franklin (who, strange to say, had been banished as a refugee), made my mother desire to settle, and she proposed to my father to open a school. It was an excellent plan, and would have succeeded well, but it was his wish to go on; and we took our departure for Philadelphia in a stage-waggon (not unlike our long coaches), and

rode two days through the Jersey woods, full of various majestic trees, mingled with the blossoms of the wild peach and apricot, and the sweet-scented yellow flowers of the locust-trees perfuming the air.

‘We passed through many little towns where the ground was cleared away for some miles round each, and made a pleasant contrast to the neighbouring forests.

‘When we arrived at the city, we took a lodging the first week in Strawberry Alley. My father then hired a house in Union Street. This house had a parlour, with a door opening to the street, a kitchen, two bedrooms, two attics, cupboards in every room, and a good cellar; our only pantry a shelf on the cellar stairs, where a colony of ants devoured everything that did not stand in a pail of water; the kitchen had a door into a bit of a yard, and this, with a small plot of ground that had never been dug or enclosed, were the whole of our premises, and for this £50 a year of their money—about thirty English—was paid.’

The description which occurs in the manuscript of Philadelphia, as it appeared to an intelligent observer in 1783, should possess no slight interest.

‘As we stayed,’ notes Miss Hazlitt, ‘so long in Philadelphia, I have a perfect recollection of this fine

city. It had nineteen straight streets from north to south, crossed by nineteen others from east to west, reaching from the Delawar to the Schuylkill. They were each two miles long, but were not all finished. Those between the rivers were called Water Street, Second, Third Street, and so on ; the others were named after different fruit, as Walnut, Pine Street, etc. There were only three Episcopalian churches here, but a great many of Dutch, Presbyterians, and Quakers, and some few Catholics. A great part of the population of this city were Irish and German. My father dined one day with the Society of the Cincinnati on the banks of the Schuylkill.

‘ He and John went to St. Peter’s Church on purpose to get a sight of General Washington. It was on a week-day, on some public occasion, when that great and good man was present. In July my father went to preach at New London, and here he met with some of his own name and kindred, whom we afterwards saw in Philadelphia, where also lived, with her guardians, Miss Hazlitt, a daughter of Colonel Hazlitt, to whose wedding my mother went. She was a distant relation. From New London my father went to Carlisle, where he spent some time, and might have been settled with £300 a year, and a prospect of being president of a college that

was erecting if he would have subscribed the confession of faith which the orthodox insisted on ; but he told them he would sooner die in a ditch than submit to human authority in matters of faith.

‘Some of our neighbours in Union Street,’ she continues, ‘were very friendly. Mr. Gomez and his family were much interested about us. They were Jews, and had lost much of their property by the war, but were still rich. Late in the summer Mr. Gomez returned to New York, where his property lay, and whence he had been driven by the British troops. He often inquired what were my father’s sentiments, and why the orthodox were so bitter against him, and he thought the Unitarian doctrine the most reasonable scheme of Christianity he had ever heard. Of course the notion of a Trinity must ever be a stumbling-block in the way of Jews and Mahometans.

‘I forgot to mention, among our friends here, Mr. Vaughan and his two sons, English gentlemen of large property. They wished my father to take a school at German Town, five miles from the city, and offered to advance him any money necessary to begin with ; but this he declined, as he did not think it right to give up preaching entirely. Mr. Vaughan, with his wife and daughters, afterwards returned to

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England; but his sons remained here some years longer, and one, that we afterwards met at Boston, behaved to us in a very friendly manner. While he was in Philadelphia, Mr. Vaughan assisted some English ladies to open a boarding-school there. German Town is a beautiful village, and it is said the yellow fever never reached it, so that it seems a pity we did not settle there. But perhaps my father was destined to remove the rubbish and to clear the way for more fortunate Unitarians, who, coming after him, entered into his labours and reaped the fruits thereof.'

## CHAPTER III.

(1783—1784.)

Family sorrows—Mr. Hazlitt goes to Maryland—His serious illness—Excessive kindness of his American friends—Heroic conduct of his eldest son—Delivery of lectures at Philadelphia—Refusal of offers to settle at Charlestown and Pittsburg—Mr. Hazlitt goes to Boston to preach (June, 1784)—The family quits Philadelphia (August, 1784)—Description of the journey to Boston—Perth Amboy—An American breakfast more than one hundred years since—Burlington—Mr. Shakespeare—Rhode Island—New York—Providence—Jamaica Plains.

THE family had not been spared its sorrows since the arrival in the States. Little Harriet had been taken, and another daughter, Esther, came and went like a vision. But a more serious danger seemed at one time imminent, and it led to a sublime development of piety and heroism on the part of a mere lad.

‘Soon after the death of Esther my father was invited to preach in Maryland. It was a township (as they call their scattered villages, where a field or

two intervenes between every house). And here, in the midst of the forests, and at a distance from the cities on the coast, he found a respectable and polished society, with whom he would have been happy to spend his days, and they were very anxious to have him for their pastor. But on the second Sunday he was seized with the fever of that country, and fainted in the pulpit. Although he might himself, after so severe a seasoning, have been able to bear the climate, he feared to take his family there, and a stop was put to our being settled with a people so very suitable in many respects. I forget the name of the place, but to Mr. Earl and his family our everlasting gratitude is due. At this gentleman's house my father was hospitably entertained, and but for the great care and attention with which he was nursed he must have died.

Nothing could exceed the kindness with which they watched over him, even sending twenty miles for lemons and oranges for him, and providing him with every comfort. Two black men sat up with him every night, and he partly ascribed his recovery to a large draught of water that he prevailed on them to let him have, which, however, had been strictly forbidden. For a long time his family were ignorant of his situation, but at last Dr. Ewing and

Mr. Davidson came to break the matter to my mother, who very naturally concluded he was dead, and it was some time before they could make her believe it was not the case.

‘At length she was convinced that he was recovering, and the next morning my brother John set off to go to him. He went alone on horseback. He rode through woods and marshes a hundred and fifty miles in fifty-six hours, over an unknown country, and without a guide. He was only sixteen at that time, and how he performed so difficult an enterprise astonished everyone who knew it. But he was wild with his fears for his father, and his affection for him made him regardless of every danger. He found him slowly recovering, but dreadfully weak, and after staying there some weeks they both returned together. How they got on I cannot think, but when they came to the door my father could not get off his horse without help. It was November, and the snow fell for the first time that day. My father was very ill and weak for a long time after his return. I recollect he looked very yellow, and sat by the fire wrapped in a great-coat, and taking Columbia root. The 23rd of this month we felt the shock of an earthquake.

‘This winter proved very severe ; the snow lay



many feet on the ground, and the cold was intense, and more like a New England winter than (to speak comparatively) the usually mild frosts of Pennsylvania.

‘In the spring my father was well enough to give lectures at the college of Philadelphia on the evidences of Christianity. These lectures were well attended, and were of great service to a numerous class of young men who, taking it for granted that the doctrines of Calvin were those of Christ, were ready to renounce the whole system at once. But the Unitarian doctrine, being consistent with reason and Scripture, brought many of them back to the ranks of the believers. Not but there were some few Unitarians there before my father arrived in that country. But none dared to avow their real sentiments, fearing to offend the many. And here I cannot help remarking how strange it seems that my father, who openly preached the doctrine of the Divine unity from Maryland to Kennebec, should have been so entirely overlooked, and the whole work ascribed to Dr. Priestley, who went there so many years after him. But it is so!

‘In the spring of 1784 my father had an invitation to settle at Charlestown, in North Carolina; but this he was obliged to decline, for the same

reason that prevented his staying in Maryland, as the heat there is so great that for two months every summer the places of public worship are shut up. Yet some of our friends wished us to go, as they thought it would be an advantageous situation, and argued that the sea-breezes at mid-day made the heat tolerable. About the same time my father had an invitation to Pittsburg, two hundred miles from Philadelphia. But this he also declined, on account of its being at that time so far back in the wilderness. But now it is a very flourishing place, and by all accounts most beautifully situated. I remember the two farmers coming to talk the matter over with my father, and thinking to myself how much I should like to go and see those wild and beautiful forests.

‘In June my father went to preach at Brattle Street meeting in Boston, where he was so much liked that no doubt was entertained by his friends of his being chosen, and they advised him to send for his family, and we, of course, prepared to follow him, hoping we should at last find a “resting-place for the sole of our foot.” But in this we were again mistaken, for the persecuting zeal of the orthodox sent one of their chosen brethren after him, and thus put a stop to his settling there; but this we knew not till afterwards.

‘ We then bade farewell to Philadelphia and to our own friends there, whose kindness to us, strangers as we were, deserves remembrance, and casting a last look at this beautiful city of William Penn, where so many events had befallen us, and where we left my two infant sisters sleeping in their early graves, the beloved and the beautiful.

‘ In August, 1784, having lived there fifteen months, we took our departure in the stage which brought us here the year before, and riding through the same woods, now rich with wild peaches instead of blossom, ripe grapes, and hickory and other nuts, the oak and ash raising their lofty heads above the rest, we came the first day to Burlington, and were welcomed as old acquaintances by our host.

‘ And here we again admired the little towns of Bath and Bristol shining in the morning sun, whose very names brought back to my mother many sad and pleasing recollections of former days. From Burlington we went on to Perth Amboy. This is a very large inn, said to contain a hundred beds. It stands alone, and its green lawn in front gently slopes down to the river. From the rising ground on which the house stands there is a beautiful and extensive view, and more than one river is seen hence.

‘Here we slept one night, my mother and William and I, in one room, with a lady and her little girl. In the night I awoke, and heard a snoring under the bed. I crept softly out to feel, and hoping it was only a dog, I made up my mind not to speak, but to watch till daylight, when seeing a large Newfoundland dog, who was come to guard us, stretched at his full length under the bed, I went quietly to sleep. Early in the morning a very large party met at breakfast on the lawn before the door. We had tea, coffee, cakes, pastry, eggs, ham, etc., for an American breakfast is like a Scotch one.

‘Here,’ proceeds the narrator, ‘what most struck me was a puritanical old gentleman, of the name of Shakespeare, on whom I looked with great reverence, thinking perhaps that with the name he inherited the talents of his immortal namesake ; besides, his face bore a strong resemblance to all the prints I had seen of the great poet of whom I had heard so much. He was dressed in a sad-coloured suit, was reserved and stately, and took his coffee with the air of a prince in disguise. All our company were curious to know who he was, some affirming that he must be a Jesuit, and others made many different conjectures. But we left him there without making any discovery.

‘ After breakfast we went on board a little sloop to proceed to New York. . . . We waited here two days for the packet going to Rhode Island, and took our lodging at a boarding-house. . . . We left New York on Sunday in the packet for Rhode Island. . . . We passed through Hell Gate, a dangerous whirlpool, and over the Hog’s Back, safely before sunset. It was a very fine evening, and pleasant sailing between the mainland and Long Island. The views on each side were very beautiful, and we remained on deck until a late hour, enjoying the moonlight and the fresh air. About noon the next day we arrived at Newport.

‘ This is a pretty, neat town, but it had not, at that time, recovered from the devastations of the British troops, who had not left a tree on the island, and many of the floors bore the marks of their axes, where they cut up the mahogany furniture of the houses for firing. My brother joined a party of gentlemen and ladies in riding round the island on horseback. It is twelve miles long, and made but a desolate appearance then. It had been pretty formerly, and I doubt not has since been well planted, and has recovered its good looks. We stayed here two days, and ate of a most delicious fish, of the size of a mackerel ; they are called black

fish, and seem to be peculiar to these seas, as we never met with them anywhere else.

‘Our next day’s voyage brought us to Providence, a very handsome town, on the banks of the river, thirty miles from its mouth. The river itself, and the scenery on each side, the most beautiful that ever was seen, and the clear blue sky over one’s head, the sun shining in all its glory, set them off to the best advantage. Providence, though built on the continent, belongs to Rhode Island. Here we stayed one night. . . . At six o’clock the next morning we went on in two coaches, and this day’s journey brought us to Boston.

‘Our road lay through woods abounding with every variety of beautiful tree, dressed in their most lovely foliage, majestic in stature, and tenanted by numberless tribes of the feathered race, whose matin and vesper hymns rose sweetly on the ear. At intervals we passed by many little townships, but I only remember the name of one. It was called Jamaica Plains; it was pleasant, and near Boston. Here lived Dr. Gordon, who wrote a history of the Revolution, and came over to London to publish it.

## CHAPTER IV.

(1784—1785.)

The journey (*continued*)—Miss Hazlitt's narrative—Weymouth—Agreeable acquaintances made there—Captain Whitman—The Johnny cakes—General Lovell—Pictures by Copley and West—Glimpses of 'little William'—Description of humming and other birds—Lectures at Boston—Severity of the winter of 1784—Hingham—Ebenezer Gay—Anecdotes of him—Visits to Salem and Cape Cod—Mr. Hazlitt prepares a liturgy for the Presbyterian Church at Weymouth—He reprints some of Dr. Priestley's tracts and his own—Visit to Hallowell on the Kennebec—Wild country—Wolves troublesome.

'THE first object we saw here' (Weymouth), Miss Hazlitt presently goes on to say, 'was a very large and old picture in oil, of the meeting of Esau and Jacob. The embracing of the two brothers, the meeting of their followers on either side, with the groups of camels and other cattle, and the background winding up between the hills and seeming to vanish in the air, completed the enchantment. On this picture I used to gaze with delight, and wondered at the skill of the artist who had made so

natural and lively a representation of the scene. But as John never copied or said much about it, I suspect it was not so fine a painting as I imagined. I have heard it was one of the first attempts of Copley ; he was afterwards a painter of some note. He and West, who were both Americans, lived chiefly in England, and produced most of their works there.'

The house appears to have been commodious ; there is a minute account of it, for which I cannot spare room ; but the writer was particularly struck by a peach-tree in the garden, which the humming-birds haunted for the sake of the blossom. 'The house,' she says, 'stood in a most romantic spot, surrounded on three sides by very steep hills that sloped down just in sight of the windows, and were covered with locust-trees.

'These trees grow to a great height, and their yellow blossoms, somewhat like the laburnum, perfume the air in spring. On the green before the door stood a solitary pear-tree, beyond the shade of which in the hot days William was not allowed to go until four o'clock, when the sun was in some sort shaded by the neighbouring hills. On the pales that enclosed this sloping green the woodpeckers were wont to sit, and make a noise with their bills



like a saw. Beyond the garden and lane was a large meadow, which in the summer evenings, with its myriads of fire-flies, made a brilliant appearance.

‘On a little low hill to the eastward stood the house of prayer, and below it Dr. Tufts’s, the road to Boston passing close by them; to the north King-Oak Hill, which in the winter, when covered with snow, reflected the golden and purple tints of the setting sun. Over this hill the road leading to Hingham was seen. How often have we stood at the window, looking at my father as he went up this road with William, in his nankeen dress, marching by his side, like one that could never be tired! The hills behind the house are very steep, and it was one of our childish exploits, when they were covered with ice, to climb up and write our names on the frozen snow.

‘From the top of these hills we had a distant view of the Bay of Boston, and many of its islands and hills beyond it, with Dorchester heights, famous for the Battle of Kegs; Bunker’s Hill, where so many British officers fell in the space of five minutes, singled out by the sharpshooters of the Yankees; to the south dark and frowning woods, and nearer to us the river, with a mill and two houses on its banks, and a variety of meadows, fields and trees

below. Here also was seen the house of Captain Whitman, a good friend of ours. He was so fond of William that the boy spent half his time in going with him to the woods, or to the fields to see them plough, or attending the milking of the cows, where I, too, was often present. . . .

‘We paid frequent visits to Mrs. Whitman, and were always glad to see her and her niece Nelly, when they came to us at three in the afternoon and brought their work with them. A bright wood-fire and a clean hearth to bake the Johnny cakes on (cakes made of Indian flour without yeast, and baked on a pewter plate before the fire) were always prepared on the occasion. . . .

‘General Lovell lived in Weymouth. He and Captain Whitman, like many of the American officers, after the war was over, retired to their farms, which in general were large, cultivating them with care, and sometimes guiding the plough with their own hands, and thus not only directing their servants, but giving them an example of industry. . . .

‘In the summer a variety of little birds flew about us, humming-birds of five or six different kinds, some of them brown, others of different colours, all of them very small, with a body an inch and a half

in length, and a bill like a coarse needle, which served them to suck the honey out of the flowers. But the most beautiful were dressed in purple, green and gold, crimson, and a mixture of white and a little black about the head.

‘Some of this sort used to enliven us by their visits to the peach-tree, and it was one of them that flew into the window, to his own great discomfiture. Besides the birds common to Europe, there are many others. The blue bird, of a pale sky colour; the scarlet bird, whose name tells of her bright plumage; and the fire-hang-bird, so called from her colour and the curious way in which she hangs her nest at the end of a bough, suspended by a string of her own making. This, it is said, she does to protect her young from the monkeys. It is also a protection against the boys, for the bough chosen is too small to bear the least weight. This bird differs from the scarlet bird in having some black under its wings. There is also the mocking-bird, who delights in imitating every note he hears; the Bob Lincoln, a very pretty singing-bird; the red linnet; the Virginia nightingale; and the king-bird, from whom the hawk is glad to escape; the little snow-bird, and many others that I forget. The swallows are of a brighter purple than ours; the robins

are much larger, but their notes and colour the same.

‘ This winter was also a very severe one, and my father spent it chiefly in going to and from Boston, where he was engaged to give lectures on the evidences of Christianity, the same that he had delivered at Philadelphia the winter before ; and here also they were attended with great success. It was fifteen miles, and he was often obliged to walk through the snow. But he thought no labour or fatigue too much in the cause he had so much at heart. Once he and John set out to walk in a most tremendous rain.

‘ I do not recollect my father preaching at Weymouth more than once, and when he was with us on Sunday he had service at home. The congregation there was large, and they were Presbyterians of the old orthodox stamp. Calvin and the Kirk of Scotland had settled the faith of two out of three of the American Churches at that period. There were but few Episcopalians, and their churches but poor buildings, and often without steeples or trees ; while the popular party had both. There were many Quakers (but not so many as in Pennsylvania), and here and there a very few Catholics.

‘ When the snow and ice melted, the lowlands

were threatened with a deluge ; but as I remember no damage that ever happened from these thaws, I suppose they were properly guarded against. Here is also, about February, what they call a middle thaw, when the weather is mild for a week or two, and the snow seems to have vanished. Yet to this other and deeper snows succeed, and the frost is as sharp as ever. This winter the melted snow ran into our washhouse, and froze so hard that my father and John were obliged to cut it up with axes in pieces of half a foot thick and throw it out.

‘ My father often went to Hingham to preach for Mr. (Ebenezer) Gay, a very pleasant old man above ninety years of age. He was fond of a good story, and used to tell with great glee how he cured a man of a propensity to steal. It seems this man was in the habit of making free with his master’s hay, which Mr. Gay suspecting, he one evening took his pipe in his mouth, and, standing behind the stable door, softly shook out the ashes of his pipe on the hay the man was carrying away on his back, and as soon as he got out the fresh air kindled it into a flame, at which the poor fellow was so much terrified that he came the next morning to confess his trespass, saying that fire came down from heaven to consume his stolen hay, and promised

never to steal again. This promise he faithfully kept, and though Mr. Gay, in compassion to his fears, kindly explained the matter to him, he never could believe but that a fire from above had fallen on him.

‘Hingham is twenty miles from Boston, and five from Weymouth. Here my father met with society quite to his mind.

‘My father often spoke of the numbers of fine-looking old men between eighty and ninety that attended that meeting and sat together before the pulpit. This congregation was very large, but in a place where there was no other church, and where none but the sick or infirm absented themselves from public worship, five or seven hundred people being assembled together is nothing extraordinary.\*

‘At Boston, too, my father had many friends, among them Dr. Chauncy, a fine old man above ninety; he was cheerful, and retained all his faculties.

‘In the summer of 1785 my father often went to Salem, where he sometimes preached for Mr. Barnes.’

\* My Boston friend, Mr. Frederic Holland Day, when I shewed him the papers which I had written in the *Antiquary* on the visit of my great-grandfather to the States in 1783, at once identified the localities in the neighbourhood which are mentioned in the *Diary*.

But the English minister stayed with Mr. Derby, a merchant, and the son of an acquaintance at Hingham. William often accompanied his father in his journeys, and sat inside the pulpit with him while he preached. 'John,' she adds, 'spent a great deal of his time at Hingham, where he painted many portraits, and perhaps some of his first pictures are to be seen there even at this present time.'

Mr. Hazlitt met in this neighbourhood, curiously enough, with two of the prisoners in whose cause he had interested himself at Kinsale, and they expressed the warmest gratitude to him. It had been wished that he should succeed old Mr. Ebenezer Gay at Hingham, but the latter declined to resign

'This summer (1785) my father,' continues our chronicler, 'visited Cape Cod, and stayed there three weeks, but he could not make up his mind to settle in so desolate a place. It was a neat little town, inhabited chiefly by fishermen, but nothing was to be seen but rocks and sands and the boundless ocean. He took William with him, who, child as he was, could not help being struck with the barren and dreary look of the country, and inquired if any robins or Bob Lincolns came there, and being told there were none, he said, "I suppose they do not like such an ugly place." Stepping into the

boat, he dropped his shoe into the sea, which he lamented because of his silver buckle.

‘It was while we resided at Weymouth that my father assisted Mr. Freeman in preparing a liturgy for his church, which had been episcopal, and furnished him with a form of prayer used by Mr. Lindsey, in Essex Street Chapel, which they adapted to suit the Transatlantic Church. He also republished many of Dr. Priestley’s Unitarian tracts, and many other little pieces to the same purpose, such as the *Trial of Elwall*, etc., besides writing much himself. These things took up much of his time, and occasioned many journeys to Boston, where John often went with his father.

‘In the autumn of this year Mr. Sam. Vaughan persuaded him to go to a new settlement on Kennebec River, called Hallowell, in the province of Maine, where Mr. Vaughan had a large tract of land and much interest in settling the township. This was in the midst of the woods, with a few acres cleared round each farm, as usual in all their new places, which by degrees are changed from solitary woods to a fruitful land. At this time the wolves were near neighbours, and sometimes at night would come prowling about the place, making a dismal noise with their hideous barking; and as the doors



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were without locks, and my father slept on the ground-floor, he used to fasten his door by putting his knife over the latch to prevent a visit from these wild beasts. In this remote place he found a very respectable society, many of them genteel people. Here he preached a thanksgiving sermon, which was afterwards printed at Boston. It was a custom in New England to preach one every year after harvest. He would have had no great objection to settling with these people, but it would not have been eligible for his sons. John's profession was not wanted in the woods, where good hunters and husbandmen were more needed. He therefore, after spending the winter there, returned to us in the spring ; and he narrowly escaped being lost in the Bay of Fundy, to which the sailors, for its frequent and dreadful tempests, have given the name of the Devil's Cauldron.'

## CHAPTER V.

(1785—1787.)

Removal to Upper Dorchester—Some account of New England—A cat-a-mount (puma)—Rattlesnakes—Return of Mr. Hazlitt to England, leaving his family behind—His kind reception by Mr. David Lewis—John Hazlitt executes a pastel of Mr. Ebenezer Gay—And a crayon of his sister, the diarist, a farewell gift to a girl-friend—Preparation for departure—Great fire at Boston (April 10, 1787)—Affectionate leave-taking—Offers of pecuniary aid declined—Embarkation at Boston (July 4, 1787)—A fellow-passenger's story—Arrival at Portsmouth—Lodgings taken at Walworth—The Montpelier Tea-gardens—The London print shops.

AFTER describing a tremendous storm which unexpectedly visited them on April 1, 1786, Miss Hazlitt states that her father and mother saw the necessity of moving from Weymouth nearer to Boston, where Mr. Hazlitt and John had frequent occasion to go.

‘Weymouth,’ she writes, ‘with its sloping hills and woods, beautiful and romantic as it was, yet had its inconveniences. The greatest, the distance from the city. There was no market or butcher’s shop,

or any baker, in the parish, and only one shop containing some remnants of linen, a few tapes and thread, with a small assortment of grocery. Hard sea-biscuits, butter, cheese, some salt beef and pork, were our winter's fare. In the summer it was better, as we often got a joint of fresh meat from some of the farmers, who would spare us some of what they provided for their own use. This, when not wanted directly, was kept by being suspended over the well. Sometimes we had barrels of flour, and made our own bread, and when the farmer's wife heated her oven, she would kindly bake our bread for us, or anything else, so that, on the whole, we did very well, and thought not of the fleshpots of Egypt.

'One day I observed the water in the well was red. I asked Mr. Beales the reason; he said, "We shall have an earthquake soon; but," he added, "do not tell my wife." The next morning, about seven, we felt a smart shock, but not bad enough to throw anything down; yet it made the handles of the drawers rattle. To the eastward it was worse, and, indeed, it came from the east. It was in February, and the weather was very close and cloudy, and not a breath of air stirring.

'New England abounds more in maize (Indian corn) than wheat, and in the country it is much used,

and is not unpleasant to the taste, though rather too sweet ; and it is very convenient, as it requires no yeast. Besides maize they have buckwheat, barley, and rye, and from the other States they have plenty of the finest wheat. With the West Indies they carry on a considerable traffic, exchanging their cattle and lumber for rum and molasses. On the Southern States the West Indies chiefly depend for corn and other food, and send them in return the finest fruit, sugar, rum, pepper, etc. I once saw a cartload of pineapples, that were just landed in Philadelphia market, that were sold for a half-pistoreen each, about ninepence.

‘ The woods are filled with a variety of game ; the number of pigeons are incredible ; and the wild turkeys are very large and fine, and their colours very beautiful ; and they make a grand appearance when seen standing, being from four to five feet in height. They have also plenty of wild geese, ducks, teal, and all the wild and tame fowl that we have in Europe ; many kinds of parrots, and the Virginia nightingale, of a bright crimson ; snakes and monkeys more than enough ; foxes, wolves, and bears ; and the tiger-cat, very fierce and strong for its size—about two feet high, I think. The moose deer is peculiar to North America.

‘ Once while we were there, an animal they call a cat-a-mount [or puma] made its appearance near Falmouth. It was said to be five feet long ; besides, the tail was as much more ; and it could mount trees, whence its name. It was hunted by eighteen dogs, killed six of them, and got off. It was said that only one of these animals had been seen before. But no one knows what, or how many, unknown creatures may be concealed in those endless forests.

‘ In July we took our leave of Weymouth, where we had spent a year and eight months, and bid farewell to our good friends the Whitmans, and others with whom we had begun a friendly intercourse, and left our romantic hills and groves, never to see them more ; but we did not then know that it was a last farewell.

‘ We removed to a small house in Upper Dorchester. It was pleasantly situated, but not to be compared to the one we had left. It was five miles from Boston, and in the highroad to it. In front, on the other side of the road, were some large meadows, and beyond, at the distance of a few miles, the blue mountains rose to our view. Covered with thick woods, they are said to be famous for rattlesnakes. It is observed that the rattlesnake is never found near the sea-shore.

‘ Behind, and on each side of the house, there was a very large orchard, and ascending a little way, we had a fine view of Boston, its bay and many islands, the same we saw at Weymouth, but nearer and more distinct. To the eastward, Fort William and its lighthouse, and to the north, a vast extent of country ; and behind the city the hill of battle, where so many fell in the beginning of that quarrel which in the end gave liberty and happiness to millions, who still regard England as the land of Father.

‘ The last summer my father passed in frequent visits to Boston, to Hingham, and to Salem. At length he made up his mind to return to England in the autumn, and try to get settled before we arrived, and we were to follow him in the spring. Oh, most unfortunate resolve ! for but a few months after he had sailed, old Mr. Gay died, and Dr. Gordon came over to London to publish his book ; and at either of these places my father would have been chosen.

‘ This last summer passed quickly away, and October came ; and the time of my father’s departure drew near. I recollect his coming to fetch me home from Boston, a few days before he sailed. He talked to us of our separation and the hope of meeting again, and charged me, above all things, to be careful of and attentive to my mother, and endeavour

by every means in my power to keep up her spirits and soften every care.

‘From my father’s journal it appears that he sailed from the Long Wharf, Boston, on October 23 (1786), on board the *Rebecca*.’ His son John saw him off. He described the passage to England as terrible. The vessel did not sight Plymouth till December 9, but did not make for it. On the 14th, after beating about, and a good deal more heavy weather, the *Rebecca* was in sight of Dover at noon. Mr. Hazlitt spent nine months in London, at the house of his old and good friend, Mr. David Lewis.

After his father’s departure John Hazlitt was busy in the pursuit of his professional studies, and our narrative says that he painted a picture of two wild turkeys for Mr. Vaughan, to send to Germany. He also taught his brother William Latin grammar, at first, it seems, not with much success, but eventually so much so that William nearly killed himself through excessive application.

It was while the Hazlitts were near Boston that John painted the portrait of Mr. Gay, a pastel two-thirds life-size, for a parishioner, who had asked the old man to grant him a favour without saying what it was. Mr. Gay had a strong aversion from having his likeness taken, but was obliged to keep his

promise. It represents the head and shoulders only, and is stated by a Boston correspondent, a great-nephew of General Lincoln, to be rather hard and stiff in execution, and to betray the hand of a novice. But the fact may be that it was an experiment in a new direction. Yet the painter was, of course, quite a youth. Ebenezer Gay was the first minister at Hingham, and held the living, or charge, from 1718 to his death in 1787. He relaxed the more austere and uncompromising tenets of Calvinism, which the first settlers had followed, and embraced the milder and more cheerful doctrines of the Unitarians.

‘Dorchester,’ the diarist says, ‘was a very pleasant place to live in. It stood high, and commanded a fine prospect on all sides. We had some good neighbours, and were so near to Boston as to be able to go there at any time. . . . We stayed there until the summer, preparing for our departure. At the last the time came, and there were some we regretted to leave, but from none was I so sorry to part as from Susan Butt. She was a good and kind-hearted girl, and much attached to me. She persuaded my brother to give her a picture he had done of me in crayons. . . . How often we have looked back with regret on the pleasant evenings John and I used to spend with them (at Dorchester)!



Our games and songs, and the tumbles we got in the snow, coming home by moonlight, when the rain, freezing on the ice, made the road slippery as glass. 'Twas then who best could keep their feet. How delightful a ride in a sleigh was then! How swift we cut through the air, going over hedge and ditch! For the snow made all level.

'This last Christmas I spent at Mr. Boot's. There we had a constant round of visits, and I was more expert at cards than I have been since; for I was pleased to do as grown-up people did, though often tired and weary of cards and sitting up late. Whist and palm loo were the games most in fashion; but chess was a favourite with all. . . . At the end of three weeks my brother came to take me home, and I did not see Boston again till the summer.

'On April 10 this year (1787) a most tremendous fire broke out in Boston. It made a very grand appearance as we viewed it from the orchard, and, though at five miles' distance, the light was so great that the least thing was visible. The column of fire and smoke that rose to the clouds resembled a volcano. John got a horse and attempted to go in to assist our friends, and bring away anything for them. He soon returned, saying it was impossible

to get into the town, as South Street, the only entrance, was burning on both sides. About a hundred houses were burnt, and a church. But the damage was not so great as we supposed. Some rum-stills had served to increase the splendour of the blaze.

‘ Boston is built on a peninsula, and joins the mainland by a narrow neck of land, four, or perhaps five, furlongs in length. I know not if it is a natural isthmus, or the work of man, but from the swampy meadows on either side I should think it to be natural. South Street is part of it. The bay in which it stands surrounds it on every other side.

‘ The entrance into the bay is defended by Fort William, and no ship can come into the port without passing under its guns. The Government keep a small garrison here, and a chaplain. Mr. Isaac Smyth was the chaplain when we were there. He was in England during the war, and settled in Sidmouth, in Devonshire.

‘ Fort William is nine miles from Boston. The bay is very extensive, and contains many beautiful islands, most of them small and wooded to the top. Those we saw from Weymouth and Dorchester had two or three hills of a sugar-loaf form, adding to the beauty of the scene by the deep indigo of their

firs, mixed with the bright and ever-varying green of the other trees. Perhaps when the country is more filled, these untenanted islets will be studded with neat cottages and farms.

‘ At Cambridge, two miles from Boston, there is a very flourishing college, and, I believe, it is the oldest in the United States. A ferry divides Cambridge from Boston.

‘ Boston is more like an English town in the irregularity of its streets and houses than any other that I saw on that continent. It had its government or state house, and other public buildings, and churches of every denomination, more than I can recollect. The people were then in everything English; their habits, their manners, their dress, their very names, spoke their origin; and the names given to their towns prove that they still regard the land of their fathers.

‘ Beacon Hill, just at the edge of the common, was a pretty object at a distance, and the house of Governor Hancock stood close to it. He was an old man then. His lady was of the Quincy family, but we did not know it then, though my father often visited at the house.

‘ The spring brought letters from my father, full of hope and anxiety to see us again; and with

mingled feelings of expectation and regret we prepared to follow him.

