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LANCASHIRE WORTHIES.

John Heywood, Printer, Manchester.

LANCASHIRE WORTHIES.

BY

FRANCIS ESPINASSE.

Second Series.

“ Hic manus, ob patriam pugnando vulnera passi,
Quique sacerdotes casti, dum vita manebat,
Quique pii vates, et Phœbo digna locuti,
Inventas aut qui vitam excoluere per artes,
Quique sui memores alios fecere merendo.”

Æneid, vi. 660-65.

“ Behold, a band
Of whom some suffered for their Fatherland ;
With them are priests whose lives were undefiled,
And reverent bards on whom Apollo smiled.
Inventors, too, of useful arts are here,
And those whose worth has made their memory dear.”

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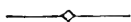
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LANCASHIRE WORTHIES.



I.

*SAMUEL CROMPTON.**

THE spinning-mule, invented by Samuel Crompton, has more than any single machine contributed to the progress and prosperity of the cotton manufacture, though the inventor himself profited little by the successful ingenuity and labour which helped to enrich his county and his country. Indeed, of the three men—Hargreaves, Arkwright, and Crompton—who may be grouped together as the originators of modern cotton-spinning, Arkwright alone accumulated wealth, and this because in business faculty he was greatly the superior of his two contemporaries. The operations of the founder of the factory system were, it is true, far more extensive than those of the inventors of the jenny and the mule. But if the sphere of Arkwright's

* Gilbert J. French, *The Life and Times of Samuel Crompton, Inventor of the Spinning-Machine called The Mule, with an Appendix of original documents*, second edition (Manchester and London, 1860). *A Brief Memoir of Samuel Crompton*, by John Kennedy, Esq., in *Memoirs of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester*, second series, vol. v. (London, 1831). Bennet Woodcroft, *Brief Biographies of Inventors of Machines for the Manufacture of Textile Fabrics* (London, 1863), § *Crompton*, &c., &c.

efforts and achievements had been much narrower than it was—if he had been simply, like Hargreaves or Crompton, the inventor of an isolated machine, he would assuredly have made out of it much more for himself than these two men made for themselves out of the jenny and the mule. By nature and by training Arkwright was as fitted as Crompton seems to have been unfitted for the battle of industrial life. Invention has been called the poetry of labour; and certainly inventors or projectors are, as little as poets, all cast in the same mould. Stalwart, shrewd, and hearty Sir Walter Scott did not differ more from the melancholic and morbid Cowper than the burly, resolute, and not over-scrupulous Arkwright from the shrinking and sensitive Crompton, whose rather sad story now falls to be told.

The only son of a small farmer at Firwood, near Bolton, Samuel Crompton was born there on the 3d of December 1753. His parents combined—as was then common—petty manufacturing with their petty agriculture. In the intervals of farm and dairy labour they carded, span, and wove, finding a market for their wares in Bolton, a town long previously famous for its fustians and other heavy fabrics. When Crompton was born, the population of Bolton was probably much less than the 5000 which it became twenty years later. The town was still called Bolton-in-the-Moors, from the marshy waste which surrounded it, and most of which, thanks partly to Crompton himself, is now covered with houses and mills. Writing or publishing in 1795, Dr. Aikin says, that “in the memory of some persons now living, not more than one cow used to be killed weekly in Bolton; or, if two, the unsold beef used to be sent to Bury market,”¹ a fact which indicates the poverty as well as scantiness of the population. In

¹ *Country Round Manchester*, p. 261.

1773 Great and Little Bolton contained only 5,339 inhabitants; a hundred years afterwards the population of the parliamentary burgh of Bolton was more than 93,000, an increase to which the success of Crompton's mule has largely contributed. In the production of its fustians and so forth, which at the time of Crompton's birth were the staple commodities of the place, Bolton was greatly dependent on the North of Ireland. Thence was brought the linen yarn for the warps, which, before Arkwright's rollers came into use, the cotton-spinning resources of the North of England could not supply of proper strength. Once a week there was a market for unbleached goods, the products of the town and neighbourhood. It was attended by buyers from Manchester and London; and the rural quota of the wares which they came in search of—"fustians, herring-bones, cross-overs, quiltings, dimities, and other goods—were carried to market by the small manufacturers (who were for the most part equally small farmers), in wallets balanced over one shoulder, while on the other arm was often hung a basket of fresh butter,"¹—a primitive conjunction of the products of the dairy and the loom.

Crompton's progenitors had seemingly been better off than were his parents. His birthplace, Firwood farm, once belonged to the Crompton family, but was mortgaged by his grandfather, and sold by his father, who remained on it merely as a tenant. Crompton's parents were honest, hard-working, and strictly religious people. The constructiveness inherited by Samuel, and turned to account in the invention of the spinning-mule, was applied by his father for the benefit of the church (now All Saints, Little

¹ French, p. 7. See in *First Series*, p. 373-5, the whole of Mr. French's interesting description of Bolton, its aspects and its trade, at the time of Crompton's birth.

Bolton), which he attended. The elder Crompton was fond of music, a taste also inherited by his son; and when his day's work was over, he helped to erect the organ gallery, even beginning to build an organ, unfinished at his death. He died when Samuel was a boy of five, and there were also two daughters, of whom little more than that they existed is recorded. One removal of the Crompton family from Firwood farm to a cottage in the same township had taken place soon after Samuel's birth, and just before the death of the father there was another to a portion of a neighbouring and ancient mansion, known from its situation as Hall-in-the-Wood. The landlord of the Cromptons, the purchaser of Firwood, seems also to have been the owner of Hall-i'-th'-Wood (as it was called in the vernacular), which was otherwise untenanted. The couple, whom, as deserving people, he may have wished to assist, would look after it. They were probably falling rather than rising in the world, and perhaps the offer of a domicile at a lower rent led them cheerfully to exchange a little home of their own for the part-occupancy and custodianship of Hall-in-the-Wood. Since it became famous as the birthplace of the mule it has had many visitors, and one of them thus records what were its aspects, internal and external, nearly a century after the Crompton family first made it their home:—

“An interesting specimen of the old rural mansion before Lancashire had become manufacturing—it is Elizabethan in style, small compared with modern mansions, but commodious and snug, and shows the advancing wealth of the owners of the successive additions which have from time to time been made to its accommodation: first, the roomy kitchen or hall, with sleeping apartments above, lit by latticed windows; then the addition of a dining-hall and drawing-room, with their large oriel windows of stained glass. The situation is very fine, on a plateau once covered with timber, from which it derived its name. The little river Eagley, a tributary of the Irwell, runs deep in the valley beneath, the high land descending precipitously in some

places almost to the banks of the stream. Even at this day, in spite of the long chimneys within sight, and the sky dimmed by smoke, the neighbourhood of Hall-in-the-Wood exhibits one of the best specimens of South Lancashire scenery." ¹

Here, with her little son and her two daughters, the widow Crompton abode after her husband's death, farming and manufacturing as before. Her dairy produced butter which was considered excellent, and the bees in the old-fashioned garden of the Hall supplied her with marketable honey. She was a superior woman, and of a superiority so appreciated, that, even in those days of the subjection of the sex, she was appointed overseer of the poor of her township. Dame Crompton seems to have been in one respect well qualified for the office. She was of a somewhat vigorous disposition, loving her son indeed, but all the more on that account not sparing the rod, and chastising him betimes. One fancies that this sort of training must have aggravated anything that was morbid in a naturally shy and sensitive boy. His mother sent him, however, to a good day-school in the neighbourhood, where he made fair progress in arithmetic, algebra, and geometry, taking kindly to such studies. Playmates or companions he seems to have had none. Of the sisters nothing is said, and besides mother and son, the only inmate of their section of the quaint mansion of whom mention is made was a lame old uncle on the father's side, so much of a cripple that he never left his one room, where he oscillated between his bed and his loom. Uncle Alexander was religious, like the rest of the family, but church-going was out of the question; and thus it was that he contrived to compensate himself for the deprivation:—

“On each succeeding Sunday, when all the rest of the family had gone to morning service at All Saints, Uncle Alexander sat in his

¹ *Quarterly Review* (for January 1860), No. 213, § *Cotton-Spinning Machines and their Inventors* (by Mr. Samuel Smiles), p. 66.

solitary room listening for the first sound of the bells of Bolton parish church. Before they ceased ringing, he took off his ordinary working-day coat, and put on that which was reserved for Sundays. This done, he slowly read to himself the whole of the Morning Service and a sermon, concluding about the same time that the dismissal bells commenced ringing, when his Sunday-coat was carefully put aside, to be resumed again, however, when the bells took up their burthen for the evening service, which he read through with the same solemnity."¹

From early childhood, in all likelihood, Crompton was accustomed to help his hard-working mother in her humble manufacturing operations, and "probably his little legs became accustomed to the loom almost as soon as they were long enough to touch the treddles." School itself may not have released him from his home labours, and as he grew up, his mother kept him close to his work, insisting, like a wicked fairy tormenting a captive princess, that he should do a certain stint every day, at the risk, in case of neglect, of a terrible scolding, or worse. He was a boy of fourteen when Hargreaves, by 1767, as has been told elsewhere,² so far perfected the spinning-jenny that a child could work with it eight spindles at once. Two years later the jenny was pretty generally used in Lancashire; and Crompton, *ætat* 16, "span on one of these machines with eight spindles the yarn which he afterwards wove into quilting, and thus was he occupied for the five following years." The spinning-jenny which Crompton used was perhaps a poor one, or there may have been inherent imperfections in the machine itself. In any case, much of his time was passed painfully in "mending the ever-breaking ends of his miserable yarn," to get through the day's appointed task and escape the maternal reproaches. It was a drudging, cheerless, lonesome life for the poor lad, and no wonder he grew up an unsocial and irritable young man. His one solace was derived from his inherited love of

¹ French, p. 24.