‘In June (1787) we left Dorchester, and spent a fortnight in Boston, paying farewell visits to our friends there. More than one inquired of my brother if anything was wanted by my mother for our voyage, offering to supply her with money or other needful assistance. These offers were declined with grateful thanks, as we had money enough to take us home, and we trusted the future to that kind Providence which had guided and supplied us hitherto. After passing these last days with our friends in Boston as pleasantly as the prospect of so soon parting with them would allow, we went on board the *Nonpareil*, ready to sail the next morning, July 4, the grand anniversary of American Independence.’

The home voyage to England was prosperous on the whole, although the vessel had to avoid the Algerine pirates, who at that time seized all American vessels which had not a passport from them. Among their fellow-passengers was a Mr. Millar, son of a farmer in Hampshire, of whom Miss Hazlitt tells the following story :

‘At the age of fourteen he had run away from home and listed for a soldier, and being sent off



*J. Hyatt. Sc.*

*Margaret Hazlitt.*



with the first troops to America, had settled (after the war was over) in Nova Scotia, where he had left his wife and children, and was to return there as soon as the object of his present voyage was completed. His chief business in England was to implore the blessing and forgiveness of his father, whom he had not seen since the day that his boyish folly had so unhappily estranged him from the paternal roof. We heard afterwards that his father had died two days before he reached home.'

'On Sunday, August 12, 1787, the Hazlitts disembarked at Portsmouth, and on the following morning set out for London in the stage. On arriving in London,' Miss Hazlitt tells us, 'my father met us at the inn, and before I had time to see him, took me in his arms out of the coach, and led us to our very good friend, David Lewis; and from him and Mrs. Lewis we received the greatest attention and kindness. With them we stayed some weeks; but, my mother's health being very indifferent, we took a lodging at Walworth, and she was in some measure revived by the fresh air. This is near Camberwell, where your father saw the garden he speaks of in his works,\* and which had made so

\* 'When I was a boy, my father used to take me to the Montpelier Tea Gardens at Walworth. Do I go there now?'

strong an impression on his young mind, and being the first gardens he had seen after our long voyage, were of course doubly valued. After staying there a fortnight, David Williams proposed our taking part of a house in Percy Street, which was to be had cheap, as it would be more convenient for my father to attend to anything that might occur. Here we stayed eleven weeks, and my grandmother came up from Wisbeach to see us. She stayed with us a month. She could walk about two miles, yet she must have been eighty-four at that time, and she lived about fourteen years after. This was a meeting she at one time did not hope for, as she was very old when we went to America, and our return to England was not intended. I never saw her after this time, but my mother paid her a visit of nine weeks in 1792.

My grandfather states in one of his *Essays*, that, years after, the taste of the barberries which he had gathered as a child, when they had lain under the snow through a long American winter, still lingered on his palate, like a sixth sense.

Miss Hazlitt, while she stayed for a few weeks in

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No ; the place is deserted, and its borders and beds overturned. I unlock the casket of memory, and draw back the warders of the brain, and there the scene of my infant wanderings still lives unfaded or with fresher dyes.'—*Memoirs of W. H.*, 1867, i. 32.



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1787 with her family in London, had the opportunity, almost for the first time, of seeing the shops and other sights of the Metropolis; but she seems to have been particularly impressed and interested by Moltino's print-shop in Pall Mall, which preceded Graves's now long-established concern. In 1821 the three principal London printsellers were Woodburn, Moltino, Colnaghi, and the Smiths. My grandfather would say that the study of Colnaghi's window was a liberal education. But there was also Boydell's, at the Shakespeare Gallery, Pall Mall, and it is notable how the taste for art was resident in the minister and in his daughter. The latter writes: 'Boydell's shop had great attractions for me, and I was quite delighted when my father took me there to buy a print. It was the *Fish-Stealers by Moonlight*.'

Boydell's place of business was afterwards occupied by Moltino and Graves, and is now Graves's.

## CHAPTER VI.

(1787—1798.)

Settlement at Wem in Shropshire—Fondness of William for the place—Remarks on the American experiment—The Rev. Mr. Hazlitt's character and straitened opportunities—His letter on Sterne—Germs of mental development in him—A letter from William to his mother (1790)—Reason for its insertion—The writer's gradual abandonment of the ministry as a calling—His intellectual progress.

THE ample record which the manuscript furnishes of those four fruitful years, which resembled a journey into the Promised Land and an enforced return to less auspicious and congenial scenes, is a notable contribution to the biographical history of our family.

On their return to England in 1787, they fixed themselves at Wem in Shropshire, as we have all repeatedly heard ; and there Hazlitt, a lad of ten or so, proceeded to devote his time to those pursuits and amusements which were congenial to his age, relieving now and then the monotony of a dull country town by trips to Liverpool or elsewhere.

Referring to her young brother, the diarist, however, observes :

‘William always liked this old house at Wem better than many superior ones that we have lived in since ; but he liked Wem better than any of us, for it was the scene of his childhood, and where he first began to show those talents which have since shone so brightly.’

Of the three surviving children of the Rev. Mr. Hazlitt, John, Margaret, and William, the first and last sought their fortunes in London ; but their sister remained under her parents’ roof till a short period prior to her death, and had no opportunity of developing those talents as an artist and as a thinker which she unquestionably possessed. She more than once almost repines in her notes at the hard lot, which was her father’s and her own, of spending their lives in an obscure and stagnant provincial town.

Speaking of 1787, Miss Hazlitt remarks :

‘This autumn was dry and pleasant. At Walworth there was a great common, and Camberwell Green was near. I never feel the morning air of an October day without thinking of that autumn and the difference we found between our English fogs and the American fall.’

The American Diary from 1783 to 1787 has

furnished much both in the way of absolute knowledge and of valuable indications and side-lights.

The hospitality extended to them while they remained in the States was of the old-fashioned type, but they experienced the same unwearied generosity at the hands of their friends at home. The names which occur in the subscription-lists of the two series of sermons in 1790 and 1808 are those of persons in all parts of England, in Ireland, and in America. Mr. Hazlitt seems never to have lost a friend, and his only enemies were the enemies of justice and freedom.

The family, however, which may be presumed, above all others, to have assisted him throughout his lengthened pilgrimage was that of Lewis of Maidstone, London, and New York, and Mr. David Lewis, more particularly, paid my ancestor an almost fraternal devotion. He not merely performed the ordinary rites of friendship, but stood by him in all emergencies, and repeatedly placed his home in London at his disposal. It was to Mr. Lewis that he committed John at the outset of his career as an artist in London in 1787, when without such supervision a lad of his years might have been exposed to the most demoralizing influences.

The life of Boston, Philadelphia, and New York,

as Miss Hazlitt, to the extent of her opportunities, portrays it, offers to us the prepossessing picture of a society which had liberated itself from the stern and bigoted puritanism of the earliest settlers, and was in the enjoyment of a prosperity and freedom just beginning to re-awaken after the conclusion of the war with the mother-country. Such an experience as my ancestors had in 1783, and down to 1787, would have been equally impossible a few years earlier and a few years later. They took the tide at the flow ; they presented themselves with the highest credentials which it was perhaps possible for English people at that precise juncture to possess and to shew ; they were introduced to the late British colonists—then colonists no more—as among the truest and most zealous of those in the old land, whose hearts had been with them all through the fratricidal struggle, and who had done their part to help forward the issue, setting their feet on the quay at New York almost ere the ink of the *Declaration of Independence* was dry. They came, moreover, with the fullest intention and desire to found a new home in the young Republic, and to turn their back for ever on the dominion which gave them life, but threatened to deny them that liberty, which was at least as dear.

That my ancestors changed their purpose owing to the obstacles which the minister found in securing a comfortable congregational settlement, and that they retraced their course without regretting the determination, grave at the moment as seemed the outlook, and dark the future, may be more or less matter of history, since two of the party lived to achieve in the old country a reputation which is common to both sides of the Atlantic, and which encourages me, more than a hundred years after the event, to commit to paper the story and its moral.

The intellectual faculties of the Unitarian minister—the Hazlitt of the first historical generation—lay, in my judgment, nearly dormant from the absence of communication and correspondence with minds capable of fostering and ripening the germinant matter within. Instead of associating with those who might have imparted to his bent of thought a certain elasticity and breadth, he communed through the whole of a protracted career almost exclusively with persons who were greatly his inferiors in natural power and perception, and who unconsciously retarded by a generation the display of literary capacity awaiting only certain conditions to bring it to light.

I must confess that I have always fancied that in

the letter of Mr. Hazlitt in 1808 to the *Monthly Repository*, respecting an incident in the life of Sterne, we may recognise the latent or slumbering aptitude which manifested itself in his younger son, and we have to go no farther than the proficiency of John Hazlitt as a painter, and the evident talent, however undisciplined and rudimentary, of the sister, to see, and to be justified in allowing that, so far as the taste and turn for the liberal sciences went, our obligations were on the Hazlitts' side, rather than on that of Mrs. Loftus and her father, the Wisbeach ironmonger.

William Hazlitt inherited from his paternal grandfather, John Hazlitt of Shronell, a fervent passion for individual liberty, and from his progenitor in the same degree on the other side an equally strong love of truth and religious toleration. But at the same time it is not difficult to believe that with his theological studies the Unitarian minister, who was one step nearer to him and to us, combined a taste for the classics, in which he gained honours at college, and for miscellaneous literature. The partiality for Sterne as a writer, which betrays itself in so many passages of my grandfather's books, might well have been acquired under the paternal roof, and Miss Hazlitt expressly cites Shakespear as

the great poet, whom they all knew so well, and testifies to her father's affection for the London print-shops.

In the published correspondence occur some illustrations of the first state of feeling, which is to be treated as a product of home-influence, and which externally afforded no manifestation of the vast intellectual awakening which a few years and a concurrence of agencies were to bring about ; and I once thought they were adequate for their purpose, as in a mere literary respect these compositions are of slender interest indeed. But, physiologically considered, the letters of Hazlitt's early boyhood are unquestionably very valuable relics, for they set him before us as he was, fully equipped according to his estimable parent's conception for life and the ministry, and enable us to take accurate measurement of the colossal stride which he made between the ages of twelve and twenty. At the former there was absolutely nothing to denote that he would be more than his father before him, or his grandfather the flax-factor ; at the latter, after the lapse of little more than a lustrum, men became aware that a new power had arisen in the domain of thought and in the annals of intellect—a power which, had it been developed half a century later, would certainly



have placed Hazlitt in a widely different position ; or, had it been accompanied by other political conditions, would probably have conferred on him distinction and affluence.

It is on this account that I subjoin the letter which he addressed in his thirteenth year to his mother while he was staying with the Tracys at Liverpool, in company with their neighbour's son, George Dickin.

Friday, 9th of July 1790.

DEAR MOTHER,

It is with pleasure I now sit down to write to you, and it is with pleasure that I do anything, which I know, will please you. I hope you have by this time received my letter, which I put in the Post Office on Tuesday evening. I intended to have written to you, in my last, but, as you see, I had not room for it, and therefore I shall fill up this sheet as your correspondent. On Tuesday night, after I had been at Mrs. Hudson's to tea, I took my Papa's letter to the Post Office. As it was half an hour past eight, when I left Mrs. Hudson's and I had a mile and half to go in half an hour I went there rather quickly, and got home a good while before the rest. As soon as I came home Mrs. Tracey told me that a Gentleman, who appeared to be about 2 or 3 and 20 years old, had been here enquiring after me ; he said that he saw my brother on Sunday last, and that I must enquire for him at the Mail Coach Office, without telling where it was, or what his name was, so that it was almost impossible for anybody to find out who it was. I accordingly went, about ten o'clock in the morning, to the Mail Coach Office to enquire for him ; I told the man how it was, who said that it was almost impossible to find out who it was, but however he said that if I would stop about an hour he

would make enquiry. I amused myself about an hour, with looking at the pictures in the shops and then I went again, but I came home without knowing who it was, any more than I did when I went. On Wednesday I and George Dickin went to Mr. Fisher's to dine. He is a very rich man, but—The man who is a well-wisher to slavery, is always a slave himself. The King, who wishes to enslave all mankind, is a slave to ambition ; The man who wishes to enslave all mankind, for his King, is himself a slave to his King. He like others of his brethren I suppose, wished that Mr. Beaufoy was out, or with the Devil, he did not care which. You see that he wished to have him out, merely because '*he would do to others as he would he done to.*' The man who is a well-wisher to liberty, wishes to have men good, and himself to be one of them, and knows that men are not good unless they are so willingly, and does attempt to force them to it, but tries to put them in such a situation as will induce them to be good. Slavery is not a state for men to improve in, therefore he does not wish them to be in that condition: In a state of liberty men improve. He therefore wishes them to be in such a state.—I have just received my Papa's letter, and the other things which I am much obliged to him for. I am concerned to hear you have so little money, but I hope that your portion is not in this world, you have trouble for a few days, but have joy for many. The RICH take their fill in a few years, are cut short in the midst of their career, and fall into ruin ; Never to rise again. But the good shall have joy for evermore.—Be sure to tell me if I may sell my old Buckles.

Tuesday, 13th of July.

I yesterday received my Papa's kind letter. I am sorry you did not receive my letter in due season as I put it in on Tuesday according to my directions. I was very glad to hear of Mr. Tayleur's present. I yesterday began a letter to my sister, and finished one to my brother.

Tell my Papa, to tell John Kynaston that I understand the 2nd problem, and that the other is very right. Do not forget to

remember me to him. I have translated 111 Fables and written 111 verbs. Remember me to Mrs. and Miss Cottons, and to every inquirer. Tell Kynaston I am very sorry Mrs. Tracey has not gotten him a place. The person who called on me last Tuesday was Isaac Kingston. He called here on Friday after I had written the first part of this letter, he stayed about an hour, and drank tea here the day following. He said he attempted to get Papa to Cork, but found it was useless to attempt it. He was asked by a lady to vote against Hind, but he said he would vote against no one. He said that those who were against him staid away from the Election and that he carried the Election without opposition.

He said that he was sorry that Papa had not a better place, and wished that he would set up a school, that is a boarding school ; and that there was no man in the world to whom he would sooner send his children. He has 3 Boys, the eldest of which is 5 years old, within a few months.

I shall go to Mr. Clegg's to drink tea on Thursday, and shall go to the play on Friday. I shall write to Joseph Swanwick this week. I dined at Mrs. Corbett's on Saturday, and at Mrs. Chilton's on Sunday, which was not very agreeable. I have told you all the news, I know, almost and have not much more paper.—They were pressing on Saturday evening. The world is not quite perfect yet ; nor will it ever be so whilst such practices are reckoned lawful. Mrs. Tracey says I had better let my arm alone, until I come home ; but I wish I could tell how to procure grains and then I would foment it in them. Adieu—Give my love to Papa. Mr. Kingston will call as he returns if he can.

I am, Your affectionate Son,

W. HAZLITT.

P.S.—I like my Balls very well, and have also received the money.

[Endorsed] Mr. Hazlitt,  
Wem,  
Shropshire.

The reader will perhaps allow that the letter by a mere boy of barely thirteen, just given, is all that I have claimed for it, and will be of opinion that it is nothing more ; yet I fancy that I can readily point out another plea for its admission as a document and a study. For although the author of this juvenile performance underwent at no long interval a prodigious mental transfiguration, he never completely outgrew the lines of his paternal culture, and in one of his maturest and noblest effusions—in his *Sketch* of the origin of the Elizabethan Drama—eloquently vindicated the influence of the Bible on the revival of learning in England ; and it seems to me, although he puts the notion into the mouth of Lamb, a farther token of his own reverential loyalty to the old Shropshire home and his excellent father, where, at the conclusion of an eclectic account of one of the Wednesdays, he says that, if Shakespear could have entered the room, every one would have risen to meet him, but that if Jesus Christ had appeared, they would have all fallen down and tried to kiss the hem of his garment. The cast of thought with which he had been so familiar at Wem was renewed by the then fresh tidings of his father's descent to the grave, full alike of years and faith ; it came back to him, as the taste of American barberries revisited his palate after forty years.

An unfaltering attachment to his mother lingered with him to the latest moment of his sentient existence. Does he not tell how, when he was full of work and in the zenith of his repute, he longed to revisit the town where she was born, and the poor farmhouse where she was brought up, and to lean upon the gate where she told him she used to stand, when a child of ten years old, and look at the setting sun ?

It was while he was at Liverpool, in 1790, that he first fell in with Fénelon's *Telemachus*, which he read with great enjoyment, and which he on his return persuaded his sister the diarist to read and to like.

In 1793 he was sent to the Unitarian College at Hackney, with a view to his education for the calling which his admirable father deemed the most honourable and most eligible ; and this change of occupation and abode, by throwing him on holidays into intercourse with his elder brother John and other Londoners, may be taken, in conjunction with his clerical studies at Hackney, as having laid the foundation of a new departure, and tended to open fresh trains of thought. To such a mind the potent contrast between the narrow teaching of the college and the broad tenets held by the set to which Hazlitt the painter had attached himself—Holcroft,

Godwin, Fawcett, Stoddart, and others—was sufficient as a source of profitable reflection. We have been already made familiar with his neglect of the ordinary studies prescribed by the curriculum of the institution, and his plea for pardon in the shape of a thesis which he had spent his time in drawing up.

The first distinct indication of a revolt from the ties and opinions of his youth was his relinquishment of the Church as a profession and a call, without an immediate view before him of any other employment beyond a desultory love of reading and a vague admiration for art. The former sentiment was, perhaps, at the outset little more than a fondness for books inherited from his father, and the latter was similarly a boyish spirit of emulation, gradually aroused by his elder brother's success as a miniature and portrait painter. To the last hour of his life my grandfather preserved his profound veneration for his parents; but the artist-brother was, after a certain age, the tutelary genius whenever he stayed in London, and the directing and controlling agency; and it is in the circle which John Hazlitt had drawn round him in Rathbone Place that we have to seek the origin of the secession from the Unitarian ministry and of the espousal, first of art, and eventually of letters, as a means of livelihood.

The effect of the training at Hackney may perhaps be treated as having been diametrically opposite to that which Hazlitt's parents anticipated and wished. Instead of forming a sequel and a complement to home-studies, it served as a fulcrum to divert his ideas and aspirations into totally different channels ; nor can it be a matter of surprise that the upshot should have been what it was—that he should, to the sincere grief of his father, have asked leave to relinquish the project of qualifying for the ministry, and should have returned home without any nearer approach to a settlement in any profession.

We have reached 1793 or 1794. He was fifteen or sixteen years of age. His father could not fail to comprehend that the sojourn at Hackney, with its attendant incidence, had wrought a great alteration in him since their return from abroad. The hope of having a successor in his vocation, when he was called away, had become a thing of the past. William was a child no longer. He was a pensive, abstracted youth, with a developing taste for philosophy and metaphysics. He had in no wise lost his affectionate and dutiful character ; but it was easily perceivable that a new intellectual bias was already in course of formation. Those who enjoyed the opportunity of tracing the phenomenon to its source, may or may

not have done so ; but it is my persuasion that he carried the germ to Hackney, and did not receive it there. As far back as 1788 he had corresponded with his brother John—they were, of course, together in America ; and through life he preserved an unchangeable regard for him. His sentiments in 1790 had not yet undergone, so far as it is possible to judge, material modification. In 1794 he had renounced the Church, and was in incipient mental labour with notions and schemes of another tendency and of a higher reach.

The correspondence between Hazlitt and his family during his youth and early manhood readily divides itself into the portion which precedes the introduction to Coleridge in 1798, and that which concludes with his letters from the Louvre in 1802. Of the changed complexion of the latter everybody can judge who has perused them all, so far as they survive, in the *Memoirs*.



## THE SECOND GENERATION



## CHAPTER I.

(1798—1805.)

William Hazlitt still at Wem—His studies—Obscurity of the period—Meeting with Coleridge—Note to his father on the subject—The *Essay on Human Action* on the stocks—Crabb Robinson's extraordinary testimony to his genius—Sir James Mackintosh's lectures in 1799—Visit to the Louvre in 1802—On his return Hazlitt paints portraits of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and his son Hartley, of Wordsworth, of his own father, of Mr. Shepherd of Gateacre, and of Charles Lamb (1803-5)—His obligations to his brother John—His dissatisfaction with himself.

THE interval between 1798 and 1808 represents in one way and sense the most important period of Hazlitt's life. It was the period of labour and mental incubation. It was then that he read most assiduously and thought most deeply, and stored up the material for the literary work which was to follow. This circumstance explains what he meant when, in response to the secretarial inquiry at the Russell Institution whether he had prepared his lectures, he shyly stated that he had *thought* over them, and also where he

tells us that his object in somewhat later in life going down to Winterslow was to 'gather up the fragments of his early recollections.'

The actual traces of the books employed by him are very limited, and those casual. He alludes in his own works to volumes which had passed through his hands, and for which he had a value or a relish. But when we scan with any degree of care the pages so luminous with his analytical insight and graphic power, and observe the wide diversity of subjects and the long catalogue of authors with whom he establishes his acquaintance, all that we see, if we use our eyes well, points to a dark and unexplored epoch in his biography, when the toil and application must have been almost passionately intense, when health was disregarded, when meals were overlooked, and when under his father's humble roof he, unknown to himself and still more to those around him, set up a temple and a religion of his own.

The most obscure portion of his youth is undoubtedly that which immediately succeeded the interview with Coleridge. All that we positively know is that he was still living with his father, with the exception of occasional visits to his brother in Rathbone Place, and perhaps to the Tracys at Liverpool, and desultory excursions on foot, including that

to Llangollen, of which we have a description from his own pen.

He appears to have been either at Liverpool or in London with his brother—at all events, away from home—when he sent his father on the eve of setting out for Wem the subjoined :

(1798.)

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have just time to let you know, that I shall set out on my way home this evening. Mr. Coleridge is gone to Taunton to preach for Dr. Toulmin. He is to meet me at Bridgewater, and we shall proceed from thence to Bristol to-morrow morning. You may expect to see me on Saturday, or, perhaps not till the next day. I received your letter on Friday. Farewell.

W. H.

He was already, about this date, striving, however, to produce his *Essay on Human Disinterestedness*, and I suppose that it does not require a critical scrutiny of the published work to convince anyone that it contains, of the *prima stamina*, as they were committed to paper by the most painful effort page by page, nothing beyond the bare outline. The author doubtless began to make notes for the volume as early as 1798, but the existing text may be taken to precede very little in date the year of issue. The style is more laboured and hard ; but the book must be accepted as a member of the group of literary

monuments belonging to the first era, and concluding with the *Grammar* in 1810. I do not propose to comprise in this cycle the Holcroft and other compilations—merely the original compositions, which signalized the transitional state of Hazlitt's mind after it had received its first impetus from Coleridge.

As this is a singularly difficult epoch in the career of Hazlitt, I venture to point out that Crabb Robinson, in his *Diary* under 1799, describes his first acquaintance with my grandfather just a twelve-month, apparently, after the meeting with Coleridge. He spoke of Hazlitt, who was then one-and-twenty, to his sister-in-law as the *cleverest* man he had met or knew. At that date, to be sure, Robinson did not know many people of much note. He adds: 'I was under great obligations to Hazlitt as the director of my taste. It was he who first made me acquainted with the *Lyrical Ballads* and the poems generally of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Lamb, and Southey.'

Of what man just of age could such a thing at present be predicated? The testimony, too, is all the more precious, since it comes from a quarter which was rather grudging of praise or compliment in this case.

A man is, however, as his school is, whatever may be the force of his original bent and self-government. The precocious aptitude and relish of Hazlitt, as a youth of one-and-twenty, for acquiring an intimacy with the poets of his day, and imparting it to others, had been imbibed from his fellowship with the author of the *Ancient Mariner* and his circle, all *juvenes fervidi*, like himself, and, like the fine character whom Chaucer portrays, 'glad to learn and eke to teach.'

From a passage in the *Spirit of the Age*, we may perhaps infer that he attended Sir James Mackintosh's lectures in 1799; and, if so, this may have led him to form speculations on their subject-matter, and to draft the essay on Civil and Criminal Legislation, which was among his early works, and bears the impress of his first style, before he acquired freedom and ease in the use of his pen.

If he was really present at those lectures, it becomes highly probable that he was led to go by his brother's friend and eventual brother-in-law, Dr. Stoddart. The latter was certainly among the audience, for I possess his manuscript notes taken at the time, and it is so far interesting to regain these scattered and almost lost links in the biographical chain, since each lends its help to render a little more lucid and con-

secutive the transactions of these years, and to ascertain the sources of the growth of Hazlitt's mind and the nature of the stimulants which it received.

It was about this date, while he was pursuing his metaphysical investigations, and writing and re-writing the manuscript of his *Essay on the Principles of Human Action*, grounded on a study of Hartley and Helvetius—partly, perhaps, at second-hand from Coleridge—that his brother induced him to try, collaterally at best, something more practical and, at the same time, not uncongenial, and that he made his earliest attempts as an artist. While he remained at Hackney he had been led, by observing his brother at work during his holiday visits to him, to endeavour to copy heads, noses, and eyes; and the employment, as he grew older, became more attractive, and began towards the end of the century, as he was entering on his majority, to share with the problems of philosophy his earnest attention.

I cannot trace to heredity the gift for painting possessed by all the children of the Unitarian minister, but the proficiency acquired by Hazlitt himself in this fresh direction was positively amazing. For we have only to remember that in 1798 he was a youth, whose occupation was of the most desultory and indecisive character, and we shall appreciate the



rapidity of progress which enabled him in 1802 not merely to secure sitters at Liverpool and Manchester, but to obtain a commission to execute for a gentleman in the latter town ten copies from the old masters at the Louvre for £105. He was away from England on this business from October, 1802, to January, 1803, and must have worked indefatigably the whole time, seeing the trophies (*spolia opima*) with which we know that he returned home.

The picture of his father was painted in 1804, and, probably through his brother's influence, was exhibited at the Royal Academy. It is the Rembrandtish composition of which the artist so eloquently discourses in more than one place. It represents the minister in his sixty-seventh year; the colours have faded a little, and the magilp has overlaid the surface, but the likeness is unimpaired. It is a striking piece of execution for a young man of twenty-six, who had had so brief an apprenticeship to the art; and of all the essays in oils which he made, this, and the head of the Old Woman which he painted in 1803, near Manchester, appear to me to be the most signally characteristic.

Southey, in a letter to Rickman, of December 14, 1803, speaks of my grandfather as having been at that time lately in his immediate neighbourhood, if

not at his house. 'Hazlitt,' says he, 'whom you saw at Paris, has been here (at Keswick); a man of real genius. He has made a very fine picture of Coleridge for Sir George Beaumont, which is said to be in Titian's manner; he has also painted Wordsworth, but so dismally, though Wordsworth's face is his idea of physiognomical perfection, that one of his friends, on seeing it, exclaimed, 'At the gallows, deeply affected by his deserved fate—yet determined to die like a man.'

In a letter to Coleridge himself of June 11, 1804, Southey compares the two likenesses of the former by Hazlitt and Northcote. 'Hazlitt's,' he says, 'does look as if you were on your trial, and certainly had stolen the horse; but then you did it cleverly. . . . But this portrait by Northcote looks like a grinning idiot; and the worst is, that it is just like enough to pass for a good likeness with those who only know your features imperfectly. Dance's drawing has that merit at least, that nobody would ever suspect you of having been the original.'

The picture of Coleridge painted for Beaumont was probably executed prior to October, 1803, as in a letter to Sir George, dated October 1, 1803, Coleridge speaks of Hazlitt in this way: 'We have not heard of or from Hazlitt. He is at Manchester, we

suppose, and has both the portraits with him'—those of the writer, apparently, and of his son Hartley.

These extracts admit us to some knowledge of his movements, while he was endeavouring to prove his mastery in a new field, by the exhibited likeness of his father and other remarkable efforts, and still adhered to the notion, originally broached by John, of making art, rather than letters, his profession and subsistence. He was now five-and-twenty. We perceive that he had painted Samuel Taylor and Hartley Coleridge, and Wordsworth, and it must have been now that he first met Southey. From all these sources the practical result was not, perhaps, very large, nor can much else be said of his other essays, especially the likeness of his father (in my possession), of his father's friend, the Rev. Mr. Shepherd of Gateacre, and of Charles Lamb (in the National Portrait Gallery), in the bizarre costume of a Venetian senator. I attribute all three to the period between 1802 and 1805. The head of Lear, mentioned in the *Memoirs*, 1867, was by his brother.

There can be little doubt that by assiduity and patience the artist might have realized all his hopes from the vocation, both in a technical sense and otherwise; and I presume that his brother, who

was never lacking in readiness to put him forward, did not neglect to lend him all the encouragement and assistance in his power. But his severest judge was found in his own preconceived standard of excellence, and an ineradicable sense of inferiority to it. Such a consciousness, making its force and influence felt, even while he yet held the brush in his hand, and continued to accept sitters, was obviously prejudicial to improvement and success. His *beau idéal* was his evil genius, but at the same time it has often struck me that a second very important obstacle to his establishment as a portrait-painter was the disparity between his knowledge of the art of colour and expression and that of mechanical execution. The branch of his profession which he should have mastered first he never thoroughly mastered at all ; and it was his shortcoming here that, I apprehend, produced his discontent with his works in the face of much favourable criticism, and from a reluctance or inability to devote a further apprenticeship to that department led him at last to abandon the project for following art as a livelihood. He was too impatient and too fastidious.

Our great painters have usually possessed genius and industry in an almost equal degree, and have applied themselves laboriously in their noviciate to

the acquisition of the grammar of their business. If not in landscape, where the lines are subject to abnormal variation, at least in portrait the study of anatomical detail formed an indispensable prelude a master's career. I do not contend that Hazlitt was ignorant of this deficiency; on the contrary, I plead that his intense appreciation of it was one of the primary causes of his relinquishment of the profession. In his copies from Titian it has always struck me that he has neglected those minutiae which in the originals are so truly rendered.

It has been represented that Hazlitt derived his first idea and love of painting from Jonathan Richardson, the earliest of the art-critics, who influenced the modern school, and notably that of Sir Joshua. His writings on the subject had appeared as far back as 1725, and were much admired by Reynolds, upon whom they have been generally held to have exercised a powerful influence; and this amounts in some degree to a confirmation of the indebtedness to them of the two Hazlitts. A new edition of Richardson appeared in 1792, just a little prior to my grandfather's earliest visits to his elder brother in London, and it was natural enough that he should turn to a book enjoying such a peculiar prestige.

Yet, while his obligation to John Hazlitt for most of his early knowledge both of men and books was undoubtedly very great, my grandfather soon learned to form independent opinions on painting in common with other subjects ; and while he might agree with much that Richardson felt and wrote, it was not consonant with his genius to allow any man or school to warp his own judgment either upon an author or an artist.

In a knowledge of the rules of art and of the practice of painting John Hazlitt doubtless far surpassed his brother, and was equally, or almost equally, a prodigy of natural talent, developed by observation and experience, rather than by any regular course of instruction. But in critical power and in judgment of what pictures should be I imagine my grandfather to have been the superior of the two beyond comparison. John Hazlitt rapidly attained the height of his fame and the limit of his faculty. His miniatures, by which it is fairest to estimate him, were admirable in mechanical execution, in colour, and in drapery ; but it was a widely different sort and degree of success to which his brother aspired and despaired of ever reaching. He gazed, sometimes almost with the tears in his eyes, at the pictures on the walls of Burleigh, Blen-

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heim, and Stourhead, and, after a few more unsuccessful attempts to emulate them, laid down the brush. He knew at once too much and too little. We shall see a little further on that my grandfather very occasionally returned to the pursuit, and took the likenesses of one or two friends even at a quite late period of his life.

## CHAPTER II.

(1805—1806.)

Relinquishment of art—Early literary work—Slender practical results—The *Essay on Human Action* completed and published (1805)—Godwin and Hazlitt meet again—Hazlitt's obligations to the former—Letters from Hazlitt to his father and others (1806-8)—The theatres visited.

THE vacillation between two courses of employment arose from a singular conjunction of circumstances, I think, acting and reacting on each other ; from great natural wilfulness after the first period of childhood, from a peculiar hardness and dryness of understanding in earlier manhood, and from the severe struggle, which succeeded the acquaintance with Coleridge, of a profound latent power for adequate expression either on paper or on canvas. The question, however, had narrowed itself to a choice between these callings, and the die was eventually cast in favour of literature, painting re-



ceding into the middle distance as a very occasional succedaneum.

As I have said, I cannot help being convinced that it was Hazlitt's dissatisfaction with himself, rather than the pecuniary aspect of the matter, which produced the ultimate decision. For during many years—that is to say, from 1804 to 1812—his literary earnings were insignificant. Let us see what they were. From the *Essay on Human Action* he assuredly never derived a fraction. The *Free Thoughts on Public Affairs* (1806) he printed at his own expense. The Reply to Malthus, notwithstanding Longman's parade that it was 'by a person of eminence,' the Abridgment of Tucker, and the *Eloquence of the British Senate*, all products of 1807, cannot have yielded much. The translation of Bourgoyne's *Tableau de l'Espagne Moderne* (1808) never found a publisher. There was the English Grammar in 1810, and finally, among the earlier works, the *Memoirs of Holcroft*, finished in the same year, and only partially printed in 1816. Thus in eleven years we have eight works, which can scarcely have represented in the aggregate a fair twelvemonth's income; and the pains bestowed on some of them was indisputably very considerable. It was no wonder, then, that in 1812, four years

after his marriage, and one after the birth of a son, he determined to settle permanently in London, and to embark in journalism or any other more popular and remunerative class of work.