² *First Series*, p. 324.

music. The son of the amateur organ-builder made himself a fiddle, the first little achievement of the mechanical genius implanted in him, and destined to find before long a very different development :—

“He soon scraped a very intimate acquaintance with his fiddle, which became to him truly a bosom friend, proving in after-life the solace of many a solitary hour, and a source of consolation after many a bitter disappointment. With this musical friend he, on winter nights, practised the homely tunes of the time by the dim light of his mother’s kitchen fire or thrifty lamp ; and in many a summer twilight he wandered contemplatively among the green lanes or by the margin of the pleasant brook that swept round her romantic old residence.”¹

This construction of a fiddle that could be played on betokens considerable handiness in a youth who had no practical acquaintance with any but his own monotonous craft, and it perhaps aided in awakening his dormant mechanical powers. He had spun for five years on one of Hargreaves’ spinning-jennies, when some dim conception of the mule floated into his brain, as day after day he felt more and more keenly the imperfections of the new machine—imperfections very palpable and very grievous, whatever its superiority to the old one-thread spinning-wheel, which it was rapidly displacing. Besides craving for a machine that would turn out yarn less brittle than that which was “ever breaking” as it came from the jenny, he was probably stimulated by the demand for a finer kind of yarn than any that could be then produced effectively in England. In the muslin trade, the fabrics of India all but monopolised the market. The Act of 1721, which made penal the importation or use of Indian calicoes, plain or printed, did not prohibit muslins, and those of India defied English competition. English calicoes, for which Arkwright’s rollers furnished the warp, and the spinning-

¹ French, p. 23.

jenny of Hargreaves the weft, were being produced in considerable quantities, when, we are told, "the manufacture of the still more delicate and beautiful muslin was attempted both in Lancashire and at Glasgow with weft spun by the jenny." But, it is added, "the attempt failed owing to the coarseness of the yarn. Even with Indian weft, muslins could not be made to compete with those of the East."¹ Nay, according to Crompton's latest biographer, in Bolton itself, for three years before he began to work at his machine, muslins had been woven, "but either from hand-spun material or from the fine yarn occasionally imported from the East Indies." The hand-spun yarn was troublesome to produce; the East Indian was costly; so here would be stimulus given at his own door, as it were, to the young inventor. Crompton's mule was to enable the English spinner to produce a yarn out of which the most delicate muslin could be woven, not only to compete with, but to supersede, the airiest fabrics of the East.

Five long years, from his twenty-second to his twenty-seventh, Crompton brooded over, experimented on, and worked at his nascent machine. In his moments of greatest hope, however, he did not dream of a patent and a fortune, but thought only of turning out for his own loom, and with greater ease, a finer and more valuable yarn than that which he and his fellow-craftsmen had painfully and laboriously educed from the jenny. The machine, if it proved effective, was to be kept a close secret, and thus the already solitary and uncompanionable young man probably became less disposed than ever for society. His tools were few and scanty—those used by his father in building the unfinished organ, and notably a clasp-knife of his own, which did him yeoman's service. Some others he bought with what money he could spare from his slender

¹ Baines, *Cotton Manufacture*, p. 334.

earnings : partly to increase these, partly to gratify his taste for music, he fiddled in the orchestra of the Bolton Theatre during its period of intermittent opening, for the sum of eighteenpence a night. Of such poor tools as he possessed and acquired, moreover, he had to teach himself the use, since to ask for aid or instruction from the more skilful might have been to betray his secret. "It is known, however, that he frequently visited a small wayside smithy in the township, where, we are informed, he 'used to file his bits of things.'" Both to maintain due secrecy, and because his labour for his daily bread left him little leisure, he worked constantly at his machine during the night :—

"Indeed, this it was which first called the attention of his family and neighbours to his proceedings. Strange and unaccountable sounds were heard in the old Hall at most untimely hours ; lights were seen in unusual places ; and a rumour became current that the place was haunted. Samuel, however, was soon discovered to be himself the embodied *spirit (of invention)*, which had caused much fear and trouble to his family. Even when relieved from the alarm of a ghost, they yet found that they had among them a *conjuror!* for such was the term applied in contempt to inventors in those days, and indeed for a long time afterwards."¹

Something worse than the contempt and gibes of ignorant neighbours threatened the young inventor just as the long term of his patient experimenting approached a close. He had begun to work on his machine in 1774 ; five years more—the five years of his unremitting and solitary toil—bring us to 1779, the date of that uprising and outbreak of the Lancashire working classes against machinery, especially the spinning-jenny, which has been already described elsewhere.² The fury of the machine-breakers was scarcely anywhere more destructive than in the neighbourhood of Bolton. The rumours that Crompton was inventing more of the machinery on which the mob was wreaking its

¹ French, p. 37-8.

² *First Series*, p. 423-7.

vengeance might easily have procured him a visit from the rioters ; and, as recorded in the following passage, they were once seen and heard, busy at their work of demolition, in the immediate neighbourhood of Hall-in-the-Wood :—

“Crompton was well aware that his infant invention would be still more obnoxious to the rioters than Hargreaves’ jenny, and appears to have taken careful measures for its protection or concealment should they have paid a domiciliary visit to the Hall-in-the-Wood. The ceiling of the room in which he worked is cut through, as well as a corresponding part of the clay-floor of the room above, the aperture being covered by replacing the part cut away. This opening was recently detected by two visitors, who were investigating the mysteries of the old mansion ; but they could not imagine any use for a secret trap-door until, on pointing it out to Mr. Bromiley, the present tenant, he recalled to his memory a conversation he had with Samuel Crompton during one of his latest visits to the Hall many years ago. Mr. Crompton informed Mr. Bromiley, that once, when he was at work on the mule, he heard the rioters shouting at the destruction of a building at ‘Folds’ (an adjoining hamlet), where there was a carding-engine.¹ Fearing that they would come to the Hall-in-the-Wood and destroy his mule, he took it to pieces and put it into a skip which he hoisted through the ceiling into the attic by the trap-door, which had, doubtless, been prepared in anticipation of such a visit, and now offers a curious evidence of the insecurity of manufacturing inventions in their early infancy. The various parts were concealed in a loft or garret near the clock, and there they remained hid for many weeks ere he dared to put them together again. But in the course of the same year the Hall-in-the-Wood wheel was completed, and the yarn spun upon it used for the manufacture of muslins of an extremely fine and delicate texture.”