Among those to whom Hazlitt sent copies of the *Essay on Human Action* was Mackintosh, then in India. The attention was acknowledged in a flattering manner, and I do not think that he is more than half serious when he says that Mackintosh's satisfaction was a proof 'of the dearth of intellectual intercourse in which he lived, which made even a dry, tough, metaphysical chokepear' acceptable to him. I am afraid that here we have an outcrop of that splenetic acrimony, which by the exercise of a salutary influence over him at this time might have been prevented from becoming a chronic infirmity.

It was not precisely, so far as I have understood, the same motive which induced him to neglect the opening which was promised in a complimentary letter from Sir James Scarlett. Scarlett received a copy of the *Essay*, presumably at the suggestion of his friend Stoddart, and expressed a highly favourable judgment of it; but it seems that Hazlitt's father was averse from him becoming a Tory, and an incident which might in other hands have proved

the turning-point in his fortunes was suffered to be resultless.

Scarlett rose to be Attorney-General, but went over from the Whigs to the other political party, just as his friends were on the point of coming into power again ; and my uncle Reynell, who was on the jury in a case before Lord Denman, where Scarlett was counsel, heard it observed that, instead of being on the Bench, he was only conducting an action before it. He eventually obtained, however, a seat in the Exchequer, and was created Lord Abinger.

We shall see farther on that Hazlitt never expressed himself favourable to Mackintosh, while the latter remained honourably steadfast in his acknowledgment of my grandfather's genius and influence.

Crabb Robinson was, I think, under a misapprehension in supposing that his brother Anthony, whom he introduced to Hazlitt, prevailed on Johnson to publish the *Eloquence of the British Senate* ; nor was that Hazlitt's first work, as the diarist terms it. Johnson was not, in the first place, the man to be influenced against his own judgment, and, so far as that goes, he had known our family as early as 1790, when he brought out the *Select Discourses of*

the Unitarian minister. Of course, it was he who really undertook Hazlitt's maiden literary effort—the *Essay on Human Action*—but that was in 1805.

Mr. Kegan Paul, in his painstaking and excellent biography of Godwin, does not seem to have been aware to what a vital extent Hazlitt was indebted to that distinguished man, when he found himself about the end of the last century under the necessity of obtaining a footing among the literary brotherhood in London. Nor does the same gentleman mention the original source of the connection between the two families through the Loftuses of Wisbeach, where, as we have seen, the parents of Godwin and of the mother of Hazlitt were fellow-townsmen. The meeting in London in later years was the renewal of an old Cambridgeshire tie.

It was through Godwin that Hazlitt knew not only Coleridge, who introduced him to Lamb and his sister, but Holcroft, Stoddart, and Fawcett, the last-named a man whom I regard as having during their intimate, but rather short-lived, intercourse imparted to my grandfather's mind and course of study, next to Coleridge, a more powerful stimulus than any other individual whom he ever met.

While the indebtedness of Hazlitt to Godwin in

the earlier stages of his career was so heavy, two communications on literary subjects are all that Godwin's biographer seems to have succeeded in recovering. These were apparently written from Wem—between which place and John Hazlitt's in Great Russell Street the future essayist and critic was dividing his time—and refer to the *English Grammar* and the *Holcroft Memoirs*, of which the former was out, and the latter had yet to receive some final touches. Hazlitt, with that solicitude for the careful and conscientious treatment of a subject which really belonged to him, but with which he has never been properly accredited, wishes to be satisfied on some points in Holcroft's life as to which he was in doubt.

But a good deal of information must have been elicited from the same quarter by word of mouth, and we actually learn from Godwin himself indirectly that my grandfather and he saw a great deal of each other in the first decade of this century.

I introduce here two letters which have reference to Hazlitt's literary work and friends in London in 1806. The first is addressed to Johnson, the publisher of the *Abridgment of Tucker or Search*, from Great Russell Street, to which John Hazlitt had

removed in 1804 from Rathbone Place. He still, we perceive, clung to the old familiar neighbourhood.

DEAR SIR,

I have sent you the abridgment I have made of the two first volumes. The proportion in quantity is, as near as I can guess, about 210 pages to 790, that is, considerably less than a third. I imagine the 3 last volumes, though much larger, will not take more than the 2 first, and that the 3<sup>d</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> will be about 400 pages, or perhaps more. If you should think this too much in quantity, the sooner you let me know the better. I find that going on in the way I have done, I can insert almost everything that is worth remembering in the book. I give the amusing passages almost entire. In fact I have done little more than leave out repetitions, and other things that might as well never have been in the book. But whether I have done it properly, or no, you will be able to determine better than I. If the first manuscript should be awkward to print from being written both ways, I could easily have it transcribed.

I am with great respect,

Your ob. servant,

W. HAZLITT.

August 30th (1806).

109 Great Russell St.

The second letter, which is of greater importance, was evidently written from his own lodgings in Southampton Buildings, a locality which he selected at this early date for the sake of its convenient position, and which, I am proud to learn, is still pointed out by the tenant as one of Hazlitt's resi-

dences. He gives a remarkably full and gossiping account (for him) of his doings. He alludes to his painting, and we note how he was in touch with his brother's circle, and even with others, such as Hume, of the Pipe Office, whom he knew through Lamb. The criticisms on Fox, Pitt, and others, were for the *Eloquence of the British Senate*, then in preparation, but some of them had previously appeared in *Free Thoughts on Public Affairs*.

The Tom Loftus with whose name the communication opens was his maternal cousin. From a letter of Lamb to Hazlitt of February, 1806, we see that Loftus was an occasional visitor at the house of the former.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have just seen Tom Loftus, who told me to my surprize that he left you last Friday. He called last night ; but I was out. I was rather surprized, because, though I knew of his going into Wales, I did not think of his going your way. He seems much pleased with his reception and with his journey altogether. He has brought home some Welch mutton with him, which I am going to eat a part of to-night. He stopped a whole day at Oxford, which he thinks a finer place than Wem or even Shrewsbury. I have just finished the cheeks which I had dressed last Friday for my dinner after I had taken a walk round Hampstead and Highgate. I never made a better dinner in my life. T. Loftus came to help me off with them on Saturday, and we attacked them again at night, after going to the Opera, where I went for the first time and probably for the last. The fowls I took to Lamb's the

night I received them, and the pickled pork. They were very good. But I found only one tongue in the basket, whereas you seem to speak of two.

The book I took to John's yesterday. The preface to Search\* is finished and printed to my great comfort. It is very long, and for what I know very tiresome. I am going on with my criticisms, and have very nearly done Burke. I do not think I have done it so well as Chatham's. I showed the one I did of him to Anth. Robinson,† who I understand since was quite delighted with it, and thinks it a very fine piece of composition. I have only Fox's to do of any consequence. Pitt's I shall take out of my pamphlet, which will be no trouble. I am to settle with Budd‡ to-morrow, but I doubt my profits will be small. These four viz. Burke, Chatham, Fox, Pitt, with Sir R. Walpole's, will be the chief articles of the work, and if I am not mistaken confounded good ones. I am only afraid they will be too good, that is, that they will contain more good things, than are exactly proper for the occasion. Have you seen it in any of the papers? It was in the *M. Chronicle*. It is a pretty good one. I might if I was lazy take it, and save myself the trouble of writing one myself. I supped at Godwin's on New Year's day, and at Holcroft's on Sunday.

I am going to dinner at Hume's to-morrow, where I also was on Christmas day, and had a pleasant time enough. It was much such a day as it was two years ago, when I was painting your picture. *Tempus preterlabitur*. I am afraid I shall never do such another. But all in good time: I have done what I wanted in writing and I hope I may in painting.

My mother I suppose was much pleased to see T. Loftus. He said that he intended returning the same day, having no time to

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\* *The Light of Nature Pursued*, by Abraham Tucker, was published under the *nom de plume* of Edward Search.

† The brother of H. Crabb Robinson, already referred to.

‡ The publisher.



spare, but that you pressed him so much to stop. Did not you think him a good deal like me? He intends calling on John to say that he has seen you.

I can think of nothing more but my best love to my mother and Peggy, and that I am

Your affectionate son,

W. HAZLITT.

Tuesday.

[Endorsed] Revd. Mr. Hazlitt,  
Wem, Salop. Single.

Whatever Hazlitt might think or say about his Abridgment of Tucker, Dr. Parr thought highly of the work, while Sir James Mackintosh extolled the preface. This, the essay, and the characters of Pitt and the rest in the *Eloquence of the British Senate*, deservedly tended to bring the author into notice among the members of the press, as well as with an enlarged circle of literary admirers. His critical acumen was manifest, and he was at this time beginning to feel an interest in the theatre. The preface to the *British Senate* contains a reference to some of the old actors, with whom Holcroft and Lamb must have assisted in familiarizing him.

To the same period may be referred a letter from Hazlitt to Johnson the publisher, relative to the publication of the two-volume collection of sermons (1808) by his father. It not only shews the writer

in a favourable light as taking an interest in a book somewhat foreign to his own present line of study, but that Johnson had promised to consider the question of sitting to the painter for his portrait :

DEAR SIR,

I have had a letter from my father, in which he is anxious to know what progress is made in the proof sheets. Would you have the goodness to let me have one soon?—If you would fix on some day to sit for the picture I spoke of, you would also confer a favour on your much obliged,

humble servant,

W. HAZLITT.

Tuesday morning.

34 Southampton Buildings,  
Holborn.

I insert both here and elsewhere pieces of epistolary composition, which in the case either of an ordinary person or of a voluminous correspondent would not be worth the space which they occupy, because it is less their direct and intrinsic value which I am regarding than their importance as aids to the formation of a more accurate and more catholic judgment of the writer.

It will be useful to remind those who may have lost sight of the *Memoirs* how fruitful in suggestion and enlarged experience those years intervening between the publication of the Tucker in 1807 and

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the choice of the Metropolis as a fixed centre were. They covered the alliance with the Stoddarts, so chequered in its consequences ; the famous visit to Oxford with Lamb, where in the quadrangles the latter 'walked gowned'; and to Blenheim in the same company, where they only discovered, when it was too late, that they had not seen the Titian Room ; the closer intercourse with Godwin, and the commencement of a habit, when the opportunity presented itself, of frequenting the playhouses in London, and imbibing a taste which exerted so powerful an influence over his own pursuits and the fortunes of some of our most celebrated performers.

## CHAPTER III.

(1810—1816.)

Settlement in London—Engagement on the press—The *Gallery*, past and present—Glimpses of the third William Hazlitt—His brother's set—Attacks upon Hazlitt by the Tories—*Memoirs of Holcroft* published.

THERE is a note from Lamb to John Collier (Payne Collier's father) about this time, soliciting his interest in procuring a post for Hazlitt on one of the papers; but, although Hazlitt undoubtedly obtained such employment, there is no proof that it was through the Colliers.

This engagement on the press as a Parliamentary reporter was the source of much mischief, though it did not last long. The habits of the gentlemen who took notes of the debates in those days were, to a certain extent, from the nature and demands of the work, irregular and intemperate, and I shall never doubt that Hazlitt contracted during his brief experience in the gallery that tendency to take 'the

other glass' which necessitated on his part in the long-run an abjuration of stimulants in favour of tea.

At the same time, in the old days, when Lord Campbell, Dickens, Payne Collier, Walter Coulson, and many other distinguished men, made a beginning in this way, the *Gallery*, as it was termed, was a widely different place in other respects than its inducements to indiscretion from the gallery of to-day. The regular staff on the leading journals was paid all the year round, and was engaged by the proprietors. During the recess there was an occasional demand on the members to review a new piece or report a Parliamentary election, in which latter contingency all expenses were defrayed. But at a later period a Cornishman, named Doogood, introduced the practice of farming the report for several papers, and a complete change took place in the position and emolument of those employed. Seven guineas a week used to be paid by the *Chronicle* in my father's time, and the *Times* gave even more.

Since those times the tone and *morale* of the Press and Reporting Gallery have undergone a complete change, and it is no longer a signal exception to the prevailing rule to find a journalist moderately provident, or a reporter who studies sobriety

and decency. It is well within living recollection when members of the staffs of the leading London papers (the *Times* included) were notorious for their intemperate and extravagant habits; but Bohemianism (as it is euphemistically termed) is dying out; and the institution of the Literary and Newspaper Press Funds has done much toward the improvement of this important and influential feature in our daily life. But if journalism is, as they say, to supersede literature in book-form to a large extent, it will have to grow better and higher in more than one direction and way.

Hazlitt was not a shorthand writer; he merely jotted down the heads of the speeches delivered, and reproduced them from memory somewhat differentiated. He rather made the men say what he should have said if he had been in their places. There is a volume of his reporting notes which bears out my statement; part of it has been appropriated to the purposes of a sketch-book.

One of the staff in the gallery, while Hazlitt was connected with the *Morning Chronicle*, was Peter Finnerty, of whom my grandfather records the anecdote that, when he drew an unfavourable character of the Scotch, Finnerty quite concurred; but when it came to the turn of his own countrymen

the Irishman put on a grave expression, and took a different view of the matter altogether. Finnerty was a humorist and a practical joker, and stories are still current of the tricks which he played his colleagues.

It was a free and rough set even in my father's day. He used to take me up with him occasionally to the office facing Somerset House, and I recollect watching the reporters at their work round the table in the room upstairs, men of a stamp not much altered from those who served under James Perry, a noted book-collector, by the way, whose valuable library was sold after his death in 1821.

I have thought that it was through Walter Coulson that Hazlitt first heard of the house in York Street, Westminster, which he took in 1812, soon after the birth of my father.

We do not gain a great amount of insight into the boyhood of the third Hazlitt beyond what I have stated in the *Memoirs* and the glimpses which are discernible between the lines of his mother's affectionate letters to him at school in 1824, in which she sometimes confides to him, mere child as he was, matters of business and literary topics ; and, again, such casual mentions as the reference by Mrs. Procter to having seen him on his father's knee, and

by Keats, who, in writing to Armitage Browne, tells him that he has just seen Mrs. Hazlitt, 'and that little Nero, her son.' This was allusive, I presume, to my father's black curly hair, which he preserved within my personal recollection to a large extent.

While my father lived as a little boy under the paternal roof at York Street, a spot hallowed by the earlier footsteps of Milton, and now metamorphosed into something new and strange, it was an almost daily practice on his part to make one of the crowd which yet, as morning succeeds morning, accompanies the Guards to St. James's Palace yard, and there witnesses their innocuous operations. His features must have been familiar to every one of them, for he marched with them going and coming, the most steadfast of their admirers, and the young heart of the Registrar that was to be, exempt from the cares of life and the Bankruptcy Court, leapt to the thrilling military music.

Hazlitt took the important step above mentioned with all the advantage derived from his unusual opportunities, through his brother's circle, of feeling his ground beforehand, and from starting as a literary man with a name already beginning to be familiar to publishers and editors. But, on the



other hand, he laboured under the grave drawback of belonging to the political minority at a period when no quarter was given to the advocates of the new and heretical views about liberty of conscience and opinion; and when the envenomed pen of Government hirelings had been substituted for the gallows and the stake, Hazlitt commenced his experience in York Street, with his wife and young son, under conditions made infinitely more difficult by his staunch and unpalatable doctrines on many public questions.

He set up house in Westminster within bowshot, as it were, of Albemarle Street, and with *Blackwood* in the height of its sinister power and meretricious renown. It may be borne in mind that a distinguished publishing firm five years before had felt warranted in describing Hazlitt in an advertisement of his *Reply to Malthus* in very flattering terms, and he came to settle finally in the Metropolis with this sort of halo round his name. But he had not made himself famous without attracting the hostile notice of the political phalanx opposed to his views.

Party tactics were conducted at that period on principles and in a spirit hardly realizable by those whose personal recollection and experience do not

carry them back beyond the era of the first Reform Bill. The fact that a man not merely entertained, but boldly expressed, opinions supposed or alleged to be constitutionally dangerous, was quite sufficient to justify the most inveterate abuse of his literary productions and his private character. The word was passed to certain organs of the press—the *Quarterly*, *Blackwood*, *John Bull*—to open fire, and the editors understood what was meant. In some instances the game answered, and where it did not actually ruin the object of attack, it cast a shadow over his life, and haunted him almost in his sleep.

It would be idle to deny that Hazlitt had given the Tories a fair taste of his quality. His *Essay on Human Action* and such matters might have passed unchallenged by the professional wreckers; but there was his pamphlet on Public Affairs in 1806, his *Eloquence of the British Senate*, with its political criticisms, in the following year, and his Reply in Cobbett's *Weekly Register* in 1810 to the article in the *Edinburgh Review*, after three years' silence, on his Malthus. But he was neither to be coaxed nor daunted. In a Wem letter of 1810, soon after the appearance of his Grammar, with its strictures on Lindley Murray, he confesses that he was then

already 'noted by the reviewers for want of liberality and an undisciplined moral sense'—whatever the latter phrase might signify.

The political coterie to which his elder brother belonged, and with which Hazlitt himself was naturally more or less in touch and sympathy, included Scarlett, Thelwall, Stoddart, Godwin, Holcroft, and probably Coleridge. In its opinions it was almost revolutionary; some of its members modified their views; two or three, like Coleridge, Stoddart, and Scarlett, crossed over to the other camp; but John Hazlitt, Thelwall, Holcroft, and perhaps I may add Godwin, remained steadfast to their original faith. This kind of atmosphere could not fail to exert a strong influence on my grandfather during his occasional visits to London between 1799 and 1808, and at the same time tended to render him a conspicuous object of hostility, not as the most violent partisan of Jacobinism, but as the man who threatened by his mastery over his pen and his denunciation of apostasy to become the most formidable advocate of the cause of progress and freedom after its desertion by the renegades.

But it was to be a life-long battle between a man very poorly adapted by his ruminant and sensitive temper for a militant career and an official organiza-

tion infinitely more potent than any now existing, or even capable of being formed.

One error of judgment, as I must term and think it, he never repeated. The answer in Cobbett's *Register* to the criticism on his Malthus in the *Edinburgh Review* was the first and the last occasion on which he employed his pen in antagonism to Jeffrey, and he was soon to find himself on the roll of contributors to the new Liberal organ, which he enriched with some of his and its finest papers down to the very last.

I do not place such considerations as these before the public in disparagement of my relative, but in order to render it clearer than I think it has yet been made, that he had to reckon with hostile agencies of an equally powerful and relentless character when he definitely started as a journalist and author in London, and that their presence was due to his courageous and unflinching espousal of a side in politics then and long after taken by a weak and disunited minority.

The *Memoirs of Holcroft* were eventually published in 1816, and even then only three volumes out of four appeared. This work may be regarded, with the exception of the *Life of Napoleon*, as concluding the second period, which comprises the com-

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piled and translated matter. Nor can the biography of Napoleon be properly classed with this group, for it stood out by itself a labour and a monument of love, a link between the events and buoyant hopes of the author's youth and the darker and soberer realities of his latest experience.

## CHAPTER IV.

(1817—1820.)

*Characters of Shakespear's Plays*—Circumstances leading to the enterprise—Efforts of the Tories to crush it—Hazlitt's increasing work—Letter to Charles Ollier (1815)—Lectures at the Surrey Institution (1818-20)—Thackeray and his *English Humorists*—The *Political Essays* (1819)—Last days of the Rev. W. Hazlitt—His death (1820)—His works—A letter from him to a friend (1814)—Notices of his family—Hazlitt's Lectures on poetry and the drama—The audience—Keats, the Landseers, Crabb Robinson, Talfourd, etc.—An anecdote.

THE power of analysis and composition, which was evident to anyone who chose to compare the original work by Tucker with Hazlitt's Abridgment, carried with it the promise of that critical gift which he was soon to exercise with equal advantage to the public and himself. In his contributions of various kinds to the papers, he commenced, as it seems, with the *Illustrations of Vetus*, or an exposure of the fallacies contained in certain articles written by Sterling under that name in the *Times* in 1813, of

which Walter thought highly enough to offer their author a place on the permanent staff.

The *Morning Chronicle*, the *Champion*, and the *Examiner* successively opened their columns to Hazlitt's pen, which ranged over politics, poetry, and the drama. In the *Chronicle* the review of the first appearance of Edmund Kean sounded the double keynote of a new actor and a new critic of actors. In the *Examiner* a paper on Wordsworth's *Excursion* indicated the rise of a judge of poetry, who had his own opinions, and was not afraid of expressing them. These exploits in journalism, so far as readers were concerned, marked a new era in the annals of literary criticism.

So far back as 1785 Whately had brought out his *Remarks on two of Shakespear's plays*, and the book was reprinted in 1808. An English version of Schlegel had also tended to draw attention to the subject, and in the same year in which the republication of Whately took place, Charles Lamb's *Specimens of Dramatic Poets* rendered the interest and curiosity in such productions still more keen. Something like a revival of the old writers had set in, and in 1811 Ellis published an enlarged edition of his *Specimens of the Early English Poets*. This

movement, with the reappearance of Shakespear on the stage under the auspices of Kean, upheld by the verdict of the New Critic in the *Chronicle*, favoured the idea on the part of Hazlitt of a book, of which the *prima stamina* existed in some measure in the newspaper articles, on the lines of Whately, but handled from an original point of view, and of course covering the whole series of plays. The reviewer of Kean in the press had identified himself in a favourable manner with the topic, and in the same hands a complete portrait-gallery of Shakespear's *dramatis personæ* might be reasonably expected to prove a successful venture.

The completion of such a book as the *Shakespear Characters* was attended by an amount of patient and careful thought, and by a degree of close application, which, taken with the engagement on the *Morning Chronicle* as a reporter and dramatic critic, easily accounts for the straitened opportunities for visiting friends, of which we get a glimpse in the subjoined note to Charles Ollier. We not only discern the encroachment which literary work was making on his leisure, but the anxiety, on which I feel it important to lay special stress, to conciliate a man of business, whom he probably knew through Lamb or through Hunt, and whose name is favour-



ably recollected as that of a publisher with a genuine sympathy for books.

I much regret the absence of more testimony of this class for the particular period, for I should have liked to demonstrate more convincingly than maybe I actually can the frank and unwarped temper in which Hazlitt was prepared to approach all falling in contact with him in business or private intercourse, where politics were not concerned or introduced.

Talfourd describes his first impression of him in 1815—the very year of this letter to Ollier—and speaks of him as ‘staggering under the blow of Waterloo.’ The defeat and ruin of Napoleon doubtless gave him a momentary shock; but that which operated far more powerfully on his character and the bias of his mind was the strategy by which his political opponents violated all the canons of legitimate warfare, and, not content with combating his views on public affairs, assailed and vituperated his literary efforts without justice and without decency.

The letter to Ollier leaves the writer under such a pressure of work, that he pleads inability to accept an invitation to a musical party. There is no date, but the postmark bears October 4, 1815:

DEAR SIR,

I feel myself exceedingly obliged by your kind attention with respect to your musical treat. I am afraid from unavoidable circumstances I shall not be able to avail myself of it. I have to get something done by the end of next week, which obliges me to practise a great deal more self-denial than I like. If I do not pay my respects to Corelli, it is because I am held fast by half a dozen of his countrymen. If I can, however, I will escape from them.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your obliged very humble servant,  
W. HAZLITT.

19 York Street,  
Westminster,  
Saturday morning.

The general neglect of Shakespear and other English writers during the lengthened period which witnessed the supremacy of the Restoration and Queen Anne schools had at last been followed by a reaction arising from agencies apparently in their inception scarcely calculated to produce such a result. In the course of the latter half of the eighteenth and the commencement of the present century a group of scholarly and laborious men had addressed themselves to the task of restoring to public notice the works of the great poets who lived before Dryden and Pope. The editions of Shakespear by various learned commentators, the collected body of old English plays by Dodsley, the reprint of

Beaumont and Fletcher, the recovery of the manuscript of Middleton's *Witch*, a supposed prototype of scenes in *Macbeth*, and the presentation of Chaucer and Spenser in a more accessible shape by Tyrhwitt and Todd—these circumstances tended together to favour an inquiry and taste for the earlier masters, and developed a market for literature illustrative of them and their lives.

But it was reserved for men of a different type to turn to a really fruitful purpose the change of feeling, and to conduct the scientific branch of the investigation. The faculty of critical insight and analysis did not reside in the pioneers of the movement. That portion and aspect of the matter devolved on Schlegel in Germany, and on Coleridge, Lamb, and Hazlitt in England; and it is to be suspected that the German philosophy formed the underlying source and mainspring of this interesting renaissance, although the more imaginative temperament and local opportunities of our own countrymen assisted most importantly in accentuating points and revealing beauties barely perceptible to a foreigner.

It seemed expedient and serviceable to specify the contributory causes which preceded and promoted the rise of modern dramatic criticism, and which induced Hazlitt to commit himself to an elaborate

monograph on what, some years prior, would have hardly been a popular and saleable topic.

Johnson the publisher's nephew, Mr. Rowland Hunter, succeeded him in business, and was for some time in partnership with Mr. Miles. Hunter was connected by marriage with Leigh Hunt, having married Mrs. Kent, Mrs. Leigh Hunt's mother.

It was Hunter who eventually undertook the publication of the *Characters of Shakespear's Plays*, which were originally issued with a title-page destitute of any indication where the book was to be had.

The first edition, however, had been sold off, and just as a second was ready, an adverse notice appeared in a Tory organ, and stopped the demand for the book by assuring the public that the author knew little or nothing about his subject. Hazlitt held the belief that the individual responsible for this iniquitous tissue of falsehood and folly in the *Quarterly* was the 'Talking Potato,' the Right Honourable John Wilson Croker. To describe such a piece of scurrilous imbecility as a criticism is, of course, an abuse of terms, and it may be an error, after all, to speak of it as imbecile, since it answered the mercenary object of the writer and his employers.

It is worth noting that Leigh Hunt felt the same gratification at learning that his *Story of Rimini* had been printed in America, as Hazlitt expressed, when a copy of his book, printed at Boston in 1818, reached him. Both treated the piracy as a compliment. Hazlitt presented the copy to his son in 1820, and it is now before me.

Among those of his literary acquaintance who patronized the series of lectures on the English Poets, Comic Writers, and Elizabethan Drama, delivered between 1818 and 1820 at the Surrey Institution, were Talfourd, Patmore, Keats, Crabb Robinson, John and Thomas Landseer, Joseph Ritchie, the African explorer, and Haydon. A lady, probably Mrs. Montagu or her daughter, who was present, described the appearance of Keats to Monckton Milnes, and spoke of his eyes as blue. In a letter to his two brothers, Keats says that he heard Hazlitt's lectures regularly, and met many whom he knew there. This was under date of February 21, 1818. Keats was disappointed at the treatment of Chatterton. If Mrs. Montagu attended, it is likely enough that Montagu himself was there, and the Procters.

Leigh Hunt, it appears, did not go—at all events, to the later series in 1818—and it transpires in the

letter which I shall give by-and-by, from Hazlitt to Hunt in 1821, on the Shelley business, that Hunt thought that it would not do for him, after the laudatory notice of his *Rimini* in the *Edinburgh Review*, to praise the author of that criticism, lest the world should suspect some collusion! A singular refinement of delicacy!

Crabb Robinson notes, under date of January 27, 1818: 'I went to the Surrey Institution, where I heard Hazlitt lecture on Shakespear and Milton. He delighted me much by the talent he displayed, but his bitterness of spirit broke out in a passage in which he reproached modern poets for their vanity and incapacity of admiring and loving anything but themselves. He was applauded at this part of his lecture, but I know not whether he was generally understood.'

Robinson refers here to his 'bitterness of spirit' toward his poetical contemporaries. He admits that the lecturer's observations on this point were received with approval, but even there he does his best to neutralize the effect by doubting whether the applause was discriminating. All that appears after necessary deductions to Hazlitt's credit is his talent, in which generic phrase the diarist sums up the meritorious treatment of the subject-matter.

While Hazlitt was delivering the series on the English poets, he came one day to Great Russell Street, and saw Mrs. John Hazlitt. 'Now,' he said, 'Mary, what do you know about Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia*? Do you know the book?' 'Yes,' she replied. 'Then tell me all about it,' he said. So she gave him the best account of Sidney's book she could, and he went away, and a night or two after an elaborate disquisition on the subject was delivered at the Surrey Institution.

I reproduce this anecdote as it was actually delivered to me some five-and-twenty years since by the niece of Hazlitt; but I have adduced more than sufficient testimony to cast a doubt on his exclusive obligation to his brother's wife for an account of Sir Philip Sidney, of whom he had eloquently discoursed at the Lambs' in the Temple a decade before.

It may be worth while to transcribe what Beckford wrote in his copy of the old edition of the *Comic Writers*, which formed another of the series of lectures, in conveying his estimate of the book and its author: 'A richer vein of bold original criticism and sparkling allusions than is contained in these lectures is not to be found in any volume I am acquainted with.'

When Thackeray began to set about his *English Humorists*, his first thought was to despatch George Hodder in search of a copy of the earlier work. It is only just, however, to the author of *Vanity Fair* to add that he pens a very warm eulogium on his precursor, and ungrudgingly testifies to his rare critical faculty.

The lectures on the Elizabethan Drama and Poetry were chiefly written at Winterslow in 1820, the year of their delivery at the Surrey Institution, and of their publication in book-form. The grass was not just now allowed to grow much under the author's feet.

Hazlitt prefixes to his *Political Essays* in 1819 a Confession of Faith, in which he starts by declaring that he is no politician, and he inscribes the volume, which is by no means so well known as it deserves to be, to John Hunt, 'the tried, steady, zealous, and conscientious advocate of the liberty of his country and the rights of mankind.' After adding other eulogistic mention of him, he concludes by summing him up as 'that rare character, a man of common sense and common honesty.'

It is vain to speculate what might have happened to the author, had he indeed been no politician, as



he here alleges. What he really signified was, not that he took no interest in the affairs of the country, or that he was ignorant of the general principles underlying government, but that he did not profess to be initiated into the scientific and professional mysteries of the employment. But no one, I apprehend, can turn over the pages of the book, now scarcely remembered, without perceiving that the two mental currents deriving their sources from Hazlitt of Shronell and Loftus of Wisbeach had at last joined each other, and that the strong manly sense of personal independence almost latent in the earliest generation, where we recognise it, and sensibly developed in the Unitarian divine, my great-grandsire, found for the first time its full outward expression in Hazlitt himself.

The *Political Essays* represent the occasional contributions to the press between 1813 and the date of issue. They constitute as proud a monument to the writer's name as anything which he left behind him ; for, considering the state of society and feeling under which they were given to the world, their freedom of language and tone is remarkable ; for we bear in mind that William Hone, who was the responsible publisher of these papers, and the Hunts, who founded the *Examiner*, where many of

them were originally inserted, suffered cruel and cowardly persecution for their opinions.

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I must take the present opportunity of mentioning that my paternal great-grandfather, of whom we have heard so much that should be interesting in the opening chapters, and who had passed with patient resignation through many heavy trials, died at Crediton in Devonshire July 16, 1820, in his eighty-third year. In the *Examiner* newspaper of August 1 he is described as 'a man who through his whole life was a friend to truth and liberty.'

I understand from local inquiries which I instituted a long while ago that he became latterly very feeble and broken, though, like his son the miniature-painter, he had been originally a robust and strongly-built man. Among his last foibles was that addiction to snuff and sugar-candy of which I have spoken in the *Memoirs*, and he at length acquired the habit of mixing the two together in the same waistcoat pocket. It was the fashion in his day for people to have their waistcoats furnished with leathern pockets for snuff. Brooks, the celebrated anatomist, whose dissecting-room was at Blenheim Steps, was in the habit, while he was engaged in his



*J. Hyatt, Sc.*

*Rev. William Hazlitt.*



occupation, of wiping his fingers on his breeches and taking a pinch of snuff out of his pocket.

We have already heard of the letter which Mr. Hazlitt wrote in 1782 respecting the outrages at Bandon and Kinsale, and we are indebted to the *Monthly Repository* for having preserved a second of a totally different tenor addressed to it by him in 1808. These two incidents furnish some slight key to his philanthropic character and catholic interest in public affairs and literary history ; and it may not be inopportune to add that he was by no means deficient in a taste for those theatrical amusements and distractions with which his name in the next generation was so intimately bound up ; for his son incidentally mentions the minister's liking for Mrs. Pritchard's style—Hannah Pritchard, a great favourite with the playgoers of the age immediately prior to Hazlitt ; and, indeed, the minister himself must have gained his knowledge of her as a young man before his marriage, since Mrs. Pritchard died in 1768. His visits to the printsellers in 1787 in company with his daughter, after their return to England from America, I have already noticed. He was in more senses than one the father of his son.

It was during his ministerial sojourn at Wem that

Mr. Hazlitt brought out by subscription in 1790 *Discourses for the Use of Families*, the publisher being Mr. Johnson, of St. Paul's Churchyard. The most interesting feature about this volume is the list of names which occurs at the beginning, and which serves to shew that the author still retained the confidence and respect of all his old associates; and here, too, he specifies Dr. Latrop, of West Springfield, N.E., and Professor Donaldson, of Philadelphia, as persons willing to receive subscribers' names. The 1790 volume, however, was not the author's first appearance in print, as he had already published two discourses or sermons separately in 1783 and 1786.

The original correspondence of the Unitarian minister has become even rarer than it would otherwise have been through the unfortunate destruction (with one exception) of all the manuscripts used for the memoir of Hazlitt in the *Literary Remains* in 1836. The letter addressed by the Rev. W. Hazlitt in 1808 to the *Repository*, to which I was the first to draw attention in 1867, and a second now first given below, are the only relics of the kind known to me outside the *Remains*. The present to Mr. Thomas Ireland, of Wem, is of no slight interest from its allusions; the writer at this time had removed from

Wem to Addlestone in Surrey, but, as usual, his former flock did not forget or desert him :

DEAR SIR,

Three weeks of my brittle life passed away last Saturday, since I received your friendly epistle. May God assist me so to spend the remainder of it, that death will be to me a passage to a new and eternally happy life. I should have written to you sooner, if I had supposed that you wished me to do so. I now thank you for your favour, and for your kindness in forwarding to me a letter from one of my old friends in America. I thank you also for the potatoes, though I never received them, as you did not direct them, according to my desire, to my son William's, as, John being at Manchester, his servant, probably thinking them for the use of the family, I presume made use of them. This being the case, do you think no more of them. We were all pleased to hear from you that all our former friends were well. We continue here in much the same style, in which we were, when I wrote to you last. Your having been at London lately, and not calling upon us here, was a disappointment to us. When you arrive there again, I hope that you will find or make time to gratify us. I should not be sorry, if the inquisitor Ferdinand was once more in his old prison in France, and that any other person was King of Spain, who had any justice or humanity. Having nothing of consequence to communicate, I only add that we all unite in friendly respects to all your family and to all those, whose remembrances you transmitted to me, besides Mr. J. Cooke of Nonelly and Mrs. Keay. I remain, my dear friend, most affectionately yours,

W. HAZLITT.

Addlestone, 9th August 1814.

*most affectionately yours*  
*W. Hazlitt*

SIGNATURE TO ADDLESTONE LETTER OF 1814.

The letter in which Lamb furnishes, in 1808, to the Rev. Mr. Hazlitt an explanation of his son's movements, so far as he purported to be acquainted with them, has a new light cast on it by the hitherto unnoted presence of a memorandum in the original manuscript, from which we are left at liberty to conclude that the said epistle was the joint composition of the actual writer and the missing author-artist.

Mr. Hazlitt, when he first settled at Crediton, lived in a house near the church, which was traditionally believed to have once formed part of the old episcopal palace. But he subsequently removed to Winswood. There were in 1867 two or three old people who recollected him in his infirm state; but he does not appear to have officiated at Crediton, merely to have resided there during his last years. His widow, the Grace Loftus of the American

*your affectionate  
Grandmother Grace Hazlitt*

MRS. HAZLITT (1746-1837). SUBSCRIPTION TO LETTER TO  
W. HAZLITT (1811-1893), 1824.

diary, survived till June 10, 1837. She resided during her closing days in a small house facing the





*J. Hyatt, Sc.*

*Grace Hazlitt.*



church.\* She had nearly attained the ripe age of ninety-one, and her mother, Mrs. Loftus, of whom we have already heard, survived till 1801. There is an oil-painting of the latter, executed by John Hazlitt in 1798. Mrs. Loftus was nine years old when the Protector Richard Cromwell died, and eleven when George I. succeeded to the throne of the last of the Stuarts. Her parents might well have witnessed the restoration of that family in 1660. She had a brother born in 1699.

\* The old lady removed some time after her husband's death to Alphington, where she was living in 1824. But she returned to Crediton in that year.

*I have no more to say  
 but farewell & may God bless  
 you I am your affec-  
 tionate  
 sister P Hazlitt*

SUBSCRIPTION TO LETTER OF PEGGY OR MARGARET HAZLITT TO HER YOUNGER BROTHER, 1820, NOTIFYING THE DEATH OF HER FATHER.

## CHAPTER V.

(1821—1823.)

The rupture with Leigh Hunt—Difficulties of Hazlitt's position—Letter to Hunt—The *London Magazine*—John Scott—His estimate of Hazlitt—Friction between the *London Magazine* and *Blackwood* (1818)—Successful action by Hazlitt against *Blackwood*—Keats's account—Letter to Scott—Hazlitt's influential position on the *London Magazine* after Scott's death—The second *Blackwood* affair (1823)—Letter of Hazlitt to Cadell—Professor Wilson and Leigh Hunt.

It has been stated very fully in the *Memoirs*, 1867, how the difference between Leigh Hunt and Hazlitt arose out of the strictures by the latter on Shelley, and the alleged attitude toward his political and literary friends. The feeling on the part of Hunt seems to have gradually intensified, and to have sought relief, like the pent-up resentment of Lamb against Southey, in a formal epistolary attainer, of which the ink was scarcely dry when, on the receipt of an elaborate defence of himself by the subject of his remarks, his anger melted away—like

Lamb's again—and led to the preparation and dispatch of a second letter, couched in a gentler strain.

The original letter to Hazlitt of 1821 constitutes, perhaps, the most remarkable feature in the Hunt correspondence. But it is only a recent discovery that Hunt wrote two letters, both of which are before me, and of which the final text—the only one seen by Hazlitt—was softened by some rumour that his friend projected a concession. The variations are mainly verbal, but I have no space to enter more at large on this part of the matter, for the composition occupies nearly six quarto pages; nor was I aware, till I obtained from the same source the original autograph of Hazlitt's answer, occupying four folio pages, that any formal cognizance was taken by him of the matter, or that he departed from his customary practice of declining private correspondence so far and so signally as to commit to paper the longest unpaid contribution which he had ever made since his boyhood to literature and to literary history.

The letter of Hazlitt to Hunt is undoubtedly by far the most vital and interesting of all the surviving correspondence of the writer. It is impossible to refrain from feeling sorry for the isolated position which such a man as Hazlitt held in every respect

at this time, after having been recognised by his contemporaries as one of the foremost intellects of the age ; but regarding the question judicially, we cannot shut our eyes to the natural umbrage arising from his policy of carrying his genius for portraiture when he relinquished art as a profession into another sphere, and painting his friends on paper instead of on canvas. There is something very apposite to this in the account of the Fight, where he says, ' It's the devil for anyone to tell me a secret, for it's sure to come out in print. I do not care so much to gratify a friend, but the public ear is too great a temptation to me.'

It necessarily militated against Hazlitt that he carried with him into the political and literary arena that stubborn and ineradicable persistence in proclaiming at all costs his view of truth and right which proved so fatal a bar to success and fortune in his father's case ; and assuredly, if we estimate the powerful agencies which were kept in motion during so many years to crush his spirit and his efforts, we must grant that, altogether, his intellectual force and prestige must have been great indeed to enable him to withstand even as long and as courageously as he did the malignant combination against him.

Here is the letter to Hunt :

Saturday night (April 21, 1821).

MY DEAR HUNT,

I have no quarrel with you, nor can I have. You are one of those people that I like, do what they will ; there are others that I do not like, do what they may. I have always spoken well of you to friend or foe, viz. I have said you were one of the pleasantest and cleverest persons I ever knew ; but that you teased any one you had to deal with out of their lives. I am fond of a theory, as you know : but I will give up even that to a friend, if he shews that he has any regard to my personal feelings. You provoke me to think hard things of you, and then you wonder that I hitch them into an Essay, as if that made any difference. I pique myself on doing what I can for others ; but I cannot say that I have found any suitable returns for this, and hence perhaps my outrageousness of stomach ! For instance, I praised you in the *Edinburgh Review*, and when in a case of life and death I tried to lecture, you refused to go near the place, and gave this as a reason, saying it would seem a collusion, if you said any thing in my favour after what I had said of you. 2. I got Reynolds to write in the *Edinburgh Review*, at a time when I had a great reluctance to ask any favour of Jeffrey, and from that time I never set eyes on him for a year and a half after. 3. I wrote a book in defence of Godwin some years ago, one half of which he has since stolen without acknowledgment, without even mentioning my name, and yet he comes to me to review the very work and I write to Jeffrey to ask his consent, thinking myself, which you do not, the most magnanimous person in the world in the defence of a cause. 4. I have taken all opportunities of praising Lamb, and I never got a good word from him in return, big or little, till the other day. He seemed struck all of a heap, if I ever hinted at the possibility of his giving me a lift at any time. 5. It was but the other day that two friends did all they could to intercept an article about me from appearing in the said *E. R.*, saying 'it would be

too late,' 'that the Editor had been sounded at a distance, and was averse,' with twenty other excuses, and at last I was obliged to send it myself, *graciously* and by main force, as it were, when it appeared just in time to save me from drowning. Coulson had been backwards and forwards between my house and Bentham's for between three or four years, and when the latter philosophically put an execution in my house, the plea was he had never heard of my name;\* and when I theorized on this the other day as bad policy, and *felo de se* on the part of the Radicals, your nephew† and that set said: 'Oh, it was an understood thing—the execution, you know!' My God, it is enough to drive one mad. I have not a soul to stand by me, and yet I am to give up my only resource and revenge, a theory—I won't do it, that's flat. Montagu‡ is, I fancy, cut at my putting him among people with one idea, and yet when the Blackwoods (together with your) shirking out of that business put me nearly underground, he took every opportunity to discourage me, and one evening, when I talked of going there, I was given to understand that there was 'a party expected.' Yet after this I am not to look at him a little *in abstracto*. This is what has soured me, and made me sick of friendship and acquaintanceship. When did I speak ill of your brother John? He never played me any tricks. I was in a cursed ill humour with you for two or three things when I wrote the article you find fault with (I grant not without reason). If I had complained to you, you would only have laughed; you would have played me the very same tricks the very next time; you would not have cared one farthing about annoying me; and yet you complain that I

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\* Could Bentham have been ignorant? I have heard that he would make his visitors do obeisance to the tablet in honour of Milton, let by my grandfather into the garden wall of the house—the earliest example of a practice now become common in London.

† Mr. Henry Leigh Hunt, of the firm of Hunt and Clarke.

‡ Mr. Basil Montagu.



draw a logical conclusion from all this, and publish it to the world without your name. As to Shelley, I do not hold myself responsible to him. You say I want *imagination*. If you mean invention or fancy, I say so too; but if you mean a disposition to sympathise with the claims or merits of others, I deny it. I have been too much disposed to waive my own pretensions in deference to those of others. I am tired with playing at rackets all day, and you will be tired with this epistle. It has little to do with you; for I see no use in raising up a parcel of small, old grievances. But I think the general ground of defence is good.

W. H.

I have given Hogg's papers to Baldwin, and wish you would write a character of me for the next number. I want to know why everybody has such a dislike to me.

A somewhat new light is cast on the origin of the connection of Hazlitt with the *London Magazine* by an unpublished letter of January 20, 1820, from John Scott, its first editor, to the proprietors. It seems that Scott had met Hazlitt at the house of a common friend, and, the conversation probably turning upon literary matters and the new venture of Baldwin, Cradock and Co., Hazlitt placed in the hands of his acquaintance, by way of sample, something which he had by him. The specimen struck Scott as displaying talent, but as not suited, as it stood, to the columns of the magazine. Scott writes to his principals as follows on this subject :

'I am sorry to say that I cannot honestly tell you

that Mr. Hazlitt's manuscript is likely to suit us in the mag. It falls into all those errors which I know are his besetting ones, but which I hope to keep him clear of when he is directed to particular topics, such as the drama, etc. His talent is undoubted, and his wish to serve us, I believe, at present very sincere. Since I last saw you, the friend at whose house I met Hazlitt on Sunday has called upon me to make a sort of semi-authorized communication from that gentleman. The fact is, as you surmized, that Mr. H. is in want of a certain sum of money, and he says that, this sum in his power, he would be very free in every respect, and would devote the whole power of his mind to the preparation of the dramatic (articles), or anything else we might suggest. If so, he would be a very valuable contributor. What the sum is I do not know, but I apprehend the terms he asked for the volume (of which I am ignorant) reach the mark. If I could have told you that the Essays, of which a specimen has been forwarded, would surely suit us, the difficulty probably would be small; but although very anxious to find it so, I would not act fairly by you were I to give this as my opinion. At the same time, I will engage for the gentleman, from what I know of his character, that he would be most ready to listen to

suggestions, and to strain every nerve for us in return for a service. He is naturally grateful, & though an original, is an honest one. I have not spoken to him for several years until Sunday last, but I see that in a very short time I shall be able to influence him to proper subjects and to a proper manner of handling them—I mean *proper* in regard to the magazine, as, generally speaking, I should have little claim to be his judge or guide. Would it therefore suit you to say to him that, with regard to the Essays, of which one has been sent, you beg leave to think a little farther over the matter, and claim the privilege of suggesting what may occur to you; but that on the general score of dramatic articles, and such other contributions as might hereafter be arranged between himself and you on mutual agreement, you have no objection to treat as for the volume *immediately*. I do not know what he has asked for the vol. Of course my recommendation must have a reference to the reasonableness of his demand, of which you will judge and decide as seems to you proper.

‘ But I think him a desirable man to secure, and will be responsible for his fully meriting any service you may deem it right to render him.

‘ He wished me to ask of you to write Elliston a

note, enclosing the magazine, and stating in dry official language that if it falls within the usual arrangements of his theatre to furnish the common ticket of admission to your dramatic correspondent, you would be glad to have it for his use. He says if he does not get this (as he has from Covent Garden) he is afraid he will find twenty reasons (*independent of expense*) for keeping away from Drury Lane; for such, he says, is human nature. I think you may do this for him without conceding dignity.'

Mr. John Scott was a gentlemanly and good-looking man. He married a daughter of Colnaghi, the printseller, and had an only son Paul, who died abroad. Scott wrote an elegy upon him, and some other poems. He had been at an earlier period of his life editor of the *Champion*, which explains his antecedent knowledge of Hazlitt.

I do not know what my grandfather submitted to the editor of the *London*, but we see that the latter regarded his specimen paper or papers with qualified confidence, which strikes one as curious, if not almost laughable, by the side of Scott's eagerness, when the magazine started, to secure the services of Wainewright (Janus Weathercock) as a critic on art, and of the actual appearance in those columns

of his flimsy and pedantic contributions under that head. At present the tables are turned, but the same comedy, if it is a comedy, is being constantly repeated; and the periodicals are yet leavened with poor matter by writers who have contrived by playing the *bon garçon* to edge themselves into notice, and even obtain a *queue*.

Keats, in one of his letters of 1819, refers to the 'sickening stuff' which was printed in one of the forgotten *ephemerides* of that day (*Literary Pocket-Book*); and the trash inserted by Wainewright in the *London* was nothing better. Yet Scott evidently had not the misgivings about him that he owns to having had about Hazlitt. There can be no question that the magazine from the outset owed its brevity of existence to such editorial obliquity; and had it not been for the support of Lamb and my grandfather, it must have collapsed even sooner than it did.

In a letter from Keats to C. W. Dilke, September 21, 1818, the writer observes: 'I suppose you will have heard that Hazlitt has on foot a prosecution against Blackwood. I dined with him a few days since at Hessey's—there was not a word said about it, though I understand he is excessively vexed.' And in a note the editor of the Letters calls attention to the gross and indecent attacks on

Hazlitt. As we learn from Smiles's *Life of John Murray*, the action really proceeded, Patmore acting for the plaintiff; but it was finally compromised by the defendants, who agreed to pay all the expenses incurred on both sides. The affair, however, was the proximate cause of the secession of Murray from the London agency of the magazine, and its transfer to Cadell and Davies.

*Blackwood*, under the auspices of Wilson, Lockhart, and Croker, did not abandon the personalities which Murray had so wisely deprecated and censured. In a letter from Hazlitt to John Scott of April 12, 1820, there is a reference to the growing friction between *Blackwood* and the *London Magazine*, and we see that Hazlitt was not for making any concessions :

DEAR SIR,

I return the proof which I prefer to the philippic against Bentham. Do you keep the Past and Future? You see Lamb argues the same view of the subject. That 'young master' will anticipate all my discoveries, if I don't mind. The last No. was a very good one. The Living Authors was spirited and fine. Don't hold out your hand to the Blackwoods yet, after having knocked those blackguards down. My address after you receive this will be Winterslow Hut, near Salisbury. Send me the article on Past and Future, if you can spare it. Ask Baldwins, if they would like the articles on Modern Philosophy, 8 in number, at 5 guineas apiece.

W. H.

I judge from a letter directed by them to Hazlitt on March 5, 1821, that the proprietors of the *London Magazine*, after the fall of Scott in the duel with Lockhart, entertained some idea of proposing to the former the vacant editorial chair. This communication, written only six days after the loss of their able and lamented friend, marks the rapid growth of Hazlitt's influence on the concern, and of his employers' sense of the value of his services. Mr. Baldwin suggested that he should proceed with the series of 'Living Poets,' and hoped to see him personally in a day or so respecting the choice of an editor; and that there was at one time a current idea that he might succeed Scott, a note to him from John Landseer, soliciting information as to the insertion of something sent by him, seems pretty clearly to show. But Hazlitt did not, at all events, undertake the work, for which he was, indeed, indifferently qualified by his temper and habits, though so long as he remained on the staff his papers were gladly accepted; and he is credited with having further enriched and strengthened the magazine by introducing Lamb.

Hazlitt has been charged with having been almost an accessory before the fact to the catastrophe of which poor Scott was the victim. He had

been in 1818 the central and prominent figure in the prosecution against *Blackwood* which led to the magazine losing Murray as its London agent ; but the attacks on him and his friends were not discontinued, and five years later there came to the new representative of the Tory organ in the Metropolis a communication foreshadowing a renewal of hostilities.

April 17, 1823.

SIR,

Unless you agree to give up the publication of *Blackwood's Magazine*, I shall feel myself compelled to commence an action against you for damages sustained from repeated slanderous and false imputations in that work on me.

W. HAZLITT.

4, Chapel Street West,  
Curzon Street.

[Endorsed] Mr. Thomas Cadell,  
Bookseller,  
Strand.

The complaint here made is general, and does not specifically refer to any article in the magazine as having been the immediate ground for the menace. Whether Cadell sent any reply to Hazlitt, or whether the Blackwoods took any cognizance of the representation, it is so far out of my power to state ; but with the peremptory summons to Cadell there fell into my hands his letter to the Edinburgh



firm, forwarding a copy of Hazlitt's communication, and rather anxiously soliciting instructions. The cartel which had been sent to him could not be said to be either intemperate or redundant, but the recipient, from what had occurred on a previous occasion, clearly apprehended the possibility of mischief, while at the same time he signified his dislike even to indirect implication in such charges. Here is what he wrote to his employers :

Strand, Saturday, 3 o'clock,  
April 18, 1823.

DEAR SIR,

Annexed is a copy of a letter I have just received, the contents of which certainly make me feel somewhat uncomfortable. This is the first appeal to me, accompanied with a threat, as publisher of your Magazine, and though Mr. H. may be considered deserving of censure upon most occasions, my feelings would not be of the most agreeable nature, were my name brought before the publick by him as disseminator of slanderous & false imputations. I shall therefore be glad if you will now suggest the mode best calculated to avert the impending storm, and I will take care to act accordingly.

Yours in haste,  
(Signed) T. CADELL.

Mr. W. Blackwood, Bookseller,  
Edinburgh.

The curtain falls at this point. The terms of the incisive little note lead one to surmise that it was written after consultation with Montagu, Talfourd,

or Procter. It breathes the air of a lawyer's chambers.

It was the special cue of *Blackwood* and such publications to give currency to any calumny or misstatement which might have got abroad or was susceptible of being fabricated about Hazlitt or any other member of the Liberal party.

Professor Wilson's nephew, in seeing his papers through the press, retained, I understand, all the offensive passages about Leigh Hunt, without so much as a qualifying note, although 'Christopher North' had expressed his great regret to Hunt before his death at the asperities of the articles which he contributed to the magazine or sanctioned in his capacity as editor. But the late Mr. George Bentley informed me that some papers contributed to *Household Words* were intended as a reparation to Hunt—when reparation was futile.

## CHAPTER VI.

Hazlitt's literary and other associates—Some of his personal and political drawbacks—His brother's influence on the formation of his circle—The Southampton Arms—Mouncey, Wells, and other visitors—His more habitual and intimate acquaintances—Godwin, Holcroft, Fawcett, Lamb, the Montagus, the Procters, Patmore, Knowles, and the Reynells—Peculiar importance of the Reynells and the Lambs—Northcote and the *Boswell Redivivus*.

THERE was much in the life and society which surrounded Hazlitt in these later days which was no doubt calculated to recompense him for the laborious task-work of his youth and the disgraceful persecution to which he was exposed in the beginning of his regular career as a journalist and author. But there was also much which fretted his spirit and made him avert his eyes from the generation to which he by lapse of time belonged, to the land of milk and honey—the Canaan which he saw in his mind's eye mapped out behind him ; the period of his first associations and dreams divested of all its

practical discomforts, and fondly idealized in retrospect as halcyon days of contemplative reverie and uncoined thought never to return. This was a paradise of the past to which Hazlitt repaired as a haven in moments of spleen and discontent. His brain was the alembic to which this creation of the fancy owed a certain proportion of its form, its colour, and its beauty; he built to a large extent out of his own imagination a world to which he could withdraw at will, and live over again his boyhood and adolescence.

In *Advice to a Schoolboy* he sounds the keynote of his own disappointment in marriage and of the failure of his early hope of happiness. It was an ill-starred union for both those immediately concerned. With the details I prefer to have nothing further to do; but behind and beyond its productiveness of mischief and discomfort I discern the value of the Scottish blood of the Stoddarts. For my grandmother Hazlitt combined with a certain neglect of conventionalities much of her brother the doctor's eye and aptitude for business and respect for economy.

Hazlitt inherited from his father a constitutional tendency to meditate and brood over questions, and to prefer to think about a subject than to write about

it. It was offering a violence to his nature to enter the arena of action and compete for the prizes of life. I hold it to be more than likely that, had he been a man of fortune like the author of the *Light of Nature Pursued*, or even the possessor of a competence like Jeremy Bentham, the world would have heard nothing of his lectures and essays, and that he would have lived and died a metaphysician. But, as he says himself, he found himself in London with responsibilities, and with nothing but his pen as a resource; and he had to sink or swim.

Hazlitt, who so far back as 1806 had set his foot down and proclaimed himself, if no politician, an enemy to despotism or arbitrary rule, incurred the animosity of those in power, and was perpetually reminded in unequivocal language that, because his political views were not in consonance with those of the King's or Regent's friends, *argal* his ideas on all other subjects were unworthy of credit and notice.

He brought to London with him certain inherited principles and convictions, and his necessitated relations with the Press and Parliament after 1812 lent form, colour, and publicity to them. The *Examiner*, established in 1808, became familiar to my grand-

father through several channels. Nevertheless, his earliest essays as a political controversialist occur, not there, but in Cobbett's *Weekly Register*, while, if we seek the fountain-head of his collision with the Government critics, we have to go to the *Morning Chronicle* and the *Champion*. He did not join the *Examiner* till 1814, and even then his articles were chiefly of a literary cast.

But the natural influence of his brother, in the first place, carrying farther in the direction of Jacobinism the liberal prepossessions of the father and grandfather, laid the foundation, no doubt, of his dualism as a politician and man of letters ; and this training was assisted by the intercourse from 1798 with such thinkers as Coleridge, Holcroft, Godwin, Cobbett, and Stoddart, long before he became acquainted with Hone or the Hunts.

Hazlitt's adolescence witnessed and endured a painful struggle for the faculty of coining into language the feelings of which he was rather the receptacle than the possessor, and when his tongue and pen were unbound, and he could write 'with freedom and with power,' he found himself, by the force of instinct and education, in conflict with prevailing authority, and exposed to the attacks of subsidized and unscrupulous opponents,

who naturally aimed at the most vulnerable point.

There was, perhaps, no passage or allusion in Hazlitt's political writings which could have been, even by a stretch of ingenuity or sophistry, construed into treason or *lèse majesté*, and he laid far greater stress on his purely literary productions than on his ephemeral diatribes in the morning papers. The true policy of the enemy was therefore obvious. To hold up his views on philosophy, art, and letters to ridicule and obloquy was the most effectual method of crushing him; and that the iniquitous and dastardly game did not exactly answer its purpose, and only embittered and shortened his life, he owed in part to his own superlative gifts, and in part to an already commencing revolution in public opinion. That revolution arrived too late, alas! to save him. Had the eyes of men been opened ten years sooner, the difference to him would have been immense.

A large miscellaneous group of distinguished men stands outside the inner circle of Hazlitt's intimates, either on account of the temporary or occasional character of their relations with him, or of their less material influence on his career. The visits to the Southampton Arms, in Chancery Lane, also

yielded a few additions to the casual acquaintances, such as Mouncey, Wells, and a few others, who made up the coterie there about seventy seasons since—a coterie unique in its way, simply because the central figure drew thither company to see and hear him in his familiar moods.

His habitual literary associates may be classified or ranged under two general heads: those with whom he became acquainted through Coleridge's visit to Wem in 1798 and through his brother, and those, secondly, who belong to the prime of his life and the height of his prestige, subsequently to the publication of all his most important works.

The former category, in addition to Coleridge, included Godwin, Holcroft, Northcote, Fawcett, and Lamb. The latter brings before us the names of the Hunts, the Montagus, the Proctors, Patmore, and Knowles. I must be understood to enumerate only such as at these two epochs were most influential as aids or agents in contributing to the development of his genius, the formation of his opinions, and the promotion of his happiness. There were, of course, many others even during his not too prolonged career with whom he found himself brought into contact casually or incidentally, such as Cowden Clarke, Savage Landor, Joseph



Parkes, Charles Wells, Horne, Hood, Talfourd; and, perhaps, after all, a family, which was eminently entitled to consideration as instrumental during a long series of years in alleviating his troubles and sympathizing with his successes, stood technically outside the literary pale. I, of course, refer to the Reynells, the relatives and life-long intimates of the Hunts. Their house and table were at all times open to Hazlitt, to his wife, and to his son; and if we except the ephemeral episode of the *Liber Amoris* and its attendant circumstances, when Patmore and Knowles acquired a momentary prominence, I am disposed to place the Reynells and the Lambs in the first rank as sources of consolation and encouragement on the one hand, and of intellectual pleasure on the other. Both, besides, presented the characteristic in common of having been loyal to Hazlitt from first to last; Lamb and his sister were living witnesses to the rise of four successions of our name and blood. From the first hour of their friendship to the sad moment when he beheld the committal of his remains to the earth, Lamb was true to the man.

With Lamb there were occasional cases of friction, never of lengthened duration, nor of very grave significance. Something which the author of

*Elia* did or said gave temporary umbrage. We discern this in the *Letter to Southey*, 1823. It was so when Hazlitt and his son looked in one day at Lamb's, and the latter expressed his regret that he could only offer them roast kid for dinner. My father took his chance, and found that it was a joke—that there was roast beef; but Hazlitt went on to the Reynells in a tantrum. By the way, Boswell says that Johnson and he ate kid in the Highlands, and that Johnson liked the dish.

One explanation which offers itself of the closeness and durability of the tie in these cases is the homely and informal footing on which it was possible for Hazlitt to maintain his intercourse. These were the roofs under which he was apt to feel a congeniality of atmosphere. The conditions of his early training and experience made him averse from frequenting circles where conventional etiquette was studied; and a visit to the Montagus and the Procters always, it may be suspected, cost an exertion, and partook more or less of the nature of an ordeal. Hazlitt liked to be at his ease, and to be sensible of an absence of constraint; and this recommended to him the evenings at the Southampton, where he sat, like a modern Dryden or Johnson, and talked *ex cathedra* to willing and de-

lighted listeners. The Southampton, indeed, served as a substitute for a *pied-à-terre*, where he could occupy a more independent standpoint than at the firesides of others, however dear and intimate those others might be, and was the nearest approach, at any rate in later years, to the discharge of the rites of private hospitality.

On the same basis in one respect as the Lambs and Reynells, yet in almost perfect contrast from every other point of view, stood Northcote, whose relationship to Hazlitt spread over the whole term of the London career of the latter. Northcote was acquainted with John Hazlitt at a very early date—probably before the death of Sir Joshua Reynolds in 1792, as it is likely to have been Reynolds who introduced them to each other. In 1802 we find Northcote giving my grandfather a letter to Merimée, when he started on his professional visit to Paris: and the two continued more or less on a friendly footing to the last, the old painter having just toward the close of Hazlitt's career handed him the materials which he had collected for a Life of Titian.

The intercourse, however, though always friendly, was never cordial; the domestic arrangements of Northcote and his sister were almost miserly; and

it was a house to which no one would have dreamed of repairing in the absence of some specific object. It is very possible that Hazlitt may have at first paid occasional visits to his own and his brother's old acquaintance for the sake of the congenial discourse and the recollections of famous persons whom Northcote had known, Sir Joshua included, just before Hazlitt's day. But the notion of turning the conversations to account, if it was an afterthought, became the main inducement; and I have offered what I consider substantial proof that Northcote, whatever he might have affected to feel, was an accessory before the fact, and was really flattered by the *Boswell Redivivus* in the *New Monthly Magazine*.

The *Boswell Redivivus*, or, as it was called when it reappeared in book-form, the *Conversations of Northcote*, strikes me as being a standard source of instruction and amusement. No one writing on the literary history of the time which intervened between the period of Johnson, Burke, Goldsmith, and Reynolds, and that of the men whom Northcote and Hazlitt themselves knew, could neglect with impunity to consult these pages, pregnant and luminous as they are with the life of generations.

Northcote was, of course, the repository of a mass of information which would never have reached us, had it not been for my grandfather. He furnished the nucleus and the lay-figure ; all beside is Hazlitt's. The latter, as he had done with less happy results, perhaps, and less strict propriety in reporting speeches in Parliament for the *Morning Chronicle*, took the raw material and realized it to us upon paper in his own embodiment. The original Boswell was incapable of doing more than set down what his hero said *totidem verbis*, and he fortunately appreciated the essentiality of exactitude. But in the other case the biographer was the stronger man of the two—the greater Ajax, and the joint production owes its form and texture mainly to him, as it does its value.

Of the Montagus and Procters I find that I have reserved for another place some brief notices. Both Mrs. Montagu and her daughter, the wife of Procter, created by their unfailing welcome of Hazlitt, whenever he directed his steps toward their houses, and by their loyal deference to his intellectual claims, a valuable and salutary diversion from passing annoyances, and presented an acceptable variety of scene and atmosphere from time to time. These two families belonged to a kind of

outer circle, to which Hazlitt was not displeased to resort, either to bring and carry back the gossip of the day, or to pour into the ear of Mrs. Montagu some little point in which another friend had vexed him, or to exchange with Montagu himself views on politics and jurisprudence.

## CHAPTER VII.

The subject continued—Godwin—Wells—Some account of his last days at Marseilles—Horne—Wainewright—Joseph Parkes and 'The Fight'—Patmore—Anecdotes of him—The good service performed by Knowles and him to Hazlitt in 1822-3.

NOR must we overlook Godwin, that very early friend, to whose agency I have ascribed an important share in the first introduction of Hazlitt to London life. The commercial enterprise in Skinner Street, which proved in the long run so disastrous, seems to have thrown Godwin a good deal into the background down to 1822, when the crisis arrived, and friends had to come forward with pecuniary assistance to save the family from utter ruin. A fund was raised, to which Lamb, to his eternal honour, was the largest contributor.

Two years later I find Sir James Mackintosh writing to Godwin, and advising him to ask Hazlitt to review his novels in the *Edinburgh*. Mackintosh, whose thoughts went back to 1805, when he praised

the *Essay on Human Action*, and to 1807, when he praised the Tucker, even if he was not aware that Hazlitt attended his lectures in 1799, speaks here very highly of him, 'though I know,' says he, 'he is no panegyrist of mine.' He was pleased to think that a criticism from such a quarter would be extremely beneficial to Godwin, and would even promote the interest of literature.

It was Godwin who conferred on Hazlitt the undoubted benefit of an introduction to the Rev. Joseph Fawcett, with whom the intercourse of my grandfather was highly influential, as he himself admits. Fawcett lived latterly and died at Walthamstow, in Essex. He must, from Hazlitt's account of him, have been an extraordinary man.

We chiefly know from the Lamb and Shelley correspondence how ill Godwin's commercial speculation on Snow Hill prospered; some have thought that it was, as in the case of Sir Richard Phillips, through his distasteful political opinions; but I conjecture that he had no aptitude for the sort of business.

The recommendation to Godwin by Mackintosh that he should induce my grandfather to do him a good turn in the *Edinburgh Review* bore no fruit at



the time it was offered in 1824; but a paper *On Godwin and his Writings* from Hazlitt's pen appeared in that periodical in April, 1830, and was the writer's last contribution to its columns.