Yes, success had at last crowned the persistently and

¹ This statement is curiously confirmed by a passage in Josiah Wedgwood’s contemporary and epistolary chronicle of the doings of these rioters :—“By a letter from Bolton,” he writes to a friend, “I learned that the mob entered that place on Tuesday, 5th October 1779. . . . They next proceeded to Mr. Kay of *The Folds* and destroyed his machine and waterwheel, and then went to work with the lesser machines ’—spinning-jennies—“all above so many spindles.” See *First Series*, p. 426.

² French, p. 54-7.

perseveringly tentative labours, prosecuted in silence and secrecy, day after day, night after night, with the rudest tools, by the inexperienced, unassisted, the solitary and indigent young inventor, during five long years, spent in what Crompton afterwards described as "a continual endeavour to realise a more perfect principle of spinning. Though often baffled," he adds, "I as often renewed the attempt, and at length succeeded to my utmost desire, at the expense of every shilling I had in the world."¹ The result was the machine called at first, from its birthplace, the "Hall-in-the-Wood wheel," or sometimes, from the fine quality of the yarn spun on it, the "muslin wheel," but ultimately and now known as the "mule," from its combination of the principle of Arkwright's rollers with that of Hargreaves' spinning-jenny. After chronicling the origin, progress, and results of these last two famous inventions, the historian of the cotton manufacture proceeds thus to describe the mule :—

"During the period that has now passed under review, Hargreaves and Arkwright had established the cotton manufacture by their spinning machines ; but those machines were not adapted for the finer qualities of yarn. The water-frame spun twist for warps, but it could not be advantageously used for the finer qualities, as thread of great tenacity has not strength to bear the pull of the rollers when winding itself on the bobbins. This defect in the spinning machinery was remedied by the inventor of another machine, called the *mule*, or the *mule jenny*, from its containing the principles of Arkwright's water-frame and Hargreaves' jenny. Like the former, it has a system of rollers, to reduce the roving ; and, like the latter, it has spindles without bobbins to give the twist, and the thread is stretched and spun at the same time by the spindles, after the rollers have ceased to give out the rove. The distinguishing feature of the mule is, that the spindles, instead of being stationary, as in both the other machines, are placed on a movable carriage, which is wheeled out to the distance of fifty-four or fifty-six inches from the roller-beam, in order to stretch and twist the thread, and wheeled in again to wind it on the spindles. In the jenny, the clasp,

¹ French, p. 37.

which held the rovings, was drawn back by the hand from the spindles; in the mule, on the contrary, the spindles recede from the clasp, or from the roller-beam which acts as a clasp. The rollers of the mule draw out the roving much less than those of the water-frame; and they act like the clasp of the jenny, by stopping and holding fast the rove after a certain quantity has been given out, whilst the spindles continue to recede for a short distance farther; so that the draught on the thread is in part made by the receding of the spindles. By this arrangement, comprising the advantages both of the rollers and the spindles, the thread is stretched more gently and equably, and a much finer quality of yarn can therefore be produced."¹

Was the first rude conception of the rollers in the Hall-in-the-Wood machine borrowed from those of Arkwright? is a question that naturally arises. In 1772, two years before Crompton began his experiments, Arkwright's rollers were hard at work in the Cromford mill, and turning out cotton yarn fit to be woven into hose. At first sight, it would therefore seem as if Crompton's rollers must have been suggested by Arkwright. But the weight of such evidence as there is, consisting partly of Crompton's own testimony, or reported testimony, tends decidedly the other way. On this point, his earliest biographer, who knew him personally and intimately, and who was himself a practical cotton-spinner, speaks thus explicitly:—

“Mr. Crompton's first suggestion was to introduce a single pair of rollers, viz., a top and a bottom, which he expected would elongate the rove by pressure, like the process by which metals are drawn out, and which he observed in the wire-drawing for reeds used in the loom. In this he was disappointed, and afterwards adopted a second pair of rollers, the latter pair revolving at a slower speed than the former; and thus producing a draught of one inch to three or four. These rollers were put in motion by means of a wooden shaft with different-sized pullies, which communicated with the roller by a band. This was certainly neither more nor less than a modification of Mr. Arkwright's roller-beam; *but he often stated to me, that when he constructed his*

¹ Baines, *Cotton Manufacture*, p. 197-8.

machine, he knew nothing of Mr. Arkwright's discovery. Indeed, we may infer that he had not, otherwise he would not have gone thus rudely to work; and, indeed, the small quantity of metals which he employed, proves that he could not have been acquainted with Mr. Arkwright's superior rollers and fixtures in iron, and their connection by clockwork. Even the rollers were made of wood, and covered with a piece of sheepskin, having an axis of iron with a little square end, on which the pulleys were fixed. Mr. Crompton's rollers were supported upon wooden cheeks or stands. His tops were constructed much in the same way, with something like a mouse-trap string to keep the rollers in contact. His first machine contained only about twenty or thirty spindles. He finally put dents of brass-reed wire into his under rollers, and thus obtained a fluted roller. But the great and important invention of Crompton was his spindle-carriage, and the principle of the thread having no strain upon it until it was completed. The carriage with the spindles could, by the movement of the hand and knee, recede just as the rollers delivered out the elongated thread in a soft state, so that it would allow of a considerable stretch before the thread had to encounter the stress of winding on the spindle. This was the corner-stone of the merits of his invention."¹