Hazlitt occasionally met Keats, as I elsewhere show. He doubtless came across him at Leigh Hunt's, Ollier's and elsewhere. Keats mentions calling on my grandfather, but preserves no record of what passed. He evidently had a liking and regard for him. A copy of his poems, 1820, exists, with an inscription on the title-page: 'To Wm. Hazlitt, Esq., with the author's sincere respects.'

The expressions 'By God' and 'My God' (the French *Par Dieu* and *Mon Dieu*) were very usual in Hazlitt's day, and were habitually in the mouths of both men and women. Yet in one of his letters Keats introduces the former, with the added remark, as it were in self-exculpation, 'As Hazlitt would say.' The sole real peculiarity in Hazlitt, however, was that, in the nervous indecisive manner which often distinguished him, he would come out with a sort of inconsequential 'By God, sir, you know what I mean!' which it was not invariably the case that you did.

Of Charles Wells, the solicitor, whom Hazlitt, in kind-heartedly praising him for something which he

had written, advised on one occasion to stick to his profession, I retain a tolerably vivid remembrance. He visited us in Great Russell Street, but I subsequently identified him as the author of two books, produced before I was born, not under his own name, but under the *nom de plume* of Howard. Of these, *Joseph and his Brethren*, a scriptural drama as it is termed, is the more celebrated. I will not enter farther into the question of literary merit ; but I see that in a copy which belonged to R. H. Horne the owner has added a manuscript gloss not over favourable to his friend. He particularly objects to a passage where Potiphar is improperly reticent, and suggests a stage direction, ‘Potiphar twiddles his thumbs.’ Wells is understood to have composed the affectionate epitaph on Hazlitt in St. Anne’s, Soho. He had, no doubt, a reverential regard for him. I remember him coming to my father’s house in Great Russell Street, opposite the dead wall of the British Museum. It was about 1846, while I was still at Merchant Taylors’, and just about the same time we had a visit from George Byron, as he called himself, the reputed son of Byron by the Maid of Athens. I was at home recovering from an attack of brain-fever, and, my father being out, I saw Byron, who disgusted me by the small interest

which he manifested in my sufferings. He was a short dark man, and, I have been told, remarkably like the poet.

Wells married one of the daughters of Mr. Hill, who kept a school at Broxbourne, in Hertfordshire. We knew the family intimately. Mrs. Wells stayed at my father's house more than once—in fact, whenever she came over from Quimper to England. Wells did not accompany her. I never saw him after 1846 or 1847. He was a low-built man, and struck me as looking elderly even then ; but I was a schoolboy.

He died at Marseilles, whither he had removed from Quimper in Brittany.

I saw Madame Bonne-Maison, who had adopted one of his daughters, at Quimper in 1893. She was in her ninety-sixth year, upright, cheerful, and intelligent. She spoke of Wells as *plein d'esprit*, and complimented me on my Breton accent. She referred me to his daughter at Morlaix in the Carmelite Convent, and I went to pay her a visit in October. She was Mary Wells, and said she was sixty-four years of age. Her father had latterly been obliged to give lessons to make out his income. When they thought that he was no more, he revived, and said, ' Ah ! you thought that the little man had

gone, but he has come back again, and you're all caught.' He was eighty-six.

Horne, who had also known Hazlitt, was a far more voluminous and a far more pretentious writer than Wells, and affected both prose and verse. We saw much of him at Alfred Place, Old Brompton, about 1840. I confess that I have often tried to appreciate his *Farthing Epic* and other effusions, but I have laid the books down, wondering that such works should meet with appreciation, save on some principle of mutual insurance.

Yet infinitely more flimsy and empirical than Wells or Horne was Wainewright, the 'Janus Weathercock' of the *London Magazine*, who, like John Lamb, had the hardihood to pose as a fine-art critic side by side with Hazlitt, and to hang his cattle-subjects at the Royal Academy. He was a genuine disciple of the Dandy School.

Joseph Parkes, a parliamentary agent, who came from Birmingham, and was connected with Dr. Priestley, was another of the set in which Hazlitt moved. Parkes is chiefly associated with him in connection with the prize-fight at Newbury between Hickman and Neate, a description of which in the *New Monthly Magazine* illustrates in my opinion most triumphantly Hazlitt's unsurpassed faculty in literary portraiture,

and marks his successful treatment of a topic which could not but be new to him. Parkes, Patmore, and Thurtell, the same who was tried in 1824 for the murder of Weare, met my grandfather on the scene of action or on the road—Thurtell, the Turtle of the paper—at Reading. Parkes, the Joe Toms of the narrative, and Hazlitt were to have gone down together, but they missed each other. Patmore was the original instigator of the notion, and the prospect of gathering the material for an article was an irresistible inducement to his companion.

The visit of my relative to such a scene, and his graphic and appreciative account of it, formed in itself an essay on the disadvantages of mental superiority, just as he speaks of having been put out of conceit of something which he had once written by witnessing a performance of Indian jugglers. Both these examples illustrated the wilful and weaker side of Hazlitt's character and his proneness to paradox.

It was what Master 'Janus Weathercock' might have termed a *divertissement*, but in fact the forcible antithesis proved for a moment a beneficial relief from the habitual tension of intellectual labour. So the jaded politician seeks relaxation in cricket or golf, and the overworked clerk recruits himself by rowing or walking for a wager.

It was the same thing with his more familiar passion for fives, which his friends used to see Hazlitt play, not with the self-possessed coolness and tact of an expert, but with the irritable and nervous impatience of an amateur. He seemed to be intent on severing himself for the moment as much as possible from his customary associations and the daily wear and tear of thought.

I observe that Pierce Egan, in his *Lectures on the Art of Self-Defence*, refers to the printed text of the *Fight*, but speaks of it as having been inserted in *Table-Talk*. It first appeared in the *New Monthly Magazine*, and subsequently in the *Literary Remains*.

The end of Parkes was sad enough. He was buried in the catacombs at Kensal Green, and the officials having left a candle burning, some of the cerements or other coverings caught fire, and several of the bodies were burnt, in Parkes's case the lower extremities only being charred.

I was once taken by my father to see Peter George Patmore at a little old-fashioned house which he rented at Hendon, or more properly speaking at Mill Hill. He lived there with his wife and his mother and some of his children. There was a considerable piece of ground attached to the

house, including a field, which I was told that Patmore had turned at least once to good account by selling the produce two or three times over to different parties.

Patmore's mother, the pawnbroker's widow, laid hold of me, I recollect, and shewed me all over the domain the very evening I arrived.

Patmore himself was at one time a dandy, and affected two sorts of nether garments, one pair for walking, and another for sitting down. He once sat down with unhappy results in the promenading pair.

He came at the time of the railway mania to my father in a state of great dismay and asked his advice. 'Hazlitt,' he said, 'what, in God's name, am I to do? I am in for a million!' 'Do?' returned my father, 'why, stay where you are; they know well enough you haven't got it.'

We saw him last at Church Street, Chelsea, about 1848. He had known us intermittently since, as secretary to the Russell Institution, he arranged with my grandfather for the series of lectures delivered there in 1812. But his real significance to Hazlitt was the so far serviceable part which he and Knowles played in the *Liber Amoris* business by furnishing a vent for the momentary volcanic frenzy.

Patmore was an original character. While he was at Mill Hill his circumstances appear to have been unusually flourishing, and he not only had land in hay, but an excellent garden with wall-fruit, which the members of his family were forbidden to touch. He reconnoitred the ground after breakfast in the season to count his peaches and plums.

He was the author, I understand, of the volume anonymously issued by Colburn in 1826, under the title of *Rejected Articles*. One of these papers is on Hazlitt. That on Plumer Ward's *Tremaine* was withdrawn, or is not, at all events, in most copies.

Patmore was the first who essayed to dissipate the absurd illusion that Hazlitt was habitually and by nature listless and inert. Those who had studied him under unfavourable circumstances, and who were ignorant of his power of endurance as a pedestrian, and of his proficiency in the Fives Court, might entertain and circulate such an opinion ; but nothing could be farther from the truth. Almost all his early excursions in the country were made on foot, and even Patmore testifies how, at the comparatively late date when he became intimate with him, he 'devoured the ground' in walking, and seemed to feel a zest and enjoyment in the exercise.

It was my grandfather Reynell who saw Hazlitt



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dressed to go to Curran's in black silk smalls and blue coat and gilt buttons, and he observed how well he looked. The blue coat and gilt buttons were much affected by the Whig Club sixty or seventy years ago, and were worn by Fox and Burdett. Mr. Byng, M.P. for Middlesex, was one of the last public men who retained the fashion ; but I remember my father wearing such a coat ; perhaps he took to it *jure patris*.

## CHAPTER VIII.

(1823—1824.)

The subject continued—Henry Colburn—The art of puffing—Colburn and Northcote—An anecdote of Leigh Hunt—The *Court Journal* and *Literary Gazette*—William Jerdan and the paper-knife school of criticism—Burke's *Peerage*—Hurst and Blackett—Thackeray's Jenkins—Mouncey—Cowden Clarke—Hessey the publisher—The *Liber Amoris*—Sheridan Knowles—Dedication to Hazlitt of his play of *Alfred*—The first Mrs. Hazlitt and her relatives—Anecdotes of her and them—Sir John Stoddart—Archbishop Sumner—My father and I—The second marriage—Hazlitt's tour abroad—Meeting with Leigh Hunt, Landor, Medwin, etc.—Letters to Landor and to his own son—The union with the second Mrs. Hazlitt determined.

A MAN who had relations with many of the literary folks of a past generation, Hazlitt and Northcote included, and whose portrait has been painted on paper by Hood, was Henry Colburn the publisher, the reputed natural son, by one of his numerous mistresses, of that famous military chieftain, the Duke of York, who supplied him with the means of starting in business.

Colburn was one of the worthy fraternity of tricksters who used to make a tolerably handsome succedaneum out of authors' advertisements, for which he received payment many times over by sending in the aggregate cost of a group to each individual. Both Northcote and Procter had reason to complain of this dishonest treatment, and it still continues to be extended to men of letters, who do not happen to be also men of business, by firms whose fine pretensions assist, of course, in disarming suspicion.

Colburn was an early master of the art of puffing, and was among the earliest, I believe, who sent round to the Press specimens of a new work on a slip for an anticipatory notice. He occupied part of the extensive premises with a frontage to Great Marlborough Street, which had formerly been fitted up by Brooks for his School of Anatomy. But in Brooks's time they extended back to Oxford Street, and in the rear of the house was a yard, where Brooks kept his ravens, besides a wolf, a vulture, etc., which used to be fed on the remains of the bodies employed in the anatomical lectures. The resurrection-men sold bodies to Brooks, and my uncle recollects seeing there that of a young woman, which had been sent in a hamper from Manchester. When

the allied sovereigns were in London in 1814 they visited Brooks's, and were amused by his habit of talking French ; he was acquainted with the foreign words, but pronounced them as if they had been English.

Northcote, who had something at one time to do with Colburn, and who was notoriously parsimonious, once became terribly frightened at the prospect of having to pay a heavy printer's bill, with all the garnishing additaments, which none knew so well as Colburn how to smuggle into an account. My father remembers the old artist saying, 'That little wretch Colburn wants to rob me of *all* my money!'

Leigh Hunt told Mr. Reynell that Colburn had applied to him for a portrait to illustrate one of his books—the *Byron and his Contemporaries*, 1828—and that he had one eventually engraved, which made Hunt look as if he had stolen a tankard ; and when the latter complained of the unsatisfactory character of it, Colburn clasped his hands together, and declared that it must stand, 'For,' said he pathetically, '*I have paid for it!*'

At one time I understand that Colburn held both the *Court Journal* and the *Literary Gazette*. The former was edited by P. G. Patmore, and subsequently by Laman Blanchard ; the latter by William

Jerdan. Through these channels Colburn had excellent opportunities of advertising his books, and obtaining favourable notices. He thought himself a crack hand at a title-page and a puffing paragraph. It was Jerdan who was said to acquire a knowledge of a work sent for review to the *Gazette* by cutting open the leaves and smelling the paper-knife. Colburn and Jerdan were two of the apostles of that school of literary criticism which has now attained so rank a growth, and been improved to an extent of which the originators could have barely dreamed.

But a yet more important enterprise and property lay in the *New Monthly Magazine*, to which Hazlitt was for some time a contributor. The more or less nominal editorship was held successively by Campbell, Bulwer, Hook, and Hood, but at last devolved on Mr. Shoberl, author of a pleasant little volume on Greenwich. After Hood had left the concern, someone addressed a letter to him at the office, which was returned with the endorsement, 'Not known to Mr. Colburn,' which occasioned the following squib :

For a couple of years, in the columns of Puff,  
I was rated a decentish writer enough—  
But alas ! for the favours of Fame !  
Since I quitted her seat in Great Marlborough Street  
My decline in repute is so very complete  
That a Colburn don't know me by name !

Now, a Colburn I knew, in his person so small,  
That he seem'd the half-brother of no one at all,  
Yet in spirit a dwarf may be big ;  
But *his* mind was so narrow, *his* soul was so dim,  
Where's the wonder if all I remember of him  
Is—a suit of boy's clothes, and a wig !

Colburn paid for the name, and Shoberl's nephew tells me that his uncle long had the practical superintendence of the magazine.

Burke's *Peerage* was originally published by this firm. Burke, who lived in Thistle Grove, Old Brompton, was father of Sir Bernard, and my uncle, who was his near neighbour, recollects the latter being sent round to him as a boy by his father on some passing matter of business.

The successors of Colburn were Messrs. Hurst and Blackett, a firm which now only exists in name. Hurst had been useful to Colburn as a writer of accounts of fashionable parties in the *Court Journal*, just as Foster, Thackeray's Jenkins, was to the proprietor of the *Morning Post*.

It was Jenkins who wrote in the *Post* the account of Stowe, afterward republished as a pamphlet.

Both Patmore and Moxon were during many years attached in the capacity of readers or assistants to publishing houses ; the former to Colburn, the latter to Longman and Co., and Hurst, Chance

and Co. In 1827 we find Lamb giving Moxon a letter of introduction to Colburn. Hurst, Chance and Co. were unconnected with Hurst and Blackett, who did not start till 1851, on the retirement of Colburn. Hurst was a man with some capital, but took no active part in the business ; he was a bill-discounter. Colburn himself, as we elsewhere perceive, was addicted to meddling in every detail, and took nearly the entire management into his own hands, from the editorship of the *New Monthly* to the sweeping out of the shop. He died in or about 1853, I believe, in Bryanston Square.

As he found a patron in a Royal Highness, so Moxon in a banker, who was also a poet.

I have heard my father say that George Mouncey, who is mentioned in the *Memoirs*, was a tall, gaunt man, much addicted to nips of ale and gin. His chambers in Staple Inn were remarkable for their unsavouriness, an effect partly occasioned by a menagerie of cats. Mouncey was a well-to-do man, and had an estate near Carlisle. He took a good deal of notice of my father—at that time a little fellow—and once tried to make him drink a whole bottle of port.

He was a good listener, however, a feature which recommended him to Hazlitt. It is possible that

the latter knew Mouncey at a comparatively early period. I find his autograph on the title of a copy of the *Abridgment of Tucker*, 1807.

Through the Hunts, Hazlitt secured the acquaintance of Mr. Charles Cowden Clarke, the friend of Lamb and the Novellos. Writing from Maida Hill, July 1, 1817, to Clarke, Leigh Hunt says, 'I saw Mr. Hazlitt here last night, and he apologises to me, as I doubt not he will to you, for having delayed [the opera-ticket] till he cannot send it at all.' I merely quote this because it is the earliest record of an intercourse which lasted till the end, and was fruitful of important consequences.

There was also Hessey the publisher, father of my old schoolmaster, the late Archdeacon of Middlesex. There, as well as at Haydon's, Hessey's, Ollier's and Hunt's, he met Keats, and altogether he could hardly complain of any lack of companionship, so far as his visiting circle went.

On the delicate subject of the *Liber Amoris* I feel, as I felt thirty years ago, that this was emphatically a case in which a *suppressio veri* was at the very least a *suggestio falsi*. The simple truth appeared to be preferable to hypothesis and misapprehension. The incident bore in some of its



features a resemblance to the story of the Duke of Grafton and Nancy Parsons, who was also a tailor's daughter.

From a variety or concurrence of circumstances it is inferrible without risk that the *Liber Amoris*, for which the receptacle in the form of a tradesman's account-book was purchased, as we know, at Stamford early in 1822, was to a large extent a literary and artificial composition, rather than a faithful transfer of the actual conversations. The writer began the task in Scotland far away from the scene and locality which witnessed the incidents, and anticipated that the volume would prove 'nice reading.' He evidently prepared the manuscript with a direct eye to the press and the public, and in a letter to Patmore he betrays the same purpose, where he requests the latter to keep the letters. As everyone has at present the means of perceiving, the original printed text by no means accurately or fully represented the original manuscript, and this divergence, as far as the *Liber* itself is concerned, leads me to remark that the manuscript, although it is the only one traceable, is not in the author's hand, while on certain pages there are additions and corrections evidently made by him. The fact seems to be that this red buttermilk's book really contains

the sole existing written text, and is a copy by somebody else—possibly Patmore—of a lost holograph, subsequently submitted to the author's approval, and in the end published with certain omissions and modifications. Again, it is likely enough that the real original by Hazlitt was in a form which demanded editorship, and that Patmore executed the task. The whole affair is a mystery, and is likely to remain so.

It was while Hazlitt was in Scotland on business arising out of this episode that he met Sheridan Knowles at Glasgow or Edinburgh, and took him into his confidence. Both Knowles and Patmore lent a sympathetic ear to the tale of love and despair, and the former appears to have been strongly prepossessed by Hazlitt's flattering criticism and friendly counsel. They visited the Highlands together, and three or four years later the author of the *Hunchback*, in looking round for a patron for his new play of *Alfred*, recalled the agreeable days which he had spent with my grandfather, and the thoughtful kindness which the great critic had shown him, and decided on inscribing the production to him. As I believe that this has never appeared in type, and as it is mutually honourable, I subjoin it entire :

DEDICATION,  
To WM. HAZLITT, ESQ.

MY DEAR HAZLITT,

In dedicating this play to you, I acknowledge a debt, which I can never repay. I will not say how many years ago it was, while I was the boy whose attempts at dramatic composition you had the patience to peruse and criticize, and the good nature to cheer. How happy your approbation used to make me—how gratified (*sic*) I felt for your strictures, given with an anxiety and kindness that effectually guarded self-love from being painfully chafed, and ensured deference and improvement by convincing me of their sincerity. I could show you some of my Juvenile performances which I have kept by me to this day, with your pencil marks upon them—to me, believe me, their highest value; and I could repeat to you a passage or two which you once recited to me from the works of a common-respected friend,\* as an example of the solid strength that gives sinews to simplicity.

Never do I reflect on the success that has attended my plays without attributing the better half of it to you; and sweet is the sense of obligation, for you have ever displayed the most steadfast friendship and single hearted disinterestedness towards your devoted Servant,

J. S. KNOWLES.

Glasgow,

May, 1826.

One of Hazlitt's latest efforts in portrait must have been the likenesses of Knowles and his daughter, as he was not acquainted with the author of *Virginus* much before 1820.

\* 'Charles Lamb, Esq.,' in Knowles's hand at the foot of the leaf.

When Hazlitt was at Glasgow in 1822, there was a Shakespear Club there to which he was introduced. Among its members were William Bewick, the American artist, and Mr. A. D. Robertson. To the former my grandfather sat for his likeness, which Bewick executed in crayons, much more to his sitter's satisfaction than to that of some who knew the original. Mr. Robertson was so ill pleased with Bewick's work, that he made a second drawing from a careful study of the first, assisted by personal recollection. But I must say that I prefer the Bewick.

I think that it is due to my paternal grandmother to mention that she laboured under many disadvantages. Her bringing-up had been rather irregular, and her mother's illness, which kept her a prisoner in a dull country town, without society and congenial friends, had undoubtedly a very prejudicial effect on her character and temper.

A lady once told me that when she lived at Kentish Town, Mrs. Hazlitt would come to see her, with a sort of satchel round her waist, and beg the loan of a few books to read. I have heard of my grandmother borrowing of others in the same way. She found books a great resource in her rather monotonous life, especially when rheumatism had some-

what affected the use of her fingers in sewing and knitting. The circulating library system was yet an imperfect development.

I remember Mrs. Hazlitt staying with us at Alfred Place, Old Brompton, about 1840. She had then nearly lost the use of her hands. She died three or four years later at her lodgings in Pimlico, whither she had been probably attracted in the first instance by the neighbourhood of the Reynells; and Leigh Hunt at one time lived under the same roof there with the latter. The spot commended itself to aspiring parents by the immediate vicinity of Dr. Duncan's 'Ciceronian Academy,' an educational establishment for young gentlemen under a somewhat grandiose title.

She was most warmly attached to her son, and in 1830, the year of Hazlitt's death, Brougham being then Chancellor, she, good lady, who remembered him as her brother Stoddart's fellow-collegian and intimate, saw no harm in writing to his lordship on behalf of my father. But the letter, commencing 'My dear Harry,' was somehow intercepted.

Sir John Stoddart, who had a son of the same name, a colonial judge and knight, married Isabella daughter of the Rev. Sir Henry Moncrieff, Bart. He had a genealogical tree, in which it was proved

that the Moncrieffs were one of three families exclusively entitled to trace their descent from Charlemagne.

My father, who was thus connected on his mother's side with the Moncrieffs and Charlemagne, was charged with the duty, many years ago, of escorting one of his Scottish kinswomen to the theatre. The crowd was very great, and they had a rather serious difficulty in forcing their way to the point where the corridor led to the boxes, when the lady suddenly exclaimed, to my father's utter consternation, 'Ay, I've lost my slapper!'

Stoddart, who is not much remembered to-day, was of Lincoln's Inn, and in 1797 translated from the French of Joseph Despaze an Account of the Committee of Public Safety, consisting of Barras and four others (*Les Cinq*). He was at this time a Jacobin in politics, but subsequently went over to the more winning side, and in the long run became Chief Justice of Malta. His work on *Scotch Scenery*, 1804, with aquatint engravings, is tolerably well known. He amused his old age with philological researches and publications, of which his limited acquaintance with languages weakened the value. He was a thoroughly upright man and, like his sister the first Mrs. Hazlitt, methodical; and

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it was from this source that came, I feel sure, all the virtue of that class which may belong to us.

Sumner, Archbishop of Canterbury, who was related to the Stoddarts, while still a curate, obtained an appointment as tutor to a young nobleman, and was his bear-leader to Paris. There the pupil became enamoured of a young lady, and engaged himself to her, to the utter discomfiture of his mother. Sumner was charged to break off the match at any cost, and told that, if he succeeded, his promotion in the Church would be secured. Great difficulty was experienced in achieving the desired object for the family; but at last Sumner prevailed, and married the girl himself, to make sure that his negotiation should not miscarry. This episode is said to have laid the foundation of the fortunes of his brother of Winchester and himself.

My father inherited from his uncle Stoddart a certain old-fashioned formalism, which he unsuccessfully endeavoured to instil into me; it was the idea that persons of rank expected to have letters, addressed to them by those in an inferior position, left at their doors by hand, and not sent through the post. I have frequently acted as the messenger on these occasions, and, until I became a free agent, had only to hear and obey. My respect for my parent's wishes

over-rode my instinctive dislike to the employment. Yet I am afraid that, as I grew up, I occasionally vexed the Registrar by my latter-day independence; and he was once almost angry with me because I referred to Montagu Corry as Disraeli's footman. He declared that, if I persisted in making myself objectionable, I should never prosper.

Stoddart and his sister were both remarkable for their florid complexions, and my father, as a young man, favoured his mother and uncle in this respect. Hazlitt on one occasion, being vexed with his son, then a youth of about eighteen, called him an *apple-face*, in reference to this ruddy look.

The second marriage of Hazlitt, closely succeeding the divorce, of which copious particulars occur in the *Memoirs*, was followed by a tour in France, Italy, Switzerland, and part of Holland, in 1824, with his new wife, the widow of Colonel Bridgewater. Colonel Bridgewater is described in his will, dated December 8, 1819, as 'Henry Bridgewater, Esquire, of the Island of Granada.' He left his widow, Isabella Bridgewater, an annuity of £300.

I may here note that an advertisement for his next-of-kin appeared in the papers in 1879. The second Mrs. Hazlitt, however, had died in September, 1869.



During Hazlitt's absence he forgot neither his first wife, whom he continued at intervals to supply with money, nor his little son at school, nor his family down in Devonshire. I hope that he recollected how poor his mother had grown, and his brother John too; for his literary commissions and his wife's fortune for the moment gave him the command of unusually ample funds.

At Florence he met Leigh Hunt, who introduced him to Savage Landor, of whom he seems to have formed a very pleasant impression. While he was at Rome he wrote to him the following letter, inviting him to stay with him, if he arranged to remain awhile at Albino :

Rome, April 9 [1824].

DEAR SIR,

I did not receive your obliging letter till a day or two ago. Mrs. H. and myself crossed the mountains pretty well, but had rather a tedious journey. Rome hardly answers your expectations; the ruins do not prevail enough over the modern buildings, which are commonplace things. One or two things are prodigiously fine. I have got pleasant lodgings, but find everything very bad and dear. I have thought of going to spend a month at Albino, but am not quite sure. If I do not, I shall return to Florence next week and proceed to Venice. I should be glad, if I settle at Albino, if you could manage to come over and stop a little. I have done what I was obliged to write for the Papers, and am now a leisure man, I hope, for the rest of the summer. I am much gratified that you are pleased with the *Spirit of the Age*. Somebody ought to like it, for I am sure there will be plenty to cry out

against it. I hope you did not find any sad blunders in the second volume; but you can hardly suppose the depression of body and mind under which I wrote some of these articles. I bought a little Florentine edition of Petrarch and Dante the other day, and have made out one page. Pray remember me to Mrs. Landor, and believe me to be, Dear Sir,

Your much obliged friend and servant,

W. HAZLITT.

33 via Gregoriana.

Jacobo III.  
 Jacobo II. Magnae Brit. Regis Filio.  
 Karolo Edwardo,  
 Et Henrico Decano Patrum Cardinalem,  
 Jacobi III. Filiis,  
 Regiae Stirpis Stuardiae Postremis,  
 Anno M.V.CCC.XIX.  
 Beati Mortui qui in Domino moriuntur.

What do you think of this inscription on Canova's monument to the Stuarts in St. Peter's . . . ordered by the R. Revd. Su[perior?] . . . Southey for his opinion.

[Endorsed] Walter Savage Landor, Esq.,  
 Poste Restante,  
 Florence.

Landor's Imaginary Conversations, by which he is chiefly known, were doubtless suggested by Fontenelle's *Dialogues of the Dead*, and Mr. Andrew Lang has employed his facile pen in a sort of sequel to Landor.

In the little volume of posthumously published essays, called *Winterslow*, one of the papers is on a Sun-dial. This dial, on which there was the

inscription, 'Horas non numero nisi serenas,' was observed by Hazlitt near Venice.

He had an interesting interview at Vevey, on his return journey, with Captain Medwin, the friend of Byron ; and thence he addressed a note to his son, who was spending his holidays down at Crediton with the grandmother and aunt. The little fellow was deeply attached to his mother, and was much distressed and hurt at the second marriage. We have heard a good deal of the odd way in which Hazlitt used the term *Sir* in speaking even to those with whom he was more or less intimate, and he extended the practice to the child. It amounted to what Mercier says in his *Tableau de Paris*, 'Le Père appelle son fils monsieur.' But in the note before us he figures as *Baby*.

This communication, had it no other claim, is the only known relic of the kind, and the sole surviving specimen of any correspondence which may have passed between the two.

Miss Emmett, whose death had been made known to him, was the sister of the Irish patriot who was concerned in the insurrection of 1798.

Vevey, near Geneva [1824].

DEAR BABY,

We are got as far as Vevey in Switzerland on our way back. I propose returning by Holland in the end of August, and I shall see you, I hope, the beginning of September.

The journey has answered tolerably well. I was sorry to hear of poor Miss Emmett's death, and I hope Grandmother and Peggy are both well. I got your letter at Florence, where I saw Mr. Leigh Hunt and Mr. Landor. I have a very bad pen.

The *Table-talk* and the *Spirit of the Age* have been reprinted at Paris; but I do not know how they have succeeded. The *Advice to a School-boy* is in the first. If you should be in London, remember me to all friends, or give my love to my Mother and Peggy.

I am, dear Baby,

Your ever affectionate father,

W. HAZLITT.

We are stopping here. Write to me, and tell me all the news.

Master Hazlitt,

at Mrs. Hazlitt's,

Crediton,

Near Exeter,

England.

We here see how the father, as well as the mother, took the child into confidence.

It was shortly after this that the union, so hastily contracted, was informally dissolved by the intimation of the lady that she declined to rejoin her husband in England. The dream of an unearned competence had therefore proved illusory, and the pen once more, and for good, remained the sole resource

## CHAPTER IX.

(1827—1830.)

The *Life of Napoléon*—Letters on the subject to Hunt and Clarke—The parallel Lives by Hazlitt and Scott—Lamb's estimate of the former—A plea for the book—The author as a man of business—Some unpublished correspondence—Hazlitt's last days and death—Jeffrey's kindness—Hazlitt and Scott—Lamb, Scott, and Godwin—Soho a fashionable address—Horne takes the plaster cast of Hazlitt—Lines on him by an American lady.

THE subjoined correspondence relating to the ill-fated *Life of Napoléon*, from which we perceive that the author anticipated, as he certainly deserved, a very different issue, was addressed to Hunt and Clarke, the publishers of the work, while Hazlitt was exerting his utmost efforts to complete it at Winterslow. He was, as we know from a letter already printed in the *Memoirs*, in a very indifferent state of health, and had gone down in the country to combine the effects of change of air and of freedom from interruption. His distance from books explains his request to Henry Hunt, in the

first communication, to verify certain points; the second letter is to Cowden Clarke. It might almost be augured from the latter, if not from both, that there was no adequate precaution taken to secure the co-operation of the press.

It is highly curious that, in writing to Clarke in 1828, he reverts to the subject-matter of his notable letter in 1821 to Leigh Hunt, and reproduces what we find there as to Hunt's refusal to attend or notice his lectures almost *totidem verbis*.

DEAR SIR,

I am obliged by the £2 and am glad the account is no more against me. The Appendix, Nos. 4 & 5, must be given at the end of vol. 4 (to be said so in a note). No. 6, Character of Marat by Brissot, will be found infallibly at the end of one of Miss Williams's volumes from France, year 1794, which can be had at any library, Saunders and Ottley's certainly. Also, I sent it up to Clarke some time ago. Tell him, I received the letter, and am much gratified by it, vanity apart. I am not surprised at what you tell me; but drowning men catch at Buckinghams. Still so far, so good. What follows is important, not a drowning, but a shooting matter. You *must* give me one cancel at p. 209, vol. ii., and alter the word *Buccaneer* to *cruiser*. An Erratum won't do. Second, do learn the width of the valley of the Nile from some authentic person (*forsan* Travels in Mesopotamia), and if it be more than five leagues (which I suspect it must be), cancel and change to fifteen, fifty, or whatever be the actual number. It is *five* in Napoleon's Memoirs, followed by Thibaudeau *in vitâ*. Is the Preface to go? You'll see I can bear it out, and perhaps play the devil with some people. Don't you think an account in the *Examiner* would tell in just now, after the *London Review* and *Athenæum*, and give us

a kind of prepossession of the ground? Tell St. John I wrote to thank him last week; but I find I directed the letter wrong to 150 instead of 159. Have the kindness (if you have room) to insert the inclosed paragraph. I see your leader of Sunday confirms my theory of good-natured statesmen.

Yours ever very truly,

W. H.

P.S. I won't send Clarke any more of my Georgics—Buckingham *had* an article the day before, which I dare say he has yet, unless he has given it to Colburn to keep. Pray send me down the second vol. corrected in a day or two. I won't send any more to B[uckingham] unless he *remit*s, which he does not seem inclined to do. I think this book will put your uncle's head above water, and I hope he will keep it there—to vex the rogues. I wish he had not spoken so of Hook, but Colburn *has a way with him!*

January 18, 1828.

In spite of Hazlitt's determination to write no more to Cowden Clarke on this point, we find that his irresistible persuasion that nothing adequate was being done to bring the forthcoming work, on which he had lavished so vast an amount of thought and manual labour, before the world in such a manner as to make it answer the purpose of all concerned, forced his hand a fortnight later, and elicited the annexed categorical appeal to Hunt's partner.

DEAR CLARKE,

[February 1, 1828.]

'To you Duke Humphrey must unfold his grief' in the following queries.

1. Is it unworthy of our dignity and injurious to our interest to

have the Life noticed favourably in a journal that is not the pink of classical elegance?

2. Are we to do nothing to secure (beforehand) a favourable hearing to it, lest we should be suspected or charged with being accomplices in the success of our own work by the Charing Cross Gang who would ruin you and me out of their sheer dogmatism and malignity?

3. Must we wait for Mr. Southern to give his opinion, before we dare come before the public even in an extract? Or be first hung up by our enemies, in order to be cut down by our zealous Whig and Reform friends?

4. When the house is beset by robbers, are we to leave the doors open, to shew our innocence and immaculateness of intention?