Or, as in a much more recent sketch of Crompton, a living expert puts it: "In this machine was accomplished for the first time the action of the spinner's left arm and finger and thumb, which consisted in holding and elongating the sliver as the spindle was twisting it into yarn."²

Confident, justly confident, that he had succeeded in solving his problem, and believing a comfortable future to be in store for him, Crompton (*ætat* 27) took unto himself a wife. "She was a very handsome, dark-haired woman, of middle size and erect carriage," while Crompton himself is described as, in his prime, "a singularly handsome and prepossessing man; all his limbs, and particularly his hands," it is added, "were elegantly formed, and possessed great muscular power." The new Mrs. Crompton was well connected withal, being the daughter of a quondam

¹ Kennedy's *Brief Memoir of Crompton*, quoted by Baines, *Cotton Manufacture*, p. 201.

² Woodcroft, p. 13.

West India merchant, "a Mr. Pimlott, who resided at New Heys Hall, near Warrington." But her father had, like Dogberry, had losses, and she migrated from Warrington to Turton near Bolton, because there "ample and profitable employment could be obtained by spinning on Hargreaves' jenny." A genuine spinster, "in this art she was particularly expert, a circumstance which is said to have first attracted young Crompton's attention to her,"¹ and which made her emphatically a help meet for him. They were married in the February of 1780, and set up house in a cottage attached to Hall-in-the-Wood, where Crompton continued to occupy a room or two for the purposes of his handicraft. The young couple worked together in secrecy at the mule. Rude and imperfect as was its first, compared with its later and latest forms, it turned out then yarn of both a fineness and a firmness unknown before, and the arrival of which in the market startled the Bolton manufacturers. The demand for it was immediate and pressing, and, to supply as much as he could of it, Crompton gave up weaving, and, with his wife, devoted himself to spinning. He produced, as he went on, ever finer and finer yarn, and could obtain his own price for the small quantities which alone it was in his power to furnish. "He stated to Mr. Bannatyne," the author of the account of cotton-spinning contributed to the old supplement of the "Encyclopædia Britannica," "that on the invention of his machine 'he obtained 14s. per. lb. for the spinning and preparation of No. 40 (*i.e.*, yarn weighing 40 hanks to the pound); that a short time after he got 25s. per. lb. for the spinning and preparation of No. 60; and that he then spun a small quantity of No. 80 to show that it was not impossible, as was supposed, to spin yarn of so fine a grist, and for the spinning and preparation of this he got 42s. per. lb." What was

¹ French, p. 59.

then a quality of almost incredible fineness "is now considered a very low number; and since the multiplication of Crompton's mules," and, it may be added, the many and great improvements made in his originally rude machine, "it can be produced and sold in any quantity at about 2s. the pound."

With a demand for the new yarns greater than the supply, and commanding his own price for them, young, newly and happily married, conscious, too, that he was reaping where himself had sown, Crompton at last found a little sunshine lighting up his life. Alas! his felicity was to be of brief duration. He might keep his own secret, but that he had a secret to keep could not long be hid. It was soon noised abroad that the spring-head from which the wonderful yarn trickled was a room in Hall-in-the-Wood, and that Crompton was producing it there from a new machine of his own invention. The inventor found himself the envy of surrounding spinners, and the object of a harassing as well as a perilous curiosity. The old Hall was beset not only by purchasers, but by pryers, who flocked thither to find out the mystery of the new machine's construction. Every species of espionage was resorted to. People climbed up ladders to look at him through the window, and when he baffled this scrutiny by interposing a screen, "one inquisitive adventurer is said to have ensconced himself for some days in the cock-loft, where he watched Samuel at work through a gimblet-hole pierced through the ceiling." There is even a tradition that Arkwright, then in the full tide of his success, came over from Cromford to the Bolton which he knew so well, and made his way into Hall-in-the-Wood when Crompton was absent collecting poor-rates for his mother. Arkwright's first wife, dead long before, had been, it seems, the aunt of a female bosom friend of Crompton's wife, and in this or some other

way the ever-vigilant Richard was enabled to pay what seemed a friendly visit, while in reality he was making a voyage of discovery. It is a pity that the two did not meet, since a patent and a partnership might have been the result, and both patent and partnership must have prospered if taken in hand by the pushing, practical, and indomitable Arkwright. As it was, the sensitive Crompton allowed himself to feel worried out of his life by all this spying and prying, annoyances which were, in fact, a tribute to the excellence of his machine. It is noticeable, parenthetically, that among the causes of Crompton's unhappiness and disorder of mind at this time, the old threats or violence of spinners indignant at the invention and use of machinery is not perceptible. In Bolton and its neighbourhood, the spinning-jenny of Hargreaves had for years been popular, and the incursions of machine-breakers from other districts been suppressed by force. In quiet times, indeed, Crompton's mule could scarcely rouse opposition of this kind, since, at least at first, it did not so much increase the quantity, as improve the quality, of the yarn in the market.