5. Were you not pleased to see the extracts from Hunt's book in the *Athenæum*? and do you not think they were of service? Why then judge differently of mine?

6. There is a puff of Haydon in the *Examiner*, like blue ruin, out of pure generosity. But with respect to ourselves we shut our mouths up like a maidenhood, lest it should look like partiality. So Hunt said he could not notice my lectures, or give me a good word, because I had praised him in the *Edinburgh*, and it would be thought a collusion.

7. You sent me L. H.'s letter in the *Chronicle*, which I was glad to see, particularly that part relating to a literary cut-throat; but why, my dear Clarke, did you not send me the puff of myself in the *London Review*, which I was perhaps—perhaps not—more pleased to see?

If you continue to use me so ill, I shall complain to your sister. Think of that, Master Brook. I like the *Companion*\* very well. Do not suppose I am vexed; I am only frightened.

Yours ever very truly,

W. H.

\* Leigh Hunt's work so called.



It is evident that Hazlitt felt a good deal of solicitude about the success of the *Life*. Much depended on it, and, coming in the wake of the one by Scott, which, whatever its relative merit may appear to us at the present moment to be, enjoyed the double advantage of his prestige and of chronological precedence, every exertion seemed desirable to secure a favourable reception by the public.

In a farther appeal to Clarke, which has survived in a mere fragment, the author asks, 'Do you think it would be amiss to give Buckingham the first vol. for next week's *Athenæum*, though Hunt, etc., do not write in it? The public are to be won like a widow

"With brisk attacks and urging,  
Not slow approaches, like a virgin."

The failure of the publishers of the *Life* involved that of their undertaking, and the disappointment and worry accelerated and embittered the end.

The nearly parallel biographies of Napoléon by Sir Walter Scott and by Hazlitt had so much in common, that they were both referable to a political origin, and displayed throughout a party complexion and bias. But than their treatment and point of view nothing could well be more different. Scott wrote to the English Tory and the French Legiti-

mist; Hazlitt recognised in Bonaparte only the symbol and champion of those principles of popular liberty which the Revolution of 1789 professed to establish, and a hero of democracy, who assumed imperial honours in self-defence and for the good of his country. Both were elaborate essays in the form of historical biography, and neither can be implicitly quoted as documentary authorities, any more than Carlyle's *Frederick* or his *French Revolution*; but it is generally allowed that Hazlitt's book carries away beyond comparison the palm of superiority as an effort of composition and as a noble tribute of admiration and homage to perhaps the most remarkable man who ever lived.

Lamb, in a letter to Cowden Clarke of February, 1828, refers to the 'speculative episodes' in the *Life* by his old friend as capital, but tells him that he 'skips the battles.' The four volumes certainly abound with magnificent passages, and when we look at the amount of technical detail and the fund of information brought together from scattered sources, we can hardly fail to admire the literary workmanship and intellectual penetration which are conspicuous throughout, and the power of the book is the more impressive when we recollect that it was produced under immense disadvantages and in

declining health. He had never attempted anything on the same scale before ; and he happened to undertake the task when he was, physically speaking, least qualified to carry it successfully out.

It is very probable that some will wonder why one should print such scraps as the following. It is simply because they demonstrate very signally and uniquely Hazlitt's assiduity in securing as perfect accuracy as possible in the excerpts which he made for his lectures, and in the text of his publications in general. They dispel the old misapprehension, that he was slovenly and indifferent with regard to such minutiae. The first item is addressed to Colburn, and refers to the volume on the English Poets :

DEAR SIR,

Did you receive the extracts from Donne in good time for the Essay, as I feel uneasy about it? Could I see the proof?

Your obliged humble servant,

W. HAZLITT.

The second item of this description was seemingly sent to the same person, and asks for a proof of the *Fight*, which originally appeared in the *New Monthly Magazine* :

[1822.]

DEAR SIR,

Could you favour me with a proof of the *Fight*, this evening, or on Monday? I wish you would desire the printer to

return me the copy. I hope to leave for Scotland next week, and shall begin the new volume of the *Table-talk*, as soon as I set out.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your much obliged

humble servant,

W. HAZLITT.

Saturday evening.

Both the *morçeau* just given and that which follows are significant of the temporary sovereignty of the passion so vividly and luridly portrayed in the *Liber Amoris*. The writer was now apparently on his return to England from his Scottish tour in 1822 :

[1822.]

MY DEAR SIR,

Will you oblige me by letting me [have] the following, prettily bound : viz., *Vicar of Wakefield*, *Man of Feeling*, and *Nature & Art*? I am here for a day or two, but am going to Salisbury. I have been to New Lanark.

Yours ever truly,

W. HAZLITT.

I wish you could send me a small gilt memorandum book, green with gold stiles.

Messrs. Taylor & Hessey,  
91 Fleet Street.

The eye for practical detail, which has not been usually recognised as characteristic of Hazlitt, equally displays itself in a letter to the postmaster at Salisbury in respect to the local postal service :

Winterslow, near Salisbury,

Oct. 6, 1828.

SIR,

I live at this place, the distance of which from Winterslow Hut is a mile and a half, and from Winterslow Hut to Salisbury six miles and a half. Each letter or newspaper I receive (brought out from Salisbury) is charged 4d. additional, which I understand is too much. This imposition is accompanied with impertinence and collusion, which make it worse. I sent a man down last night for a newspaper, which I was particularly anxious to see, and it was refused to be given up, because the messenger had not brought the 2d., though the landlady has in her possession 2d. of mine that had been left as change out of a letter paid for yesterday. This happens, whenever the landlady at the Hut (Mrs. Hine) is in the humour, and the object is to keep the 2d. for the letter-carrier the next day. Nor is this all. The letters received in so unpleasant manner do not reach Winterslow till the morning or middle of the next day after they arrive in Salisbury. They are brought out by the Guard at night, and sent up to the village at their leisure the next morning. For the additional 4d. many persons would be glad to fetch them out from Salisbury the same day, so that they would be received here two hours after they reach Salisbury, which would be a great convenience, and in some cases an object of importance.

I am, Sir,

Your very obedient, humble servant,

W. HAZLITT.

If this was not the only letter of the kind ever written by Hazlitt, no other at least has ever come under my eyes. It was a class of composition which was peculiarly distasteful to him, nor could there be much in common between his correspondent and himself beyond the dim insight and limited

compliment possibly implied in the redemption of the piece of paper from the waste-basket or the fire. The recipient docketed on the back of the original that he answered it on the 11th of the month.

In his earlier correspondence with Godwin, which is in type, the same point is still further illustrated and confirmed. There, too, we are introduced to Hazlitt as the man of affairs and the world ; and he was both in the best sense. Those who could form an estimate of him only when his health and spirits had succumbed to disappointment and worry were necessarily very indifferent judges of his temperament and carriage, while the hopes of his youth were unshattered, and his whole heart and thought were in his work.

The two remaining notes belong to 1830, and to the Frith Street days, where the scene was so soon to close :

DEAR SIR,

I should feel most extremely obliged if you could possibly favour me with a couple of orders for to-morrow-night (Tuesday).

I remain, Dear Sir,

Very respectfully yours,

W. HAZLITT.

Monday 14th June,  
6 Frith Street, Soho.

[Endorsed] — Bartley Esq.

Covent Garden Theatre.

Mr. Hazlitt takes the liberty to leave this little work with Mr. Shee, but would feel obliged to have it returned to him at No. 6, Frith Street. When the vol. is published, Mr. H. will have the honour of leaving a perfect copy of it with Mr. Shee.

[6 Frith Street, Soho.  
1830.]

The note to the President of the Royal Academy was found inside the paper cover of an incomplete copy of the *Conversations of Northcote*, 1830, which the author thus appears to have forwarded for Shee's inspection.\*

My uncle Reynell says: 'I went after the Revolution of July, 1830, to congratulate your grandfather on the triumph of Liberalism; but I found him in no very sanguine humour about the ultimate result. "Ah," said he, "I am afraid, Charles, things will go back again."'

Among the family papers is a long news-letter, sent from Havre, July 30, 1830, in which the commencement of the revolt against the government of Charles X. is graphically and minutely described. The revolutionary movement had not yet reached Havre; but there was great excitement and solicitude, and the National Guard was prepared, at a

\* Comp. *Essays on the Fine Arts*, 1873, p. 370 (the short paper entitled *Royal Academy*).

moment's notice, to march for Paris, in order to fraternize with their brethren in arms in the metropolis, where the most terrible scenes of violence and bloodshed were being enacted.

In the autumn of 1830 Hazlitt's health and strength gradually failed. There is no occasion here to enter into the details. Cowden Clarke, among others, came to see him, and talked to him in an undertone. But he said to him, 'My sweet friend, go into the next room, and sit there for a time, as quiet as is your nature ; for I cannot bear talking at present.' Mr. Clarke observes : 'Under that straightforward, hard-hitting, direct-telling manner of his, both in writing and speaking, Hazlitt had a depth of gentleness—even tenderness—of feeling on certain subjects ; manly friendship, womanly sympathy, touched him to the core ; and any token of either would bring a sudden expression into his eyes very beautiful as well as very heart-stirring to look upon. We have seen this expression more than once, and can recall its appealing charm, its wonderful irradiation of the strong features and squarely-cut, rugged under-portion of the face.'\*

That Hazlitt, or anyone else, in such a state,

\* *Recollections of Writers*, 1878, p. 63.



should not have been able to bear the conversation of Clarke, was owing to that loud voice and boisterous manner to which his friends were accustomed, but which a dying man could not endure.

My grandfather laid Jeffrey under not inconsiderable obligations to him by the splendid panegyric in the *Spirit of the Age*; and the editor of the *Edinburgh* had the opportunity of requiting the service when Hazlitt on his death-bed, without any real title, wrote to him, requesting him to send him in his extremity £50. Jeffrey's kindness and liberality on this occasion won, as Talfourd tells us, Lamb's admiration, nor did it affect the argument, that the money arrived too late to be of any use.

He had made Jeffrey's personal acquaintance, it appears, at Edinburgh in 1822, while he was there for the first and last time on private business. At least there is no apparent record of an earlier meeting; and it was then that Jeffrey wished to introduce him to Sir Walter Scott, and that Hazlitt declined the offer. It seems almost a pity that he did so; for he had spoken, on the whole, favourably of Scott as an author, and the latter, like Southey, was a man of more liberal temper than many of the Tory party. In that very year, when Hazlitt was in Scotland, Scott had privately forwarded to Lamb £10 for

Godwin, then in real distress, with an injunction to refrain from mentioning the donor, lest political friends might think him inconsistent, and even more than that.

Jeffrey, however, did not permit this circumstance to militate against his friendly intercourse and literary relations with my grandfather, who never lost his footing as a writer in the *Edinburgh* from 1815 to the time of his death. The tone of the paper in the *Spirit of the Age*, 1825, two or three years after the refusal to meet Scott, is a sufficient assurance that this scruple on Hazlitt's part in no way weakened the tie between Jeffrey and himself. No doubt the suggestion was delicately put, and the ground of objection was purely political.

There is a letter from the younger Hazlitt to his future wife, which dates itself about this point of time, when his father was fast failing, yet apparently rallying a little now and then, in which the writer observes: 'My father is much better, and ate a chicken for dinner, but he was disappointed, as he had ordered a fowl, chickens being injurious to him.' This otherwise unimportant communication is characteristically addressed to 'Miss C. Reynell, Eden.'

Hazlitt died, as it is well known, at No. 6, Frith

Street, Soho, on Saturday, September 18, 1830. At that date Soho appears to have preserved some share at least of its gentility; for one finds that Ralph Willett of Merly, about the same time, having occasion to bring his wife up to London to be attended in her confinement by some particular medical man, at first took apartments in Berners Street; but, before the event took place, on hearing that Berners Street was not a fashionable locality, he engaged other rooms in Dean Street, Soho, whence the *accouchement* was duly announced in the papers. 1830, however, marked nearly the close of the retention by Soho of its old character. Ever since the last quarter of the seventeenth century it had been a favourite resort of the nobility and gentry, before the West End was extended further toward Piccadilly and the Parks.

A good deal has been said and written of my grandfather's love of tea. He drank the finest Souchong—first at fourteen shillings, and after at twelve shillings per pound, and used two ounces for his breakfast and two for his tea, with cream. He got it at Robinson's in Piccadilly. At the beginning of the century the price had been a guinea.

After Hazlitt's death, Horne, who is not mentioned by Mrs. Hazlitt in the memorandum left behind her,

and printed in the *Memoirs*, as having been in the room at the time, superintended the taking of the cast, which was used by Durham in his bust, and cut off a lock of hair, which he gave to Mr. Buxton Forman. The latter informed the writer that it was black. The plaster cast, which I possess, and which shews terrible emaciation of the features, was made by an Italian employed by Horne, I understand. The bust, which Durham executed for my father gratuitously, was modelled after the cast and portraits, assisted by the suggestions of the Procters. Four copies were done, of which at least one was broken. The Procters pronounced it a satisfactory likeness.

An illustration of the gross illiteracy of most of our inferior clergy was afforded, when an American gentleman of my acquaintance went to St. Ann's, Soho, to see the burial-place of Hazlitt. On inquiring of a person of clerical aspect whether he could direct him to the spot, 'Ah, yes,' replied the individual, 'I believe that there is someone of that name buried here—the author, I think, of *Old Cookery Books*.'

There was far more in this trait of ignorance than the mere want or deficiency of knowledge as to Hazlitt's writings or literary merits; for here was

the local clergyman, or his deputy, who almost seemed to plume himself on his uncertainty of information respecting well-nigh the only person of any note lying within the precincts of the church; and this is the class which sets itself up as specially qualified by education and culture to enlighten and improve the community.

A second American pilgrim more recently called at No. 6, Frith Street, Soho, and inquired of a German woman, who opened the door to him, whether she had been there long. She replied, 'Sixteen years.' He asked once more, 'Had she ever heard anyone mention Mr. Hazlitt?' 'Hazlitt—Hazlitt?' she repeated after him thoughtfully. 'Was he a tailor?'

I should like to be permitted to append as an antidote the graceful and appreciative lines written on Hazlitt by Miss Louise Imogen Guiney, of Norwood, Massachusetts :

FOR W. H., 1778—1830.

Between the wet trees and the sorry steeple  
Keep, Time, in dark Soho what once was Hazlitt,  
Seeker of Truth, and finder oft of Beauty ;

Beauty's a sinking light, ah ! none too faithful,  
But Truth, who leaves so here her spent outrider,  
Forgets not her great pawn : herself shall claim it.

Therefore sleep safe, thou dear and battling spirit !  
'Safe also on our earth, begetting ever  
Some one love worth the ages and the nations.

Nothing falls under to thine eyes eternal,  
Sleep safe in dark Soho: the stars are shining;  
Titian and Wordsworth live; the People marches.

1788  
Your most  
affectionate son  
William, Hazlitt

1812.

Admit the beaver to  
Mr. Hazlitt's lectures  
on English philosophy.  
W. Hazlitt

1829.

William Hazlitt

## CHAPTER X.

Remarks on my grandfather's character and writings—Alexander Ireland and his publications on him—Some particulars of John Hazlitt the miniaturist.

As regards Hazlitt's later and latest work, apart from that in book form, the channels for his artistic, theatrical, and miscellaneous productions continued to the end to be fairly numerous and lucrative. The *London Magazine* ceased to exist about 1826; and before that date my grandfather had discontinued his papers there. On the other hand, the *Morning Chronicle*, the *Examiner*, and the *Edinburgh Review*, which he had joined at an early stage of his career, willingly opened their columns to him down to a few months of his death; and he acquired fresh outlets in the *New Monthly Magazine*, the *Atlas*, and Richardson's *London Weekly Review*. Mr., subsequently Major, D. L. Richardson spent a portion of his later life in India; he revisited England; and remained here some years, during which I made

his personal acquaintance ; but he ultimately settled at Calcutta, I believe, as the editor of the *Englishman*. I lost sight of him thenceforward. The curious part of the matter was that he volunteered to procure me the editorship, and then wrote to say that he had changed his mind, and taken it himself.

Hazlitt, in common with all men of obscure and humble origin, who raise themselves above mediocrity by high and varied attainments under trying conditions, was exposed to all the inconveniences and annoyances which every aspiring literary adventurer must reckon on encountering ; and there was in his day the added element of political bitterness and animosity. Had he been a purely literary character, the ground for hostility would have ceased ; the Tories of the time did not care what he thought about Shakespear and Milton, or whether his criticisms on art and the drama were good or bad ; they merely looked at what he had to say about them ; and that he did not spare them, and was beyond a bribe, is the true reason, after all, why his name and writings so long suffered obloquy. Until the state of political parties underwent a complete revolution, the general public did not think of taking up his books to judge for themselves if what Gifford,



Croker, and Wilson had said about them was the truth, or a wicked calumny, and of his personal history they had no means of knowing anything beyond the barest outline and a few more or less apocryphal anecdotes. An occasional review of one of his works by an unprejudiced pen, the noble and pathetic allusion of Lamb in the letter to Southey, and the notice prefixed by Bulwer and Talfourd to the *Literary Remains*, were long all that could enable the ordinary reader to suppose the real Hazlitt to be something different from the caricatures in the Tory press; and it was only when the present writer collected together a large body of new biographical data in the *Memoirs* of 1867, that, nearly forty years after his death, the first systematic attempt was made to present my grandfather's chequered career in an approximately true light, and to shew that he is added to the catalogue of distinguished Englishmen, whom it is an injustice and an absurdity to estimate by any normal standard. Every great man becomes his own prototype.

A failure or contempt of tact, accompanied by certain infirmities of temper, arising in part from the conflict of early training with the ulterior evolution of new ideas and projects, obviously tended very much to aggravate his position, and to render its

tenure more arduous. He was baited by opponents of every class and grade, from the *Quarterly* to *John Bull*, all the more cruelly because he had not the art of disguising his exasperation and chagrin; and the violence of political warfare, with the almost unceasing cross-current of literary antagonism, coloured and darkened his private life, as they did those of so many others. Parties and names have long changed their relative positions; and the Liberalism which Hazlitt espoused, and for which he suffered, would be too narrow for a modern Conservative. He lived and died under the old *régime*; but although he witnessed two revolutions in France and one in America, he became neither a Radical nor a Socialist. His young associations led him rather to fraternize with the doctrine of personal liberty, which underlay the birth of American independence. His writings may now be judged and appreciated apart from collateral elements and agencies; and his full measure of fame has yet to come to him. *Sic vos non vobis.*

Mr. Ireland, in his recent book (1889), has detailed all the known circumstances which attended the last moments of Hazlitt. It is no part of my design to transcribe or reprint from easily accessible authorities; and anyone can perceive by glancing

over Mr. Ireland's pages, that several friends exerted themselves to mitigate the distressing incidents of the scene, and contributed to pay a final tribute of respect to the dying man. I find myself, however, unable to refrain from applying a moral—To what did all this homage and succour amount, but a tardy and meagre recognition on the part of some, at least, of those present on this sad occasion? Why should Montagu, with all his own, and his wife's, and the Procters', rapturous appreciation of Hazlitt, have waited till the object of it could only receive it, as it were, as a sort of *viaticum*—when it was practically little better than a posthumous act? They, one and all, admittedly comprehended the wayward and almost childishly froward nature of their friend, and they permitted him to die under a pressure of petty worries, which by a concerted movement among themselves, at the proper time, might have been removed. His failure of strength was gradual; it extended over some months; even for a year or so he had complained of his health being indifferent, and a source of anxiety on his little son's account; and, nevertheless, all these well-wishers forbore to take the initiative in averting the catastrophe, which most of them ought to have dis-

cerned long beforehand. It was a case of sheer bodily and mental exhaustion.

Mr. Ireland furnishes a highly acceptable selection of representative extracts, helping to familiarize the general reader with Hazlitt's name and merits; and the memoir prefixed embraces all the known facts within the editor's reach, as the latter was unfortunately not aware that I had accumulated a large assortment of new matter since 1867, and had been thus enabled to supply important corrections and additions to a narrative which was, at the time of its appearance, very far in advance of anything yet attempted or to be hoped for.

It seems to me regrettable that of JOHN HAZLITT, to whom his brother owed so much at the outset of his career, we are able to regain so little. Very few clues to the circumstances which attended his establishment in the Metropolis after the return from America have come under my notice; his representatives are destitute of any memorials of him, nor have I met with a single scrap of his handwriting. As a mere boy he must have acquired an elementary proficiency in the art of painting, and we ascertain from his sister's Diary that he executed a good deal of work of all kinds during

the stay in the States, and that on the settlement of the family at Wem in 1787, he, being then hardly of age (for he was born at Marshfield in Gloucestershire, as we know, in 1767), was left behind in London, under the charge of his father's tried and affectionate friend, Mr. David Lewis, in order to pursue his studies and earn his subsistence.

That he accomplished these objects, married a Miss Mary Pearce, of Portsea, of whom I possess several portraits on ivory, and settled in Rathbone Place, is clear enough ; but the details are lamentably scanty. His progress and success in his calling as a miniaturist must have been extraordinary.

In 1788, only a twelvemonth subsequent to his arrival in the Metropolis, he exhibited at the Royal Academy four miniatures after pictures by Sir Joshua in one frame ; and he not merely continued to hang his productions down to 1819, but had sufficient interest and reputation to procure the admission of their father's likeness by his younger brother in 1804, and to draw round him many of the eminent literary men and artists of the time. Among his professional performances in my hands are the miniatures of his father and mother, brother, sister, and himself (engraved in the present volume), and many others, particularly a portrait of Charles

Kemble, painted in 1809, and a copy on ivory of Sir Joshua's *Robinetta*, of which (then in the possession of the Honourable William Tollemache) there is a well-known print by T. Jones.

Leaving England as a lad of sixteen, he had remained in America with his parents four years, and during the last twelvemonth or so followed his profession. He must have been, to a large extent, self-taught, like his brother; yet at a period of life when he was a comparatively young man he had secured a connection which enabled him to maintain a household, to receive friends, and to remove to more fashionable quarters in Great Russell Street.

This was in 1804, and he notified his change of address in a circular, of which I transcribe the terms, on the plea of its possible uniqueness and the meagre knowledge which we otherwise have of the person concerned :

*MR. HAZLITT, Miniature Painter, begs leave respectfully to inform his friends and the public, that he is removed to No. 109, Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, where he flatters himself with a continuance of their favour. He hopes that his miniatures will justify the high encomiums passed upon them by the late*

---

*Sir Joshua Reynolds, by whom he was warmly recommended to many of his friends before his death.*

*Specimens of his pictures may be seen at his house in Great Russell Street.*

*His price for the usual sizes is seven guineas.*

*Great Russell Street,*

*Feb. 20th, 1804.*

This rather interesting document goes no farther than to state that John Hazlitt's work had met with the approbation of Sir Joshua, which, seeing that several of the specimens were from his own originals, might have been complimentary; for we are expressly informed that the deceased painter recommended his young contemporary to his friends. I have not seen any evidence of the elder Hazlitt having copied Sir Joshua's works in the original size.

We gather from the Lamb correspondence certain traits and vestiges of the establishment in Great Russell Street. Lamb, writing to Hazlitt on February 19, 1806, refers to the show-cupboard there, and expresses his high estimation of John's ability. He particularly specifies the miniature of Margaret Hazlitt as having been done prior to this date, and as being of special excellence.

He executed, concurrently with his practice as a miniature-painter, a considerable number of portraits, including several of his brother between the ages of nineteen and thirty, one of his sister Margaret, one of Joseph Lancaster (now in the National Portrait Gallery), and one of Thomas Clio Rickman, the bookseller, a kinsman of Lamb's early friend and correspondent; and in the decline of life, while he resided successively at Exeter and Stockport, I believe that, owing to failing sight, he confined himself entirely to this class of work. The likeness in oils of his sister is almost worthy of Romney. From a letter of his father, written to a friend in 1814, we casually learn that the artist was then at Manchester, possibly on tour through the old familiar country, where both his brother and himself had in former days found so many patrons.

Some of his miniatures and portraits have been engraved. Among the former I may mention those of Dr. Kippis, his father's early and steadfast friend, and of Arthur Young, the agriculturist and traveller. The only portrait which I have seen copied is the likeness of Clio Rickman, of which the print by James Holmes is dated 1800. But, owing to the absence of distinct clues, an exhaustive catalogue of



his works would, I fear, be a task no longer susceptible of satisfactory treatment. The likenesses of his wife are numerous; and there are some of himself, of which I own two.

Lamb, in his letter of February, 1806, to Hazlitt, deprecates the seduction of his brother by *ignes fatui* in the shape of Madonnas. He was then engaged in painting a Virgin and Child from his wife and infant son; and he once undertook a recumbent Aphrodite on an unprecedentedly large canvas. It furnished a proof of his capacity, at any rate, for producing works small enough to wear as a brooch, or large enough to occupy one side of a room.

A man of such undoubted genius, working so many years as a miniaturist in a then tolerably fashionable neighbourhood, ought in the very nature of things to have left fuller memorials of his professional life behind him than the entries in the catalogues of the Royal Academy, and such traditional items as have been handed down to his descendants. His political views, which were almost Jacobinical, were as antagonistic to his success as an artist as those of his brother were to his favourable reception by certain sections of the literary world; and the two resembled each other, and the father from

whom they derived them, in a radical incapacity for disguising what they felt.

My father recollected the cottage, which stood above and overlooked the road, about half a mile out of Exeter, where his uncle first went to live on his retirement from London ; it was a neighbourhood to which he was naturally drawn by the proximity to Crediton or Alphington, where his mother and sister were about the same time, and whence we find old Mrs. Hazlitt directing a letter in 1824.

He died, at Stockport, May 16, 1837. I never heard whether his brother ever actually assisted him in his later days, when his resources were, I fear, straitened ; but more than once he expressed his desire to be in a position to do something for him ; this was evidently a thought constantly in my grandfather's mind, and the allusion to the subject in 1822, when the Scottish business was sufficient to absorb all attention, proves the strength and sincerity of the sentiment, while it is the last distinct trace which we gain of the object of fraternal solicitude. It was at Exeter that his eldest daughter Harriet, after the death of her first husband, Captain Stewart, met with Mr. Upham, a bookseller, whom she married ; and the Uphams may have helped her

father. I like to think that they did. The painter, when Hazlitt first settled at York Street, shewed a natural kindness of heart in sparing a portion of his own effects toward the new establishment.

The singular obscurity in which John Hazlitt's career is involved, from the absence of letters and other *data*, tempts me to add here that, in settling at Stockport in May, 1832, his inducement was the neighbourhood of the Carlingfords, connections of Harling the artist, and a leading family at that time in the town, with whom my great-uncle not impossibly contracted an acquaintance during his earlier provincial tours. He executed between 1832 and 1837 a considerable number of likenesses and other works, and acquired a reputation for conversational ability, though, like his brother, he was said to be irritable.

His London career extended over about six-and-thirty years (1788-1824), and we hear only of three addresses: 288 High Holborn, Rathbone Place, and Great Russell Street.

Coleridge notes that John Hazlitt told him that a picture never looked so well as when the palette was by the side of it. 'Association, with the glow of production.' The essayist reports a saying of his, that no young man thinks he shall ever die; this

may have formed the germ of Hazlitt's paper *On the Feeling of Immortality in Youth*, where it is cited.

It has always been understood that my great-uncle might in or about 1809 have taken the appointment of miniature-painter to the Czar, and that he declined it. Despotism, even as it existed in England at that date, was not to his taste; he would have probably been drafted to Siberia.

## THE THIRD GENERATION



## CHAPTER I.

(1830-1840.)

Hazlitt's son—His exertions to obtain employment—Bulwer-Lytton—The *Literary Remains*—Difficulties in procuring material for a biography of his father—Engagement on the *Morning Chronicle*—Marriage to Miss Reynell—The Free List—Charles Kemble—Testimonies from literary correspondents—Wordsworth—Haydon—The Procters—Anecdotes of Procter, Haydon, and Hood—Robert Chambers.

VARIOUS schemes had been propounded for arranging some settlement in life for Hazlitt's only son, now nineteen years of age, and without any provision beyond such slender assistance as his mother could render him out of her own modest income and the friendly hospitality of a few intimate associates, foremost among whom stood the Reynells.

From the time of leaving school about 1824, my father spent a very considerable share of his time at Broad Street, which became a second home to him under the peculiar conditions in which he was placed after the unfortunate separation of his parents in

1822. This roof, and one or two others, alleviated what might have been a still more comfortless position. His father appears to have cherished to the last a hope of leaving him sufficient to make any occupation unnecessary; but the best that can be said for such a notion is that he did not anticipate so early a close of the scene, or the financial collapse of the firm which had engaged to pay him a handsome amount for the *Life of Napoleon*.

Even before Hazlitt's death, but while it required very little foresight to augur the worst, my father's ever-thoughtful mother endeavoured through Martin Burney and others to prevail on him to exert himself to procure his son some employment; and as he seemed to have a taste for singing, it was proposed to Hazlitt that John Braham should be asked to take him as a pupil. But nothing was done, and my father found himself in 1830 without a profession and without a subsistence. That he accomplished what he did under almost every conceivable drawback and difficulty, and that, with the steadfast help in their several ways of his mother, Sir John Stoddart, and the Reynells, he succeeded at length in winning a recognition of the claims of Hazlitt to public gratitude, is a piece of the romance of life, which reflects honour on him and on his



memory. Perhaps the recompense, which came to him in 1854, was barely adequate to the load of anxiety which he suffered in the interval, and certainly in one respect the boon arrived too late; for, had it been conceded ten years sooner, it might have saved my mother from a premature grave. She was our good genius through all these troubled times, and was only spared, as it were, to look for a short season on the land of Canaan. I feel confident, from what my mother once told me, that her husband did his best in those early days of trial and straits, before I understood how narrow and how precarious were our means, to sustain her courage and his own; I remember her speaking of one occasion, when he was unusually silent and thoughtful, and when, at length, he owned to her that he had lost his engagement on the press and their only source of livelihood. I am relating over again the experience of many and many—of some whose careers have been full of such incidents to heart-breaking.

When the genius of Hazlitt himself had gradually overcome all obstacles, his original associations and boyish culture still remained an inalienable part of his nature, and in some respects assisted in accounting for apparent contradictions in his character and

conduct. The scanty resources on which his young home at Wem had been perforce maintained, and the sparing expenditure to which he was accustomed, even when he had quitted the paternal roof, and until his connection with the press proved more remunerative, gave place in a not unusual manner to habits of prodigality and improvidence. This reaction may partly explain his dislike to encouraging parsimony in young people. He had not merely had actual experience of the disadvantages of want of money in his early days, but I feel almost convinced that he was self-conscious of the pernicious effect which it was calculated to produce by the force of subsequent contrast. In the case of my father, he was not quite so extreme as the Prince de Condé, who flung indignantly away his boy's unspent pocket-money ; but he was generally vexed if my father had not got rid of all the change last given to him. This was an idiosyncrasy, with a philosophical solution at the root of it.

The commercial disaster which had befallen the publishers of the *Life of Napoléon*, and had rendered that work a barren labour, unhappily involved the Reynells, and cast a cloud over the fortunes of a family which had become doubly endeared to my father by the proposed alliance between him and

one of the daughters of Mr. Carew Henry Reynell. This complicated, and in every sense untoward, catastrophe necessitated the reconstruction of the printing business.

The engagement to Catherine Reynell, however, had been contracted antecedently to Hazlitt's death, and had been cordially approved both by him and my grandmother, whose letter on the subject I print elsewhere. Through the influence of Walter Coulson, my father had obtained a berth on the *Morning Chronicle*, then edited by John Black, and he was already busy in devoting intervals of leisure from the press in collecting material for a suitable literary memorial to Hazlitt. He had apartments at this juncture at No. 15, Wardour Street, Soho, and the replies of some of his correspondents to his appeal for information and assistance in his task are directed to him there.

Unquestionably he had been led into entering on such a votive enterprise by the advice of well-wishers, who discerned the importance of keeping the name before the world, and of the younger Hazlitt identifying himself with his father's works and services.

The *Literary Remains*, introduced by biographical and critical notices from the pens of Bulwer, Talfourd,

and the Editor, represent the fruit of some years' intermittent work succeeded by the difficulty of finding a publisher willing to undertake the book. Hazlitt had been dead six years when this tribute to his memory appeared at length in 1836.

At first sight there is a sentiment of regret that such a delay should have occurred, as interest and sympathy are usually apt to suffer modification from lapse of time; yet in the particular case it is impossible to judge whether prompter action, had it been feasible, would have been more effectual, and would have spared my father many long years of anxiety. Bulwer stood well with the Melbourne Cabinet, and when we cast our eyes over the glowing periods in which he testifies his unbounded admiration for Hazlitt, it seems unaccountable on ordinary principles that he could not have spoken a word in season for Hazlitt's son.

I have quite a series of letters from Bulwer-Lytton to my father; but they are of no permanent or general interest. Though a man of considerable fortune and influence, he never assisted us in any shape or way. He was notoriously, and even self-consciously, penurious, and used to explain this by saying that he had the blood of Elwes the miser in his veins; but he was at the same time totally

deficient in real sympathy with anyone. He was a word-painter and ideologist. One of Hazlitt's latest projects was to review his novels in the *Edinburgh*. He had read *Paul Clifford*, and wanted, rather characteristically, a practical inducement to go through the rest. But the notion was never carried out.

I have always understood that the Lyttons were connected with Rackery Hall, Llay, near Wrexham, an old house where I have often stayed with the more recent owners.

My father called on Lytton one day at the Priory, Acton, a mansion standing in large grounds on the left hand at the entrance to the village as one came from London, and found him seated before the fire, with his feet on the mantelshelf and a long pipe in his mouth. He invited my father to take a cigar and sit by him, and for some time the two smoked in silence. At length Lytton, removing the pipe from his mouth, and turning round to my father, said, with a gloomy smile, 'This is cheerful, Hazlitt, isn't it?'

Meanwhile, the *Morning Chronicle* supplied the means of support, and in 1833 my father and Miss Reynell were married, at St. James's, Piccadilly, at first taking lodgings over Warren's, a cabinet-maker,

at No. 76, Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, where I was born, August 22, 1834. They subsequently shifted their quarters to two successive sets of apartments in Percy Street, Tottenham Court Road, where they continued to live till, in 1838, they settled in Alfred Place, Old Brompton.

At one of our addresses in Percy Street, our landlord was a Mr. McComie, a bookbinder. I did not recognise him as such, of course, till long subsequently; but he was one of the enemies of books, and I have copies of many volumes which were desecrated by this villainous artist, for whom Mr. Blades would probably have recommended capital punishment. Percy Street may be recollected as the locality where the Rev. Mr. Hazlitt lodged in 1787, after his return from America, and where Lamb visited his friend Hume.

The love of the theatre, which had developed in Hazlitt from his early visits to London, before he regularly resided there, and which I have traced to the Presbyterian minister himself in a modified degree, descended to his son, with whom it doubtless proved a valuable resource at a period when his purse was thinly lined, and an instructive and amusing evening was attainable, in company with the Reynells, without any appreciable expense.

One of the great old-fashioned institutions connected with the drama sixty or seventy years ago was the Free List. Of course, this usage is still in force as regards persons belonging to the press, and more or less directly associated with the staff; but at one time, while the modern practice of *papering* the theatres was comparatively unknown, complimentary tickets and admissions by signing the book were far more general. It is unnecessary to mention that Hazlitt himself enjoyed a sort of *carte-blanche* at all the principal houses, where his dramatic criticisms were apt to be such influential agents in deciding the fortunes of a new piece; and at one or two theatres I have understood that his place was kept for him.

My father had a free admission at Covent Garden at a very early age (he used to say at twelve), and went there some thirty times to see a piece called *Ivanhoe; or, The Black Knight*—the *Noir Fainéant* of Sir Walter. Some of the gentlemen connected with the press took half a dozen or more of their friends in with them gratis, when he was a boy.

By a sort of prescriptive sufferance, he probably, if he had no actual *entrée* on the same lines elsewhere, experienced no difficulty in procuring orders

But it seems to have been thought even at Covent

Garden, by some of the subordinates, that the death of the critic himself determined the old relationship, and my father, one evening early in November, 1830, was refused admission at the barrier. He therefore wrote to Charles Kemble, and received instant attention and redress, as the subjoined letter establishes :

T. R. C. Garden,  
10th November 1830.

DEAR SIR,

There must be some mistake : but where it lies I cannot tell. I certainly ordered your name to be put upon our free-list and on referring to it this morning, there I found the name, and Mr. Notter assured me it had been there ever since I had spoken concerning it—I can only regret that you should have been disappointed, and request that should the Door-keeper make such another blunder, you will immediately enquire for Mr. Notter, who is always to be found at the Theatre till nine or ten o'clock, and he will take care to rectify the mistake.

I am, Dear Sir,  
Very truly yours,  
C KEMBLE.

It would not be quite proper to dismiss this letter without explaining the peculiar obligations under which Mrs. Siddons and the Kembles lay to Hazlitt, whose services in bringing their merits before the public contributed most importantly to their professional success. These criticisms of his later life appeared, for the most part, in the *Atlas* newspaper,



and have not hitherto been reprinted. But our family had known Charles Kemble at a much earlier period, and in 1809, or thereabout, John Hazlitt executed a very striking miniature of this distinguished performer. It was perhaps through Godwin, again, that we became acquainted with them. They had taken the leading part in his *Antonio* so far back as 1800. My grandfather was probably as valuable an aid to this gifted family as he had formerly been to the elder Kean.

As regards the Free List, it nominally exists no longer ; but, as a matter of fact, the system is carried out under different conditions. My father and myself never dreamed of paying for admission in the old days.

The meagre co-operation and light which my father obtained in the years succeeding Hazlitt's death, in aid of a connected narrative of the Life, and the failure to gain from those in office a favourable hearing for his own inherited pretensions, were accompanied by a tolerably bountiful supply of evidences from all quarters of grateful and admiring enthusiasm for the writings and gifts of the departed man. With the most limited experience of the world, and a slender livelihood of precarious tenure, my father found himself brought into contact with many who were almost strangers to him personally,

and who, with the fewest possible exceptions, possessed in common one property—that of being unable to serve him.

The distasteful ordeal of candidature for some official post of a permanent character constituted an incident of my father's career from his nineteenth to his forty-third year. In the intervening time he was, on the whole, enabled by his industry and ability to earn a fair competence ; but it was a perpetual struggle in quest of work, and his health must have been seriously shaken if the strain had lasted much longer.

In the memoir before the *Remains* I confess that I do not trace Godwin's helping hand, yet I see from a letter in my possession that an application was addressed to him, and that he acknowledged it. He says, under date of May 24, 1831 :

‘ I should be very happy to render you any service that it lay in the way of so old and poor a man to confer. But I am afraid I can do little in the matter to which your letter relates. I knew your father perhaps earlier than most persons now living. In the meanwhile, if you will favour me with a call at one o'clock either Thursday or Friday next, I shall have pleasure in our comparing our recollections and ideas on the subject.’

Among those to whom my father not unnaturally applied in his quest for information and assistance in connection with a contemplated memoir of Hazlitt, was Wordsworth, whose reply is dated May 23, 1831, and testifies that he (Hazlitt), whom he had first met in Somersetshire (*i.e.*, at Nether Stowey), in the autumn of 1797 or the summer of 1798, 'was then remarkable for analytical power, and for acuteness and originality of mind; and that such intellectual qualities characterized him through life, his writings, as far as I am acquainted with them, sufficiently prove.'

Wordsworth, I apprehend, was rather niggard of praise of others. In a letter of 1816 to John Scott, then editor of the *Champion*, he dismisses the literary exploits and merits even of his more particular friends Lamb, Coleridge, and Southey in a couple of lines, and then breaks off to ask his correspondent if he would like to see his 'Thanksgiving Ode' before publication. There was a good library at Rydal Mount, and one would have thought that in 1831 Wordsworth must have fallen in with the printed lectures, the *Characters of Shakespear*, the *Round Table*, the *Table-Talk*, and many another, to have made it possible for him to requite in some measure the high tribute to his genius which

Hazlitt had paid him in his lifetime. But the verse-writer, at all events—perhaps every author—prefers compliment and homage to discriminating appreciation, and it is to be feared that the critic had given offence by not allowing Tennyson's predecessor—the bard who 'uttered nothing base'—all points.

Haydon the painter, returning a copy of the *Literary Remains* to a friend, says: 'I return you Hazlitt. I have had great pleasure in it. I remember his talking the greater part. Nowhere did he unbend with more pleasure than with me. . . . I remember with great feeling his noble character of me in a criticism he wrote on my *Agony of Christ* in the *New Monthly*, 1821: "The more you give him to do, the better he does it. Order, energy, boundless ambition, are the categories of his mind and the springs of his enterprise. He bestrides his Art like a Colossus. Impossibility is the element in which he glories." There's a character! Enough to make a man forgive a host of faults, and overlook the age of malice. I forgive him all for that, and consider accounts are balanced.' Generous creature! Wordsworth over again!

In the *Memoirs* I have accumulated, as far as possible, every item of information shedding light on the relations and intercourse between these two con-

temporaries. Hazlitt must have fallen in with Haydon immediately after his fixture at York Street, as the painter described from actual observation the circumstances attending the christening of my father in 1812. Whether they had been brought together by Northcote I cannot say; but the intimacy continued to the end, notwithstanding occasional friction and coolness, which must be set down, I believe, to Haydon's superlative egotism and the inadequate panegyrics of the critic on his periodical productions. It is tolerably notorious that in one or two instances my grandfather did violence to his own conscience by overpraising the work of a friend, purely because he knew that the pecuniary realization was of momentous importance.

It was Haydon who once met Hazlitt returning from the Fives Court with his shirt in his pocket, because he had been playing with such energy that it was like a wet rag.

Cowden Clarke, writing to me from Genoa in 1867, says: 'With respect to the relics of his artistic career, I wish I had only thought to have sent you a characteristic anecdote communicated to me by John Hunt. You no doubt knew that he for a long while had in his possession that very remarkable (I believe *first*) portrait of the Old Woman.

One morning Haydon called, and, observing the picture, exclaimed : " Hallo ! where did you get that Rembrandt ? It looks like an early performance." When Hunt told him who was the artist, poor Haydon uttered not a single word.'

In an odd little letter from Procter, under date of 1852, he explains the origin of his *Effigies Poeticæ*, which had appeared about five-and-twenty years before : ' Nearly thirty years ago I agreed to edit an edition of the English poets (adopting a different plan to that generally in use), for which I was to receive about £1,000. After I had taken an enormous deal of trouble—not so much in writing as in searching—the booksellers found their funds insufficient, and sent me a cheque for £10 with, their best compliments. Previously to this, however, I had framed a sort of *catalogue raisonné* of the portraits of the English poets, which was afterwards published, A.D. 1824, by Carpenter and Son, Bond Street. In this I ventured upon such portraits (about one hundred in number), about twenty or thirty lines, sometimes a page, sometimes less, of matter, partaking somewhat of the biographical and critical—brief, as you will see ; but in my case I fear that brevity was not the soul of wit. Your father liked some of those that I read to him, and this is

the best that I can say of them. This book, or catalogue, upon which the bookseller inflicted the title of *Effigies Poeticæ*, is, I suppose, easily attainable. If not, I have a copy which I can lend you, but you must be good enough to take care of it and return it, as it is the only evidence I possess of my incompetency at that particular period of my life.'

Both Procter, his wife, and the Montagus had undoubtedly a very high respect for Hazlitt. Mrs. Montagu, in writing to my father about some point in relation to my grandfather's manuscripts, says: 'I could do nothing respecting Mr. Hazlitt in which I did not consider his own wish, and I think I know his mind in this matter.' And, again, Mrs. Procter, referring to the fourth generation of the family, and to the approaching publication by myself of the *Memoirs* (1867), writes as follows: 'What an old woman it makes me to receive instruction from the son of the little boy whom I have seen sitting on the knee of one whom I have never ceased to regret! When I read a fine piece of modern writing, my greatest expression of praise is, "Almost as good as Hazlitt."' Does not the last sentence remind us a little of what the late Louis Stevenson said?

This excellent lady once tried to befriend me by recommending me to Sir Francis Goldsmid, M.P., as

a sort of secretary. I do not know that I should have been of much use to him ; but I perpetrated the appalling indiscretion on the threshold of suggesting that I could, I thought, draw up his speeches for him. Our acquaintance was ephemeral.

I was informed by Mrs. Procter some years ago that her maiden name was Sheppen. Hazlitt always spoke of her as Anne Skipper.

In a letter from Miss Lamb to Miss Barbara Betham, of 1814, just ten years before the marriage to Procter, the writer says : ' Miss Skepper is out of town.' But the Lambs on orthographical points are never conclusive.

It was in 1824 that she married Procter, with whom she had become acquainted in 1820. In their early married life they resided at Merton ; but when my father took me to see them about 1860, they were living in Weymouth Street. Mrs. Sheppen or Skipper, Mrs. Procter's mother, married Basil Montagu about 1806. She had previously taken lodgers, and possibly in this way met with her future husband and son-in-law. Montagu was a son of Lord Sandwich, and held during many years the post of Commissioner of Bankrupts.

Procter wrote some spirited songs, but his poetry, notwithstanding the laudations which his friends were



pleased to lavish on it as a matter of compliment, is of the thinnest and poorest quality. Lamb characterized it as redundant, like the wen which once appeared on the author's neck.

Procter as a young man had a way of twitching his ears, and when he was courting Miss Sheppen, who was reputed to have a will of her own, Hazlitt said that, when they were married, she would make him twitch his ears still more.

Mrs. Procter used to say that Patmore's statement as to Hazlitt's going to Montagu's ill dressed, or being disconcerted by M.'s footman, was rubbish. He always, she said, came properly dressed, though not, perhaps, in rigorous evening attire.

Another slight testimonial from one of Charles Lamb's later acquaintances, Thomas Hood, lies before me in the shape of a note to my father on a matter of business. Hazlitt met Hood at the house of their common friend. The former was associated in his host's recollection with those early days when he, and Coleridge, and Wordsworth, and the rest of the Temple coterie, and the whist-boys, were young, poor, and happy together. The latter, with his geniality and wit, came in brighter times, when resources were ampler and fame had been realized; but the old set was scattered, and new faces formed

almost a need to distract Lamb from melancholy reflections and depressing home scenes.

The allusion to the devolution of the *New Monthly* is a characteristic touch of Colburn, of whom we have heard a good deal in an anterior section :

17 Elm Tree Road,  
St. John's Wood,  
Tuesday.

SIR,

I have so often enjoyed the conversation and writings of your Father that, predisposed to look favourably on your own MS., it would have given me great pleasure to find you a contributor to the *New Monthly Magazine*.

You would therefore have heard from me sooner but for an uncertainty, which is resolved by my renouncing my own connexion with the *New Monthly*.

I am, Sir,  
Yours very truly,  
THO. HOOD.

I return your paper for your own disposal, as there is no successor appointed to the Editorship, which is to be managed, I understand, 'in the house' or by the publisher and his clerks.

W. Hazlitt, Esq.

One of the lessons taught by these later pieces of correspondence is the admission by more than one eminent man of the next succeeding generation of the indebtedness to Hazlitt for much that he knew, and much which had promoted his success and repute.

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Robert Chambers, writing in 1842, in respect to the *Cyclopædia of English Literature*, and the utility to him of my grandfather's *Select British Poets* of 1824, delivers this significant and complimentary testimony: 'I beg to mention to you, wishing much that it were possible to mention it to your father, that to him I was indebted for my first acquaintance with the beauties of the Elizabethan period, and perhaps to him originally is to be traced the design which now occupies me. Humbly offering to you the gratitude due to him,' etc.

## CHAPTER II.

My father's career as a journalist and man of letters—His contact with Lord Palmerston—A curious *contretemps*—My co-operation in literary work—My father edits a book for the Duke of Wellington through Murray—How the terms were fixed—Dinner-hour in those days—Tennyson referred to—My father at Chelsea—The German Reeds—Carlyle—His wife—Carlyle's reference to my grandfather—His position as a historian—Anecdote of him and Tennyson—Turner at Chelsea—Ruskin's opinion of him—Hazlitt's judgment of Turner's later style—Cremorne Gardens—John Martin the artist—His work on Metropolitan drainage—Changes in Chelsea—The Chelsea Bun House—The river and my rowing experiences—I join the Merchant Taylors' eight—Gordon Cumming.

THE mainstay of my father during the first period of his sojourn at Brompton—for he quitted it and returned to it—was journalism. It is immaterial to the present undertaking to enter into the particulars of his successive engagements on the *Morning Chronicle*, *Daily News*, and *Times*; all men who have to live by their labour have their pot-boilers; and my father had his. As I have taken occasion elsewhere to explain, the competition was less severe at that time, and better terms were obtainable; and

my father always found a succedaneum in miscellaneous literary work.

Here, again, there is no necessity for dwelling. During a succession of years he worked hard for David Bogue in Fleet Street, for John Templeman, and for Ingram and Cooke. H. G. Bohn told my father that Bogue's *European Library*, edited by the younger Hazlitt, and on the same (then novel) lines as regarded price, had been a loss to him (Bohn) of thousands. But the two capital undertakings were Defoe and Montaigne. The former was never completed; the latter has run through several editions, and with certain improvements, introduced in 1877, is still the standard English text. What we really want, however, is a direct transfer from the author's Gascon original. Cotton's translation, adopted by my father, is indifferent enough, and Florio's still more so, although among people who do not read the old provincial French it has become the fashion to applaud it. You hear the *jeunes précieux* of London speaking rapturously of Florio. If he were living, and did not belong to their circle, how different it might be!

It was while he was on the staff at the *Chronicle* that my father was twice thrown into contact with Lord Palmerston, and in both instances personally

experienced a pleasing and forcible illustration of that easy affability and ingenuous straightforwardness, for which the former Premier was so remarkable.

On the first occasion, my father having gone down in the recess to attend the election at Tiverton for the paper, he was by some accident the only London reporter present, and took notes of his lordship's speech to his constituents. The speech contained some rather strong remarks upon certain proceedings of the then French Government, and the reporter took upon himself, at the conclusion of the address, to ask his lordship whether he desired those remarks to be given, or whether they were not rather merely designed *ad captandum* (as it were). Lord Palmerston smiled, and said: 'I thank you for the alternative, but what I say here I say for everywhere;' and he added, in his own kindly manner, 'How are you going up? I am going up to town at once, to take part in the London election.' The reporter replied (this was before railways): 'If your lordship will take up my report and send it for me to the *Morning Chronicle* office in time for publication, I shall be much obliged, for that will enable me to proceed West.' His lordship accepted the mission, and ere he left Tiverton

took charge of the report, which was duly delivered at the *Chronicle* office in time for press.

On the other occasion, when Lord Palmerston, as Foreign Minister, had made on the last day of the session an important speech, Sir Benjamin Hawes, then his Under-Secretary, meeting my father outside the House, said: 'That was a fine speech of Palmerston's; I hope the reporters have a full note of it.' The answer was that, if they had no more notes of it than he himself had, in consequence of the darkness, the probabilities were there would be excessively little in the papers. The much alarm of Mr. Hawes—as he was then—at this doubt suggested a proposition that, if it was so desired, my father would take down such notes of the speech as his lordship might dictate. This being accepted, he and the Foreign Secretary proceeded to Downing Street, where, my father being seated at a table, and the noble lord being requested to regard him as the Lower House of Parliament, Palmerston, pacing up and down, and with a good-natured smile from time to time, repeated his address. By this means an important Ministerial statement was rescued from oblivion.

On the *Morning Chronicle* they arranged to pay certain members of the staff all the year round, and

to provide work for them to do, as I have just indicated, in the Parliamentary recess. My father occasionally reviewed a book or undertook a theatrical criticism. On one occasion, a new piece at one of the houses, of which he had gleaned the general character and knew the cast, was announced, and he was asked to furnish a notice. But he thought he had all the facts before him, and sent in an article based on his imagination. The performance was unfortunately postponed. The same thing once happened to Davison, musical critic on the *Times*, in the case of a new opera at the house in the Haymarket.

These days, until employment grew more and more difficult to procure, and certain classes of work ceased to be remunerative, seem to me, as I look back wistfully at them, to have been brighter and happier than those when relief arrived, and my father no longer suffered the tension and suspense of a precarious and inadequate livelihood. I cannot help feeling and saying that he bore up bravely against his trials and annoyances; and I was too young and inexperienced to aid him in his literary tasks till toward the critical juncture, when his health and spirits, and those of my poor mother, began to give way, and the fruit of a longer post-



ponement of Government patronage must have been calamitous. The earliest books in which I co-operated were the translations of Huc's *Travels in Tartary* and of the Works of Napoleon III. in 1852 and 1853. I am prouder of the bit of money which I then made for my parents than of any which I have since made for myself.

I retain a very vivid impression of a cabinet council, at which I was present as a lad, about this period, when money was scarce and precious. The second Duke of Wellington intimated his wish to Murray of Albemarle Street that my father should edit a volume connected with the series of the old Duke's *Despatches*; and the question was, what to ask; for no price was fixed either by the Duke or by Murray. My father and mother and I sat accordingly in conclave upon this weighty matter. My father held that £50 would be ample.

'Oh,' put in my mother, 'these folks have plenty; why not make it sixty?'

'Seventy would only be ten more,' suggested I.

'Egad!' cried my father, taking courage, 'I'll try eighty.'

'I should go as far as ninety, if I were you,' was my counsel. My father and mother looked at each other; my view carried the day, and ninety

sovereigns, rather easily earned, my dear father had.

About that time my father saw a good deal of the second Duke. While Apsley House was under repairs, his Grace hired a residence in Belgrave Place. My father called one morning early, and found him at breakfast on a bit of cold mutton, bread-and-butter, and tea. A servant came in, when they were together, and brought some message from the Duchess, who was not on the most cordial terms with her husband. The same thing was said of Lord Sydney and his wife, and the same reason was given. Lady S. used to travel abroad with her maid and footman, and leave Sydney to shift for himself.

He and Wellington were very intimate, and had travelled together. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ.* I saw the Duke—my father's acquaintance—more than once in Piccadilly, and recall his shabby dress and his silver watch-chain, which impressed my youthful imagination as derogatory to a man of such high rank.

It was during our stay at Alfred Place that we saw most of R. H. Horne, author of *Orion*, who has been already mentioned, and of Raymond Yates, son of an Indian Colonel, and relative of the more

celebrated Edmund and of the great actor; both these gentlemen grew, and long remained, very intimate with my father. On the latter's authority, I mentioned in the *Memoirs of Hazlitt* that Horne had once commenced a notice of my grandfather, but proceeded no farther than the exordium, 'Man is a STONE.' Horne, however, repudiated this allegation; yet from other traits of him I can believe the story to have been perfectly true. It was very characteristic of him that, during his lengthened stay in Australia, he sent nothing over to his wife, whom he had left behind, and who had to go back to her own family, but portraits of himself.

Yates, who so far followed in his father the Colonel's footsteps that he joined the Spanish Legion under Sir De Lacy Evans, although I never heard any good account of his military exploits, was a professed admirer of Coleridge and Hazlitt, and in a modest way collected original editions of both. I lost sight of him after 1867, when I left at his house in Chelsea a copy of the *Memoirs*. His wife had no literary sympathy, and poor Yates's treasures, including a few autograph letters, were stowed away in a disused oven. I suspect that they and their owner have long since gone their several ways.

When we lived at Old Brompton, three o'clock was a very usual hour for dinner, and friends, such as the Byrons and the Holls, came to tea and early supper, with a game of cards and music. There was something like friendship and neighbourhood, whereas at present there is little else than make-believe and formality; and each housekeeper seeks to outvie the other with paltry little soirées and dinner-parties, where Nobody meets Nobody. One result of the earlier dinner-hour was that places of amusement opened sooner. When Tennyson wrote about 1850 the verses on the Cock Tavern, the dinner-hour appears to have advanced to four, and since then it has moved forward to five, six, seven, eight, nine, till dinner practically stands in the place of supper.

My father had three or four residences in Chelsea between 1847 and 1857, when we returned to Brompton. At Church Street we lived opposite the Rectory, then standing in large grounds, and facing us was a charming paddock. At the other end of the thoroughfare, nearer the Queen's Elm, the German Reeds had a house, and gave musical evenings, to one of which I was taken.

This was some time prior to the opening by the Reeds, in 1859, of the public entertainment at the

Gallery of Illustration, in which they associated with them the late John Parry. Mrs. German Reed (Miss Priscilla Horton) I had often seen at the Haymarket. An attempt was made at the outset without success to quash the undertaking by injunction, on the ground that it was an unlicensed stage-play.

Church Street was at that period—about 1848—fairly rural; all the old houses still remained, and Chelsea Park was intact.

Our house in Cheyne Row was dated 1708; we were within a few doors of Carlyle. Another neighbour was Mr. Wrentmore, who shewed me an odd letter he had had from the Sage about certain cocks and hens, which he (Mr. W.) kept, and which broke Carlyle's rest.

My father, who had not then yet received his official appointment (he obtained it in November, 1854), undertook a *Life of Cromwell* about this time, and wrote respectfully to Carlyle, asking his leave to use the latter's biography in some matters of detail, but got no answer.

It was while Carlyle and ourselves resided near each other in this neighbourhood that James Hannay and some other admirers of the former presented themselves one night outside his house

and performed some mysterious rites denoting their profound sympathy and veneration.

I recall being in Hyde Park one day, and seeing Carlyle leaning against the railing by Rotten Row. He stared at me, as a cow does at a dog. I used often to meet him on horseback in his long brown great-coat and his slouched hat, while the fancy for this sort of exercise lasted.

I have watched his wife clambering up a ladder at the London Library in quest of the books of which he was in want. He made the committee buy a mass of German stuff utterly useless to anyone else, and a good deal of which he never even consulted himself, Mr. Harrison told me, when acquired.

It is a trait conclusive of Carlyle's Northern extraction and want of delicate subtlety in criticism, where, in that letter to Emerson, mentioning Hazlitt's first meeting with Coleridge at Wem, he quotes, as an illustration of the boy's election of his future master, the lines from Burns :

‘Wi’ sic as he, where’er he be,  
May I be sav’d or damn’d.’

It goes without saying that Carlyle was a vigorous, able writer and a zealous advocate; but as a historical critic, I scarcely think that he stands

very high. The references in his *Cromwell* and *French Revolution* are often of a very flimsy and second-hand cast, and I was terribly vexed at having been led to insert in a little book of anecdotes a letter from the Protector on the strength of his biographer having given it, but which is almost unquestionably a forgery.

Carlyle strikes me, indeed, as having been very indiscriminating in the choice of his authorities, and the reason may be that he mainly used them as pegs to hang his own ideas upon, couched in his peculiar Anglo-Teutonic phraseology. I suspect that more than one of the letters in the *Cromwell* book is spurious.

I do not think that it is generally known that the germ of *Sartor Resartus* is in Swift's *Tale of a Tub*. Some persons have taken me to task, and even bestowed uncomplimentary epithets on me, because it has been my cue to trace ideas back to their apparent sources. Thus, the saying of Coleridge about Lamb, that his was a mind as incapable of receiving pollution as is the sun when it shines on a dunghill; may be found in a *Life of St. Agnes*, by Daniel Pratt, 1677, and occurs long before that in Diogenes Laertius, whence perhaps Coleridge borrowed it.

I formerly threw into book-form what I termed *Studies in Jocular Literature*; it was an effort to trace out these anecdotes, and discover their real sources or *prima stamina*; and I recollect that I was described by one of the reviewers as a *ghoul* for my pains, just as the late Mr. R. H. Shepherd was on a somewhat similar account characterized by the ever-genial *Athenæum* as a *chiffonier*.

A. B. related to me a curious instance of unconscious or spontaneous sympathy and the freemasonry of tobacco. Carlyle and Tennyson spent an evening together at Cheyne Row, and sat opposite each other, pipe in mouth, saying scarcely anything. Carlyle, when the Laureate had left, remarked to his wife what a capital fellow the latter was, and Tennyson made the same comment at home about his entertainer.

The Magpie and Stump story in the *Glasgow Herald* in 1888 has the air of an elaborate hoax.

Just by us at Chelsea was the little cottage on the riverside where Turner the painter passed his last days as a lodger with Mrs. Booth, he taking her name. He left her a liberal annuity. When the woman asked for references, Turner drew out a bundle of bank-notes. I recollect that he used to travel by the steamboat from Battersea Bridge, and



if he perceived that he was noticed, he got off at the next pier.

There is a portrait of him, which is a sort of caricature, yet not offensively so, in Willis's *Current Notes*.

I dare say that this anecdote of Turner is well known. He sent his picture of a ship in a snow-storm to Ruskin for the opinion of that great expert. Ruskin, on looking at it, confessed that the snow had much the look of soapsuds; but he added this graceful saving clause, that he believed the painter to be so true to Nature, that he doubted not that the scene was a faithful representation of what he had seen.

Hazlitt, by the way, did not relish Turner's later style. But it was a heresy in art when he wrote, and I do not think that he had given himself sufficient opportunity of well considering the matter. But no doubt there was a good deal of *trick* about the effects produced, and in one or two cases, on unlining the pictures, the mode in which the painter had produced them was revealed.

Honour has been paid to Carlyle in a monument and a museum. But a greater man than he died not very far away from Cheyne Row in that humble cottage, yet standing, and where is the public enthusiasm?

The cottage in which Turner died lay only about two hundred and fifty yards from my father's residence in Lindsey Row, and we used to hear occasional anecdotes of his eccentricities. These have doubtless been made public elsewhere.

Not far off lay Cremorne Gardens, once a private mansion, now covered by buildings and streets, in our time a place of popular resort of a not very elevated or elevating character, where the aeronauts occasionally made their ascents. One day I saw a man rush up in breathless haste, and spring into the car just as the balloon was cut adrift. He was pursued by a second, who arrived a moment too late. It was a new method of escape from arrest.

While we resided at Chelsea, an occupant of one of the houses in Lindsey Row was John Martin the artist, whose handsome features I perfectly recollect, and with whom I have frequently played at whist. Two of his daughters married Joseph Bonomi and Peter Cunningham. Martin, apart from his professional work, took an interest in public affairs, and prepared a scheme for the drainage of the Metropolis, which he lent to my father, and which does not seem to have been returned, as I have it still by me with his autograph note, forwarding it for perusal.

I recollect my father telling me, about this time, that he had been dancing the evening before with a lady who was so thin that he was afraid she would have worn his coat into holes.

In one of the best houses in Cheyne Walk resided in these days Mr. and Mrs. Handford. She had been a Mrs. David, and her son by the former husband produced one of the earliest Turkish Grammars in this country. The Handfords entertained a good deal, and we met under their roof Dr. Lee of Hartwell, the book-collector ; Sir Charles Aldis, and his son Dr. Aldis. The latter wore his white hair ; but Sir Charles, with the help of enamel, stays, and a wig, contrived to pass off as the junior of the two—in fact, the Doctor seemed to have been born many years before his father. In the Handfords' garden, which robbed all the others, was one of the numerous mulberry-trees planted by Queen Elizabeth, who must have spent much of her time in this employment.

In another house the Venetian ducal family of Grimani settled in the person of Mrs. Hornby, daughter of a gentleman of that once illustrious name, who followed the profession of a teacher of Italian in London, and wife of a solicitor. Their younger son, Sir Edmund Grimani Hornby, carried

down a step farther the distinguished *provenance*, although Hornby himself had, in a far greater degree than Miss Grimani, the air of a descendant of Doges.

A striking contrast between the busy thoroughfare which traverses the entire length of the way from Cheyne Walk to Pimlico, and the road as it was fifty years ago, must be immediately evident to any one old enough to recall the aspect of the locality so far back, when a private path ran by the Military Hospital and was open only in the daytime. Such antique bits as the Archway, Turks' Row, and Jews' Row, had their picturesque side, especially before the population overflowed all reasonable limits; but at present, notwithstanding certain improvements, Chelsea has dropped to a low general level, and is a district blocked from nearly every point by squalid approaches.

A good deal of confusion appears to have arisen out of the existence at different times of two or three so-called Chelsea bun-houses. One of the childish reminiscences of a personal acquaintance is a visit to that which was once known as Bath House, toward the old church and in the portion of Cheyne Walk fronting what was once the old China Factory, and subsequently Wedgwood's depot. The bun was given to him so hot that he could hardly hold it in his

hand. My informant adds that it was here that they first made the Bath buns, which I used as a school-boy to prefer out of a particular shop in Orange Street, Red Lion Square, as I did the three-cornered tarts from one in St. Swithin's Lane.

But this was not the real original house, which lay much further eastward in the Queen's Road, at the end of Jews' Row, near Ranelagh Creek, and which was taken down in 1839. The buns were square, without plums, very greasy, and served hot, being baked on iron plates in the shop itself. They were adapted only for folks with elastic digestions, and, like many other characteristics of the bygone time, would not suit the present taste.

The ordinary books of reference mention the changes which Lindsey Row has undergone. In my father's time, behind our residence and the others lay the Distillery Garden, with its Clock House. It was a large piece of ground devoted to the growth of lavender and other plants, or of herbs; and I more than suspect that it originally formed part of the demesne of Old Lindsey House, as well as of the conventual establishment which is supposed to have preceded that. Our own cellarage toward the river was very extensive, and ran under the front garden and part of the road; and it was

said that in one of the houses a secret subterranean passage, long since stopped up, once existed, crossing the Thames to the Battersea shore, as a means of escape for the nuns in case of danger. The Distillery Garden had a long dead wall abutting on the King's Road at the bend opposite the Man in the Moon tavern at the corner of Park Walk. Mr. Whistler the artist, who subsequently occupied our house, threw that and the adjoining premises to the east into one.

All our residences at Chelsea were at or near the waterside; and those were the rowing days of the writer. The chief points for hiring boats were Searle's at Lambeth, Greaves's at Chelsea, and Biffen's at Hammersmith. I joined the Merchant Taylor's eight, and the only occasion on which, as an oarsman, I got into trouble was when, owing to the negligence of our coxswain, our boat was nearly capsized off Battersea Reach one day by the swell of two steamers. One of the patrons of Greaves, when I hired his boats, was Gordon Cumming, the African explorer, who was fond of exhibiting his muscular strength by holding out a pair of oars (not sculls) horizontally. The river has since my time undergone a complete change in its rowing aspects—not for the better.