A man of ordinary energy and resource would, in Crompton's position, have endeavoured to procure a patent for his machine. If he had not himself the means, there must have been numbers of others who would have been ready and eager to associate themselves with him in patenting an invention of which the powers and resources were proved beyond possibility of doubt. Crompton was neither as poor nor as obscure as Arkwright when the now prosperous owner of the Cromford mills invented or appropriated the rollers, and Arkwright procured wealthy partners and a patent. Even Hargreaves had managed to patent his spinning-jenny, though too late to benefit himself. But, strange want in a Lancashire man and a

Lancashire worker, Crompton seems to have been entirely deficient in "push," and he succumbed when he ought to have triumphed. All the practical defects of his character were aggravated by the petty but perpetual annoyances to which he was subjected, and they seem to have driven him half-distracted. His mood at this crisis of his fate he himself thus described long afterwards in a manuscript which he left behind him: "During this time I married and commenced spinner altogether. But a few months reduced me to the cruel necessity, either of destroying my machine altogether, or giving it up to the public. To destroy it I could not think of; to give up that for which I had laboured so long was cruel. I had no patent, nor the means of purchasing one. In preference to destroying I gave it to the public,"—an act of imprudent generosity, which, under the circumstances, is almost without a parallel in the history of industrial invention.

Crompton was encouraged to make this sacrifice by the advice of a "Mr. (afterwards Major) Pilkington of Siverwell House, Bolton," who was himself a considerable manufacturer. Mr. Pilkington was allowed to inspect the machine, and was made acquainted with the principle of its operation. Incredible as it seems, he advised Crompton to present the mule to the public. Agitated, tormented, dejected, too shy, and perhaps too proud, to go about asking for pecuniary aid wherewith to procure a patent, Crompton took the unkind advice of this unwise counsellor. He did not, indeed, quite give away the mule, since, before he parted with it,—and he surrendered not only the principle of the invention, but the very machine on which he was working,—he received a document, possessing, as it happened, no legal validity, and in which some eighty firms and individual manufacturers agreed to pay him the moneys respectively subscribed by them, amounting in all to the

magnificent sum of £67, 6s. 6d. ! Let the most copious and best-instructed of Crompton's biographers tell the remainder of the shameful and sorrowful story :—

“The miserable result was, that, according to Mr. Kennedy's account, about £50 only accrued to Mr. Crompton from this source”—the aforesaid subscription—“while, on the authority of Mr. Pilkington, the gross receipts amounted to £106. Mr. Crompton himself says: ‘I received as much by way of subscriptions as built me a new machine, with only four spindles more than the one I had given up—the old one having forty-eight, the new one fifty-two spindles.’

“That Mr. Crompton's statement is probably the most correct, may be gathered by reference to an existing copy of the agreement and list of the subscribers, in his own handwriting. There are fifty-five subscribers of one guinea each, twenty-seven of half-a-guinea, one of seven shillings and sixpence, and one of five shillings and sixpence, making together £67, 6s. 6d. ; but as it is known that several did not pay at all, and that he was at considerable expense of time and money in personally collecting the subscriptions of others, it may be assumed that the amount received did not exceed £60. The list is curiously interesting, as containing among the half-guinea subscribers the names of many Bolton firms now”—1860—“of great wealth and eminence as mule-spinners, whose colossal fortunes may be said to have been based upon this singularly small investment.

“No sooner was the mule given up to the public than the subscriptions entirely ceased. Crompton's hopes of reward and remuneration were blasted, and many of those who had previously given their names evaded or refused payment. Let us again use his own words in describing this very shameful transaction :—‘At last I consented, in hope of a generous and liberal subscription. The consequence was, that from many subscribers, who would not pay the sums they had set opposite their names when I applied to them for it, I got nothing but abusive language, given me to drive me from them, *which was easily done*, for I never till then could think it possible that any man (in such situation of life and circumstances) could pretend one thing and act the direct opposite. I then found it was possible, having had proof positive.’

“It thus appears that the money received for giving publicity to his wonderful invention merely sufficed to replace the machine he had given up ; and for his loss of time, study, and toil, he had not as reward or recompense a single shilling. But this pecuniary loss was less mortifying to his honourable and sensitive mind than the deceitful ingratitude he met with from too many of the persons he had so gene-

rously trusted. A record exists with the names of some of the men who used him thus infamously, but we blot these names from our paper, and spare their descendants the mortification of learning that when Samuel Crompton respectfully asked their ancestors to pay their promised subscriptions, and put before them their own written agreement to do so, they denounced him as an impostor, and asked him how he dared to come on such an errand! By this means many saved their miserable guinea (for that was the utmost extent of any subscription), but at what a fearful sacrifice of honesty and honour!"¹

This was the return made to Crompton for his gift of the mule to the community which specially profited by it. The shabby and sordid treachery of his townfolk sank deep into his soul, and hopeless resentment permanently clouded a disposition which was not by nature a cheerful or buoyant one. Crompton was himself an upright man, and his very integrity increased his exasperation at the meanness, faithlessness, and sometimes insolence, with which his benefaction was repaid. He became thenceforth suspicious and distrustful of all the world; and, with a temper soured by disappointment, was prone to fancy himself insulted when not the slightest offence had been intended.

Thus it came about that, not very long after his surrender of the mule to the public, Crompton declined an overture, the acceptance of which might have effaced all or most of the disastrous consequences of his precipitancy. Among the subscribing firms entitled to inspect and copy the mechanism of the mule was that of Peel, Yates, & Co., of Bury, the chief or most energetic partner in which was Mr. (afterwards Sir) Robert Peel, son of the founder of the family, and father of the statesman. There is a story told of a visit of Mr. Peel to Hall-in-the-Wood for the purpose of seeing and studying the mechanism of the mule. He took with him, it is said,

¹ French, p. 75.

some of the mechanics in his employment. They inspected the mule, and carried off in their heads the details of its construction and working. Mr. Peel could have meant no offence, but he mistook his man if, as is reported, he tendered Crompton, in rather too business-like a way, a payment of sixpence for each of these mechanics, presumably to compensate the inventor for the time lost during their inspection of his handiwork. Crompton, it is added, resented the offer as an insult, and never forgot or forgave it; if so, greatly to his own disadvantage. He or his household received two more visits from Mr. Peel when he had removed (within five years from the date of the invention of the mule) to a farmhouse at Oldhams, some two miles north of Bolton, perhaps to escape the importunities of the visitors who, even after the mule was given to the public, continued to haunt the Hall-in-the-Wood. At Oldhams, nevertheless, he was still pestered by the curious, intent on inspecting the improvements which he was supposed to have made in the machine; and, to baffle them, "he contrived a secret fastening to the door in the upper story where he worked at the mule." It was from no mere curiosity of this kind that Mr. Peel paid the two visits to Oldhams, one of which, and the objects of both, are thus described by Crompton's biographer from information received:—

"Mr. George Crompton" (Crompton's eldest son, born in 1781) "had a vivid recollection of two visits paid to Oldhams by the first Sir Robert Peel, then an eminent though untitled manufacturer. . . . On his first visit Crompton was absent, but Mr. Peel chatted with his wife, and gave young George half-a-guinea. Mrs. Crompton going into her dairy to bring her guest a bowl of milk, Mr. Peel took the opportunity to ask the boy where his father worked. George was pointing out the nail-head which, on being pressed, lifted the concealed latch of the door leading to the upper story, when his mother returned with the milk, and by a look warned him that he had committed an error."

What follows is much more important than this anecdote, however characteristic and descriptive of the Crompton household:—

“It is understood by his family, on the information of Mr. Crompton himself, that the objects of Mr. Peel’s visits were, first, to induce him to accept a lucrative situation of trust in his establishment, and, afterwards, an offer of partnership. Both of these offers Mr. Crompton declined, partly, it is believed, from a somewhat morbid desire for independence that clung to him through life; partly from a jealous suspicion of persons in superior social position, caused (as has already been said) by the cruel treatment he received when he surrendered his first mule; but most of all from a feeling of personal dislike to the future baronet, which he entertained all his life, arising (as we have been informed) from some disagreement on the occasion of Mr. Peel’s first inspection of the mule,”¹ produced by the already recorded tender of the sixpences.

Things might have gone well with Crompton, or at least very much better than they did go, had he accepted Mr. Peel’s offer. The man who refused it on such grounds as those just recorded was evidently little fitted to succeed in business.

At Oldhams Crompton rented a few acres of land, and kept a cow or two, from the milk of one of which Mrs. Crompton brought Mr. Peel the jugful of the preceding anecdote. Another little glimpse of the interior of the humble household of the inventor of the mule is given in this reminiscence of his eldest son’s:—

“When I was quite a child my father removed from Hall-in-the-Wood to Oldhams, and there a brother and a sister were born. I recollect that, soon after I was able to walk, I was employed in the cotton manufacture. My mother used to bat the cotton wool on a wire riddle. It was then put into a deep brown mug with a strong ley of soap-suds. My mother then tucked up my petticoats about my waist, and put me in the tub to tread upon the cotton at the bottom. When a second riddleful was batted, I was lifted out, and it was placed in the mug, and

¹ French, p. 81 and note.

I again trode it down. This process was continued until the mug became so full that I could no longer safely stand in it, when a chair was placed beside it, and I held on by the back. When the mug was quite full, the soap-suds were poured off, and each separate *dollop* of wool well squeezed to free it from moisture. They were then placed on the bread-rack under the beams of the kitchen-loft to dry. My mother and my grandmother curled the cotton wool by hand, taking one of the *dollops* at a time, on the simple hand-cards. When carded, they were put aside in separate parcels ready for spinning.”¹

Accustomed from his childhood to spin, Crompton produced from his own machine, as may be supposed, better yarn than was turned out from it by any one else. It might be supposed, too, that he would have attempted to extend his operations by employing others to spin under him. He seems to have tried this plan, and meanwhile to have invented a new carding-machine; but any hitch, great or small, in the conduct of an enterprise, threw the morbid and moody Crompton out of gear; and after experimenting as an employer of labour, he sank again into dependence on his own and his wife’s, with that of the children who were growing up about him. “I pushed on” (such is his own account of this section of his career), “intending to have a good share in the spinning line, yet I found there was an evil which I had not foreseen, and of much greater magnitude than giving up the machine, viz., that I must be always teaching green hands, employ none, or quit the country; it being believed that if I taught them they knew their business well. So that for years I had no choice left but to give up spinning or quit my native land. I cut up my spinning-machines for other purposes.” “On one occasion,” says his biographer, “when much incensed by a repetition of this injustice, he seized his axe and broke his carding-machine to pieces, remarking: ‘They shall not have this too.’”² But Crompton did neither “quit” his

¹ French, p. 78.