### CHAPTER III.

The Reynells—Their descent and connections—The house in Piccadilly—Some account of the old printing-office, its staff, and its surroundings—The *Racing Calendar* and the *Bellman's Verses* printed there—The *Lounger's Commonplace Book* and its author—George Frederick Cooke, the tragedian, a journeyman at Mr. Reynell's—Origin of Swan and Edgar's—Tattersall—Bullock's Museum—Many of Byron's, Shelley's, and Keats's books produced by my grandfather—Benjamin West, R.A.—My mother—Charles Kemble's idea about her—The *Examiner*—My recollections of the early staff—Professor Morley—My Uncle Reynell's youthful associations—Keats—His *Endymion*—Lamb and the *Select British Poets*—John Forster.

THE Reynells of Devonshire, who intermarried with the Carews, were a notable family from the time of Magna Charta down to the end of the seventeenth century. They claim Walter Reynolds, the Walter de Reynel of Hume, as a progenitor. They sumptuously entertained Charles II. on one occasion. The Rector of Wolborough, a Reynell, was the first in England, it has been said, to proclaim William of Orange.

Mr. Henry Reynell, born in 1746, had been apprenticed to the King's printer in the Savoy, and subsequently acquired the business of Mr. Towers in Piccadilly, whose premises he considerably enlarged. He was one of the sons of Dr. Richard Reynell, of Air Street, medical officer to the parish of St. James, in which appointment he was succeeded by his son Carew.

Dr. Reynell's house in Air Street was, I understand from his grandson, on the right-hand side as one goes from Piccadilly—one of those with bow-windows. Here he occasionally entertained at dinner his relatives, the Bishop of Londonderry; the bishop's son, Precentor of Down and Connor, and other eminent connections. The doctor published three now-forgotten professional tracts between 1735 and 1743, the last-named a communication to the *Philosophical Transactions*.

Mrs. Henry Reynell was Rebecca, daughter of the Precentor. Both her husband and herself were of the Reynells of Ogwell and Newton Abbot, at one period the most distinguished, and one of the wealthiest, families in the county. A portion of the property went through heiresses to the Courtenays of Powderham Castle, a portion to the Davys of Creedy Park, a portion to the Packs, and finally



some to the Whitbreads, of which stock there are portraits by Hoppner and Reynolds.

In the old drawing-room over the office, and looking on Piccadilly, were long preserved an interesting series of family portraits, including Sir George Reynell, Marshal of the King's Bench *temp.* James I., of whom there is a very curious glimpse in the *Economy of the Fleet*, with an account of the mutiny there in 1620; the Right Honourable Sir Richard Reynell, Chief Justice of Ireland *temp.* William III.; the Bishop of Londonderry, and the Precentor of Down and Connor. Most, or all of these, are still in the possession of representatives of the family. But the likenesses from the hands of the two masters above mentioned belonged to the Whitbreads, till they were quite recently sold by auction.

The Earl of Abingdon, to whom the printer was distantly related, called on him here, inspected the little picture-gallery, and borrowed the family pedigree, which he did not return.

Mr. H. Reynell was the first member of his ancient house who had been engaged in trade, and both his wife and himself were quite members of the old school in dress and deportment. Mrs. Reynell considered it a cruel degradation to have to go into

her kitchen, and not to ride in her coach. She died in 1807, her husband in 1811. The house was demolished in 1817 to make room for the *New Street*, as it was originally called—the modern Regent Street—and the business was removed to Broad Street, with which the important and intimate associations between the Reynells and ourselves are identified.

Mr. Henry Reynell used to buy his fruit and vegetables in Carnaby Garden, as he called it, behind the present Regent Street. This was before 1817. There was then also in the same locality an emporium for the purchase or sale of that figurative vegetable, tailor's cabbage. The death of the gentleman referred to has been described to me as probably accelerated by the villainous drainage of the locality and the insanitary atmosphere of the business premises. One of the delectable features of the place in those days was the practice of 'bishopsing the balls'—that is, of steeping the balls, which were employed to ink the rollers, in *urine* to keep them moist. The process was a sort of baptism, and the term perhaps owed itself to the resentment of the printers at the old animosity of the episcopal order against the typographical art, of which they foresaw the fatal influence.

The shop No. 21, Piccadilly, where the premises of Messrs. Swan and Edgar now stand, or immediately thereabout, had been originally of very humble pretensions, and acquired only by degrees the area and importance which it eventually possessed by taking in the adjoining tenements.

But the site had been partly occupied since 1735 or so by the Black Bear Inn, which was flanked on the eastern side by a narrow court leading into a labyrinth of mean streets in the rear. The printing premises, prior to 1817, extended back into Castle Street. Mr. Henry Reynell not only enlarged them, but added a storey; and in his time (1780-1811) it was an old-fashioned house two or three steps above the footway, which was still more or less at its original level, with a bow-window on either side of the door, somewhat like Fribourg's old snuff-shop at the top of the Haymarket, only that the bars to the basement windows, instead of being perpendicular, were oblique. Of course, the exact situation of the buildings on this spot has been slightly changed; but I understand that Mr. Henry Reynell's printing-office stood almost precisely where the stationer's shop now is.

Here, during a long series of years, were printed the *Racing Calendar* and the Bellman's verses for

St. James's, Westminster, of which latter there are some early examples in a volume belonging to the Huth Library. It was here also that Newman, at first a Foxite, and afterward a Tory, printed his *Lounger's Commonplace Book* (1805-7), conditionally on the preservation of the strictest *incognito*. Nor was his name known even to Mr. Reynell at the time. He passed among the staff as 'The Lounger.'

As a place of business this was during, perhaps, more than half a century one of the leading firms at the West End. The waggons used to bring orders from all parts, and take the work, when completed, to its destination. A gentleman till lately among us vividly recollected them standing opposite his grandfather's premises with six or eight horses furnished with bells, and the driver in his smock-frock, with a whip long enough to enable him to reach the leaders. It was a picturesque sight.

*Tempora mutantur !*

George Frederick Cooke, the great actor who preceded Edmund Kean, and played many of Kean's parts, worked originally as a journeyman in Mr. Reynell's office ; he left it to go on the stage, and he made his name in Dublin. It is still well recollected that, after his acquisition of celebrity, Cooke took the earliest occasion when he came to

London of calling at No. 21, Piccadilly, and paying his respects to his old employer.

The house of Swan and Edgar was founded by Mr. Swan, one of the staff at Flint's establishment, Grafton House, Newport Market, the favourite shop three-quarters of a century ago. People came from long distances to make their purchases there.

It is an apt illustration of the more frugal notions of many well-to-do folks in former days, that some ladies at Chiswick in good circumstances were in the habit of walking from Chiswick to Flint's and back again, and only partook of a bun and a glass of water by way of refreshment. Of course, there were no cheap conveyances, and they did not happen to keep a carriage.

Nearly opposite No. 21 were Robson and Hale, decorators. The former had several daughters, of whom one married Mr. Tattersall of the *Corner*. Next to Mr. Reynell's westward (No. 22, Piccadilly) lay a house on the first-floor of which was preserved Bullock's Museum of Natural History, partly formed out of the Leverian at Liverpool.

Bullock had shot some of the specimens himself. He told my grandfather Reynell that he once brought home from Norway a pony so diminutive that he

conveyed it to his place from the ship in a hackney coach. He afterward removed to the Egyptian Hall; and at a later date, when a very old man, he had a small catalogue printed of a collection of pictures he had for sale. He was then residing at Bristol.

He seems to have been the first to introduce the practice of presenting the fauna in their natural aspects as far as possible—the monkeys on trees, etc. His collection was very select, but limited. The first object which met the eye was a deer with a boa coiled round its body. The room was fitted with cases for birds, smaller animals, and other items, and in the centre were grouped the larger specimens. There was a very good catalogue of the museum. A depot for military accoutrements lay a few doors off. It had been established by Mr. Hawkes. It was there that Mr. H. Reynell's eldest son took lodgings for his young wife and himself in 1797.

Mr. Carew Henry Reynell, my maternal grandfather, married a Miss Ann Hammond, Mr. John Hunt, Leigh Hunt's elder brother, becoming the husband of her sister. The Hammonds were tolerably prosperous corn-factors, I have heard, at Woodbridge in Suffolk, and were connected in blood with

the Ridleys of Bury St. Edmunds, who had a tannery, and were in good circumstances. It is a somewhat curious coincidence that, according to an accepted tradition, the Hazlitts of Antrim (before their removal to the South) were flax-factors and tanners.

Mr. Reynell, who, as a printer, was in constant relationship with the publishers of the works of Byron, Shelley, Keats, Leigh Hunt, and in some instances with the writers themselves, frequently lamented his neglect to preserve the manuscripts which passed through his hands, and which were generally destroyed. So little did that generation foresee the value which we, with all the development of American enthusiasm, would set on such relics. Yet it is to be said that the sacrifice of the bulk has made the residue all the more precious.

The constitutional indifference of many people to associations and ties was never more forcibly exemplified than in the case of my grandfather Reynell, who was absolutely destitute of sentiment toward the existing relics and memorials of his family. He had in his possession by accident the portraits which I have just specified; but when his cousin, the Rev. Henry Reynell, of Hornchurch, offered to enlarge the collection by presenting him with those

which he held, Mr. Reynell took no action in the matter, and the paintings were probably thrown into the market. Even if they still exist, they may be unrecognisable; yet, like those formerly in Piccadilly, they portrayed personages belonging to an eminent Devonshire race, and were possibly from the hand of Sir Godfrey Kneller, or some other distinguished artist.

The Reynell family was acquainted through the Hunts with Benjamin West, R.A., who, as well as Copley, has been already mentioned in the American Diary of 1783-87, and who resided in Newman Street, Oxford Street, in the house subsequently occupied by Kirby the chemist. Kirby's shop had been West's book-room. It and the rooms upstairs as well were still adorned in 1890 with the handsome mantelpieces belonging to the house in the artist's time. My uncle Reynell recollects being taken as a boy to call on West with Mr. Robert Hunt; and in the picture of the *Centurion and his Family*, the Centurion was painted from Mr. John Hunt, and the young girl in the foreground from my mother, then about eight years old. This was about 1812.

Charles Kemble used to say that my mother, who died June 12, 1860, would have made a capital Lady



Teazle. She was remarkable in her youth for beauty and graceful dignity, and she preserved much of these to the last. She was the best of wives and of mothers. I possess, and greatly value for her sake, the pencil drawing of her by William Mulready, taken when she was about five-and-twenty.

Her moral influence over my father, who was left very young and very ill provided for at Hazlitt's death in 1830, and her excellent domestic training, accomplished, I am sure, wonders for her husband and for all of us. It is to her frugality and intelligence that I feel myself indebted beyond the power of repayment, for while her practical observance of home lessons did so much to save her husband from ruin, her precept and example have been through life a precious treasure to myself.

From 45, Broad Street, the Reynells' printing establishment migrated to Little Pulteney Street, in the same neighbourhood. The *Examiner*, till its extinction some years ago, was retained at the office, and in my own occasional visits there I have met several distinguished men who were successively on the staff. Albany Fonblanque was before my time, but I knew Laman Blanchard, John Forster, Dudley Costello, and Henry Morley.

Morley was a disciple of Forster, and wrote several books outside periodical literature. The most memorable are his biographies of Cardan and Cornelius Agrippa, which, at Forster's instance, he recast. He subsequently worked for Routledge, and became a professor at University College, where he had a class or classes. Mr. Reynell told me one day that Morley had a lecture on Skelton, the Henry VIII. poet, and famous antagonist of Wolsey, to deliver, and had borrowed his copy of the Works by Dyce. This was an hour or so prior to the delivery of the address, and my uncle said that the teacher seemed as if he had all his lesson to learn.

One of the men, when Fonblanque used to go to Little Pulteney Street to see his proofs, called him 'Death on the Pale Horse,' from his cadaverous complexion and the colour of the animal on which he came mounted. Fonblanque had a marvellously retentive memory. On one occasion the copy which he had sent to the office was lost, and on his arrival he set to work, and from recollection rewrote the whole.

There was a rather droll incident in connection with a furious philippic against the Papacy by Dr. Beggi. The author, when he had printed it at

Mr. Reynell's, and had sent out a few copies for presents, was so alarmed at the consequences of the indignation and vengeance of the Holy See, that he shaved off his beard to disguise his identity with the portrait prefixed to the book, in case the Pope should send over emissaries to track and assassinate him. But he was left unmolested, and his book too, for it became waste-paper.

One generation has been said to stand on the shoulders of another. The father often lives to see the son, whom he may have rocked in the cradle, a man of middle years and the head of a grown-up family. But it is rarely the case that a man of ninety-four can look on one whom he held in his arms as a child in swaddling clothes, and who lived to stand side by side with him an octogenarian; yet such was the relationship between my maternal uncle and my late father. The latter was born in 1811. The former recollected how, in 1809, the Jubilee year of George III., he mounted up to the top of the house in Piccadilly, which was higher than some of those which surrounded it, to see the bonfires and illuminations in Hyde Park. He had seen the gigantic Irish porter at Carlton House look over the outer entrance-door to discover who was claiming admittance before he took the trouble to open it.

The ornamental enclosure in St. James's Park was in his remembrance a mere field with some fine elms and broken sheets of water. It used to have deer till Farmer George placed beeves in it instead. There was a half-witted fellow appointed to tend them, whom the boys called Lal, and impishly tormented.

In Kensington Gardens, too, there were deer at one time, and they were similarly replaced—in that case by some Merino sheep which had been sent over to the King.

My uncle, of course, recollected the destruction of the old Houses of Parliament in 1834, and, indeed, witnessed the scene, and picked up at Millbank some of the charred paper belonging to documents which perished in the flames.

The greater part of the grounds of Buckingham Palace was a conveyance by His Majesty George III. from the Green Park, and a further encroachment was made in the present reign in order to form a forecourt on the side of St. James's Park. These seigniorial spoliations used to be carried out under the old régime without an eye to the public interests or wishes; now the scale is more modest, and there is usually some specious plea put forward. It is possible that hereafter the entire enclosed area,

palace inclusive, may be thrown back into the park to which it belonged.

In George III.'s time the whole area occupied by Grosvenor Place and Belgrave Square might have been purchased for £20,000. George III. wished Parliament to vote the money in order to secure him greater privacy; but the royal views were not appreciated.

My uncle Reynell, as a young man, met Keats at Leigh Hunt's lodgings in the New Road. He produced the impression upon him of being dressed in a sort of naval costume. This must have been about 1817. Some forty-five years later I met Joseph Severn at Hunt's cottage in Hammersmith, and received an invitation from him to go over and see him at his temporary residence in Eccleston Square.

Keats lodged for a short time at the Queen's Arms Tavern in Cheapside, and is said to have written some of his poems within its walls. It has lost all its old character with its name, and is now known as Simpson's. It is the place to which both Dickens and Thackeray refer.

I have shown above that the author of *Endymion* knew and admired Hazlitt, and it is remarkable enough that the latter made a blank leaf of that

poem serve as a receptacle for one of his rhapsodical effusions about the heroine of the *Liber Amoris*.

A gentleman named Higgs, connected with the *Family Herald*, and a buttonholer on the Currency Question, gave me the original manuscript of Keats's sonnet, beginning 'Happy is England.' Moxon, when he presented my mother with a copy of the poems edited by Milnes, 1854, told my father that the illustrations cost him £500.

Edward Stibbs, the bookseller, mentioned that, when he was in business in Holywell Street, he bought the remainder of Ollier's original edition of *Endymion* at three-halfpence a copy in quires, paid twopence-halfpenny for boarding, and sold the lot very slowly at eighteenpence.

It was to Broad Street, while Mr. Reynell was printing for Whiting the *Select British Poets* in 1824, that Charles Lamb came to bring the corrected proofs, for although the title-page bears the name of Hazlitt, the latter was abroad just then, and, in fact, did nothing to the work but indicate what was to be printed, and write the preliminary notices. Lamb is recollected as a little spare man in black clothes and knee-breeches, much as he appears in Brook Pulham's etching. This work was originally undertaken by

Whiting, and the earlier sheets set up at his office ; but he handed over the business to Mr. Reynell's father, with the type. The latter was afterward used for the *Examiner*. My uncle composed a good deal of the volume with his own hands, as he was then a young man learning the practical side of the business.

The original edition of 1824, which I have already described in the *Memoirs* as a suppressed book and of very rare occurrence, is larger in size than that of 1825, and contains about a third more.

It was characteristic of John Forster that he almost bullied Miller the bookseller, because he once had a copy of this publication, and Forster was too late to secure it. He never succeeded in obtaining one. The British Museum has not till quite lately possessed it.

We had no complete copy ourselves till one memorable morning (March 25, 1869) I looked in at Heath the bookseller's, in New Oxford Street, and he brought forward a book, remarking that of course I must have it. I took it in my hand, and it was the *Select British Poets*, 1824. When I reached home with my prize, I discovered that it wanted a leaf, and I mentioned this fact to Heath the next

day. 'Oh,' said he, '*I have another copy!*' He tendered it, and I saw that that wanted a leaf, too, but would make mine perfect. So I bought the duplicate, and became the master of a rarity for which the late John Forster Esquire sighed in vain.



## CHAPTER IV.

The Reynells (*continued*)—Their acquaintance with the Mulreadys—Its source—S. W. Reynolds, the engraver—Glimpse of Westbourne Grove—The two Coulsons—John Black—His connection with the *Morning Chronicle*—How he lost it—Jeremy Bentham—His habits and his visitors—Voelker's Gymnasium—The Reynells meet Lord Clarendon and his brother there—Place, the tailor and pamphlet-collector, who married Mrs. Chatterton—The *Westminster Review*—Robertson—Henry Cole—Cole and the Exhibition of 1851—Joseph Cundall—Neal (*Brother Jonathan*)—Sir John Bowring—Lord Brougham—His first brief—Leigh Hunt—Account of his last days and his death at my uncle Reynell's house—Anecdotes of him—His story about Sheridan Knowles—His family—Thomas Scott of Ramsgate—Particulars of his personal history—His connection with Bishop Colenso.

THE Reynells during their residence in Black Lion Lane, Bayswater, formed the acquaintance of the Mulreadys, who lived in Orme Square, a block of buildings erected about the commencement of the century by a partner in the firm of Longman and Co. My uncle Carew Reynell was constantly at the house when he was a boy. The friendship between the families began by Mulready seeing my

uncle, who was a good boxer, fighting with another boy, bigger than himself, in the street ; he was very handsome, and the artist founded on the circumstance his picture of the Wolf and the Lamb, which H. B. (John Doyle) subsequently caricatured in illustrating the quarrel between Lord Brougham and Lord Melbourne, the family name of the latter being Lambe.

William Mulready, one of the sons, executed pencil or crayon likenesses of my uncle and of my mother. The picture to which I have referred came into the possession of Absolon the painter.

I have heard that Mulready himself was a singular character. He spent the greater part of his time with Sir John Swinburne, who would hardly bear him out of his sight. A portion of the year he would be with Sir John in the country, and a portion with him at his residence in London. Mulready was separated from his wife, but kept a home for his children. He gave his son Peter proper clothes to wear, but the others went anyhow. He said that he did this to keep them from gadding about, and if one of them obtained leave to go out, he had to borrow Peter's clothes, and Peter stayed at home till he returned.

For the current pronunciation of the name a

weak *jeu de mots* may yield some sort of authority ; it used to be suggested, when the artist had finished a new work, that he had another *mull ready*.

Another neighbour was S. W. Reynolds, who engraved the graphic works of his namesake, Sir Joshua, as well as the vignette on the title-page of the *Liber Amoris*.

In these days there were only two or three cottages in Westbourne Grove, which really deserved its name.

Walter Coulson and his brother William, the eminent surgeon, with both of whom the Reynells were acquainted, and of whom the former, probably through this channel, befriended my father in early days, were the sons of a master-painter in the dock-yard at Plymouth or Devonport. Walter was the elder, and paid for his brother's medical education, I have understood. William came to London in 1820, but did not finally settle there till 1823. He was, from his own account, quite a self-made man, nor was he ashamed to relate how he first found himself in the great Metropolis a ragged boy. He died in May, 1877. Walter was in early life a pupil and amanuensis of Jeremy Bentham.

Both the brothers were constant visitors at my grandfather's at York Street, and at John Black's

at Millbank, two houses long since pulled down, and William sometimes put the other out of temper by bringing home 'a subject' wrapped up in his dissecting apron. Walter became a reporter on the *Morning Chronicle*, editor of the *Globe*, and, finally, a Parliamentary draughtsman. He was considered a good lawyer. He and Martin Burney were my father's sponsors.

Coulson the surgeon married one of the daughters of Bartrum, a pawnbroker, who is not otherwise famous or historical than as the husband of Alice W——n, the heroine of an episode in the earlier life of Charles Lamb, mentioned by me in my *Mary and Charles Lamb*, 1874.

When John Black lost the editorship of the *Morning Chronicle*, through his indiscreet remarks about Sir John Easthope in an after-dinner speech, Walter Coulson befriended him, and not only allowed him the use of a cottage, first somewhere in Kent, and subsequently in the New Forest district, but gave him a pension of £200 a year. Black was a good pedestrian, and sometimes walked up to town to receive his quarterly money, and on one occasion, my father told me, was cozened out of the whole of it on his way back by a fascinating casual.

The rupture between Black and Easthope arose from the former, at a banquet given in his employer's honour, being so candid as to tell the company that both of them came up to London to seek their fortunes, and that he believed the only difference was that he had shoes to his feet and Easthope had not. This was a case where honesty was not the best policy, or was it honesty?

While he remained at his post, and collected books, he used to ramble about after breakfast to ransack the stalls, then more fruitful of bargains than now. He was generally accompanied by his large dog Brutus. I do not know, nor did the person who was more nearly concerned remember, whether it was Brutus, or another dog, Platoff, who once rescued my father from the river at Millbank.

During his sojourn with Bentham, Coulson lived in a small tenement formed out of the stable of Bentham's residence, and Henry Leigh Hunt, a nephew of the author of *Rimini*, at one time shared the quarters with him. A very constant visitor to Coulson was Jeafferson Hogg, who became known at a later date by his book on Shelley.

A relative tells me that the only time she heard Bentham speak was when she went to witness the athletic performances at the place he had taken for

Voelker in the Marylebone Road, opposite St. Mary's Church. He was speaking of his picture by Pickersgill, and said he never possessed the crimson dressing-gown in which he is painted.

Bentham only took two meals a day—a late breakfast in the French fashion, and dinner at eight. He usually had company. Brougham was often there. He had his bed made once a month, and had it sewed up to prevent untucking.

He would often be seen trotting up and down his garden, his stick Dapple in hand, and generally with one of his admirers or pupils at his side, who had some difficulty in keeping pace with him. This was what he described as 'maximizing relaxation and minimizing time.' He would say 'that he had a great deal to do, and not long to do it in.' *Ars longa, vita brevis.*

Voelker's Gymnasium was first established at North Bank, Regent's Park, but was subsequently removed to more spacious premises in the New Road. My uncle, William Reynell, drew up the regulations for Voelker. There was a scheme for opening a similar institution for ladies under the management of a Miss Mason, but I am not sure whether it came to anything.

The Reynells met at the Gymnasium the Earl of

Clarendon and his brother, Mr. Villiers, M.P. for Wolverhampton. One of them recollected that both these gentlemen were laughed at, because they went through the exercise in gloves, from fear of spoiling their hands.

There is a singular account of Bentham and his friend Place, the tailor and pamphlet-collector, who afterward lived in Brompton Square, and who married Mrs. Chatterton the actress. The two went out together one day, and Bentham arranged to wait for Place while the latter went into some house. Bentham sat down on the doorstep, and a worthy lady, passing by and struck by his venerable aspect, offered him a small gratuity, taking him for a mendicant. Bentham translated the *White Bull* from the French of Voltaire, and in the preface he seems to refer to the author as if he had been personally acquainted with him.

The *Westminster Review* was originally projected by Bentham, and was subsequently the property in succession of Sir William Molesworth, Mr. John Stuart Mill, and Mr. Hickson, of Fairfield, Kent. While it was in the hands of Molesworth, John Robertson edited it, and Henry Cole was among the contributors. It was Cole who prepared the

illustrated Cruikshank number. Robertson lived near my uncle Reynell in Brompton Vale.

There is no doubt that Cole was the real originator of the Exhibition of 1851. When my uncle questioned him on this point, and said that it was generally understood that Prince Albert threw out the first idea, he laughed, but made no reply. It suited him to let the Prince enjoy the credit.

In connection with Cole, many may still recollect the name of Joseph Cundall, the bookseller and publisher of Old Bond Street, a man of great taste and feeling for art, and whose shop was in my boyish days a treasury of interesting books for young and old, attired in all sorts of fanciful bindings, composed of papier-maché, stamped in imitation of leather and other materials, of which the novel singularity and the weightiness impressed my juvenile fancy, and are yet palpable to my sight and touch. Cundall was led to bring out a new edition of *Robinson Crusoe* with Stothard's plates by a copy which my father lent to him of that of 1820.

Bentham left his body for dissection ; but under the direction, I believe, of Bowring, the remains were reunited and presented to University College. I conclude that his property, which he must have



improved by his frugality, went to his nephew George, son of Sir Samuel Bentham.

Another notability, who was to be met at Bentham's, was Neal, who wrote *Brother Jonathan*, and contributed during his stay in England to the *London* and other magazines. He came over here to endeavour by judicious articles in the press to improve the state of feeling between us and the States, and Mr. Reynell used to see him at the Gymnasium. Neal was a man of middle height, and looked like a sailor. My uncle remembered his yellow suit. There is an imitation of his style of writing in Patmore's *Rejected Articles*, 1826.

John Bowring, who was afterward knighted, and became Governor of Hong Kong, was intimate with the Reynells as a young man, and frequently dined at my grandfather Reynell's table. He was also one of the set which Bentham collected round him, and edited his works, in which he took the liberty of expunging or altering passages. He was very civil to my brother when he visited Hong Kong as a midshipman, and sent a special messenger to the ship aboard which my brother lay, to invite him to his house.

A curious thing was mentioned to me by Mr. Spiers, of Essex Hall, as having occurred after

Bowring's death. His widow wished to print a memoir and some inedited poems, but she was assured that the book would not answer. She did not object, however, to put £10 or £20 into the venture, and Mr. Spiers worked the oracle so well among Bowring's friends and admirers that 8,000 copies were sold.

The Reynells persuaded Bowring, then in Parliament, to intercede about 1838 on behalf of Leigh Hunt, who was then in great distress, and Bowring went to Lord Melbourne, to see if he could obtain a pension for Hunt. But Melbourne told him that he could not recommend the Queen to assist a man who had libelled her uncle, the Adonis of fifty.

Through Hazlitt and the Stoddarts the Reynells came in professional contact with Brougham, who was an early acquaintance of Stoddart, and remained intimate with him to the end; and my mother always averred that it was through her father that Brougham had his first brief. I hold a number of letters which Sir John Stoddart received from the ex-Chancellor, while my father was canvassing successive Governments for official employment.

Leigh Hunt died at my uncle Reynell's residence, Chatfield House, High Street, Putney, on Sunday, August 28, 1859. On the Saturday previous my

cousin Ada heard him coughing in his bedroom just beneath her, and went down to him. He was very feverish, and she gave him some water. His daughter Jacintha told her that she had felt his feet and legs, and that they were already getting cold. He was then dying. His eyes were brilliant.

On that night his son Thornton had arrived from Paris. He or someone else read the *Examiner* to Mr. Hunt, who manifested a warm interest in the last news from France.

He had always delighted in music, and his daughter Julia played on the piano for him in the adjoining room—the little chamber assigned him for writing.

I paid several visits to Mr. Hunt while he was at Putney, and recollect well the small apartment facing the street, where I sat and conversed with him.

One of the old clerks in the War Office told me many years ago that he remembered Leigh Hunt when he was there, and described him to me as a very indifferent official, though doubtless 'a very ingenious person.' It was this same functionary who had two set phrases always ready at hand. If he was put out, he invariably 'damned his sister's shirt'; and his other expression, significant of modified regard or confidence, was that he

valued you as an acquaintance, but declined you as a son-in-law. What a congenial atmosphere poor Hunt must have been in among such creatures as these! They might have put it contrariwise. Who knows?

Leigh Hunt used to tell a story of Sheridan Knowles. Knowles was expatiating on the ingratitude of the Prince Regent toward his former boon-companion Sheridan in his last days—how he only sent £100 to him—‘to this expiring angel,’ exclaimed Knowles—but observing a titter among the company, he corrected himself—‘to this expiring angel of a ganius!’

The notes from Leigh Hunt written to us in his later and latest years from Kensington and Hammersmith have never hitherto been published—many of them may be more or less trivial—and I propose to limit myself to one addressed to me in connection with the edition of his poems issued by Routledge, which I had had a hand in arranging for him with the firm. This was in 1859. The lines were written about two months prior to his death.

Hammersmith, June 11.

DEAR WILLIAM HAZLITT,

(For I being old, and your father's old friend, and you therefore an everlasting young gentleman in my eyes, I shall never be able to settle into calling you ‘Mr.’), I happen this

moment to be greatly driven for time, but nevertheless I cannot lose a moment in thanking you for the letter which this moment I have received. You have done all that I hoped, and more than I expected, and I am

Your truly obliged  
and faithful

LEIGH HUNT.

I trust to have the pleasure of thanking Mr. Reynell personally to-morrow. My state of body is mending, and this good news will help it.

Thornton Hunt, Leigh Hunt's eldest son, was a man of very considerable acquirements, but very diffident and retiring. When Rintoul established the *Spectator*, the younger Hunt contributed a good deal to its success, although Rintoul took the credit. As Albany Fonblanque said at the time, the latter was not capable of writing such papers as appeared in this periodical; in fact, they were Hunt's.

Robert Hunt, a grandson of John Hunt, Leigh Hunt's elder brother, became Master of the Mint at Sydney, and it was arranged, after a time, that his two sisters should join him there. The vessel in which these poor girls sailed went down not far from its destination, and only one on board escaped. He was said at the time to have been providentially saved. He was the greatest rascal among the crew.

Leigh Hunt and his elder brother John owed a good deal of annoyance and misrepresentation to the

twofold fact of having relatives of the same names and of not very reputable character ; and there was another respect in which the accomplished essayist suffered injustice. I refer to the report which spread abroad after the appearance of Dickens's *Bleak House*, that the creation of *Harold Skimpole* was borrowed from Hunt. The prevalence of this impression naturally afforded much pain to the individual most concerned, and his feelings were communicated to the author, who came down to Hammersmith in order to tender Hunt his solemn assurance that he had not designed anything of the kind, and that he would do anything in his power to make reparation for the unintentional wrong. Hunt told my informant that Dickens was affected almost to tears ; but I never heard of any public or direct disavowal.

My father would say of Leigh Hunt that he did not excel as a housekeeper or economist, and that while his circumstances were indifferent, if his wife placed hot-house grapes on the table for dessert, her husband would not question the proceeding, but apparently treated the costly dish as a gift from the gods.

Among the guests at Maida Hill, when Mr. John Hunt's family resided there, was Mr. Stephen Hunt,

John Hunt's eldest brother, and a lawyer. He has been described to me as a tall man of the most courtly and agreeable manners, but of a most violent temper. Hazlitt and he used to have frequent argumentative duels on religion and politics, and an eyewitness has said that, if a reporter had been present to take down Hazlitt's remarks, he would have made his fortune.

I was much struck by Hunt's friend and literary executor, Townshend Mayer, who lived and died at Richmond, characterizing the park there as 'a desert.' He was terribly afflicted, and could not enjoy that beautiful place. So far as sentiment went, he was prepared to deny its general claim to appreciation.

Mr. Thomas Scott, of Ramsgate, a deputy-lieutenant for Sussex, the collaborateur of Bishop Colenso, and a very intimate acquaintance of my uncle during many years, served in his boyhood as a page at the Court of Louis XVIII. When he was quite a young man, he went on a surveying expedition in Canada, and used to say that for seven years he never slept in a bed.

His father had considerable property in Brighton, including the ground on which Mahomet's Bath stood. That was the earliest Turkish bath, I

believe, in England. Walter Keating Kelly, in his *Syria and the Holy Land*, 1843, gives a very vivid account of one which he experienced in the East.

Scott and the late Emperor Napoleon III., who were of the same age, acted as squires to Lord Gage at the Eglinton Tournament.

I used to see Mr. Scott occasionally, when I happened to be at Ramsgate, and was instrumental in procuring for the London Library in St. James's Square a considerable number of his pamphlets on theological topics, printed by Mr. Reynell. He told me that it would scarcely be credited to what a large extent the clergy was really at one with him, and how many correspondents he had among members of the Establishment, who desired to express to him their concurrence in his views, and at the same time to keep their names out of print from fear of losing their preferments.

END OF VOL. I.



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Says Hereditary Taint,  
"Better do a little sinning"—and I do!

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