¹ *Ib.*, p. 91-2.

“native land” nor entirely “give up spinning.” Seemingly what he did do, when the paroxysm was over, was “to betake himself to his original occupation of weaving, or at least to spin only such yarn as he could employ in his own looms as a small manufacturer.” In 1791 we find him leaving his “pretty and pleasant” abode at Oldhams (actually, it is said, to avoid being reappointed overseer of the poor!), and removing to Bolton, to occupy the house “now”—which means in 1860—“17 King Street, with the attics over it and two adjoining houses for manufacturing purposes. During the six following years,” adds his biographer, “his family was increased by the birth of four more sons—a circumstance which appears to have induced him to make fresh attempts to work his inventions with profit, as we find that he filled the centre attic with preparatory machinery, and that the others had two new mules. In working them he was now assisted by his two eldest boys.” At the end of the six years he lost his good, true, hard-working wife, and was left with eight children, some of them infants, others of them old enough, as has been seen, to assist him in his handicraft. After her death he joined—a step characteristic of his dreamy disposition—the Swedenborgians, who were then rather an increasing sect here and there in Lancashire, and he became a zealous member of its Bolton congregation, taking “entire charge of the psalmody in the church,” and composing hymn-tunes for the choir. Crompton was a religious, and altogether, in his private life, a well-conditioned man, a good husband and a good father, frugal and industrious in his habits. His failures or non-successes were due not to any irregularities of conduct, but solely to want of business faculty, and his lot was cast in a stirring and pushing community at a time of great industrial expansion and excitement. He was never in debt, and indulged in

speculation as little as in dissipation. The yarn he span was the finest, and the muslin he wove was the most delicate, in the market. But original defects of nature, which disappointment had aggravated, kept him behind in the race of life. "I found to my sorrow," he wrote once, "I was not calculated to contend with men of the world, neither did I know there was such a thing as protection for me on earth! I found I was as unfit for the task that was before me as a child of two years old to contend with a disciplined army."¹ To such a height did his shyness and sensitiveness grow, that "he has been known," says his biographer, "to return from Manchester without even attempting to transact business, because he observed himself to be pointed out to strangers as a remarkable man." If he did "attempt to transact business," he too often, as might be expected, shirked the bargaining and higgling of everyday trade. "When he attended the Manchester Exchange to sell his yarns or muslins, and any rough-and-ready manufacturer ventured to offer him a less price than he had asked, he would invariably wrap up his samples, put them into his pocket, and quietly walk away."² Poor Crompton! But well might he be "pointed out" in the streets of Manchester or in any other cotton-manufacturing town as a "remarkable man," for he had created a new and mighty industry. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the rude machine put together in secrecy and concealment, in fear, and almost in trembling, was producing a wide-spread and plenteous harvest of golden fruit. The mule turned out yarns of most kinds, and, unlike Arkwright's rollers, which, to yield a profit, needed to be worked on a large scale and by extraneous motive power, the mule was a hand-machine, and whoever had ten fingers could spin with it. As it hap-

¹ French, p. 95.

² *Ib.*, p. 95 and note.

pened, moreover, a few years after the invention of the mule, all Arkwright's processes became public property, through the judicial decisions which cancelled his patents. This event gave a great impulse to the use of the mule, by making Arkwright's roving machinery generally available; and at first the mule did not rove, it merely span. The mule had been given to all the world, and in course of time all the world of cotton-spinning seized upon it. In 1784, the year before Arkwright's patents were cancelled, there were at work in England 20,000 of Hargreaves' hand-jennies of eighty spindles each, against 550 of Crompton's mules, of ninety spindles each. But as soon as Arkwright's patents were cancelled, the mule began rapidly to displace or to gain upon the jenny. As has been said or quoted elsewhere, "The dissolution of Arkwright's patent and the invention of the mule concurred to give the most extraordinary impetus to the cotton manufacture. Nothing like it has been known in any other great branch of industry. Capital and labour rushed to this manufacture in a torrent, attracted by the unequalled profits which it yielded."¹ Readers of the First Series may remember Robert Owen starting in the cotton manufacture with no other stock in trade than three of Crompton's mules, the rovings for which he bought from "two young industrious Scotchmen of the names of M'Connell and Kennedy,"² afterwards a famous firm. How mules, cheap and easy of construction, and workable everywhere, were set up through the length and breadth of industrial Lancashire, may be easily conceived. Of the effects of the general use of the mule on the weavers in a single district of Lancashire there is a graphic description by Radcliffe, the improver of the power-loom, when chronicling the history of the cotton manufacture in his own township of Meller, fourteen miles

¹ First Series, p. 455.

² *Ib.*, p. 453.

from Manchester. The following sketch of his is a continuation of that in which he delineated the half-agricultural, half-manufacturing, industry of the small Lancashire farmer in the days before Hargreaves, Arkwright, and Crompton :—

“From the year 1770 to 1788, a complete change had gradually been effected in the spinning of yarns ; that of wool had disappeared altogether, and that of linen was also nearly gone ; cotton, cotton, cotton, was become the almost universal material for employment ; the hand-wheels were all thrown into lumber-rooms ; the yarn was all spun on common jennies ; the carding for all numbers up to 40 hanks in the pound was done on carding-engines ; but the finer numbers of 60 to 80 were still carded by hand, it being a general opinion at that time that machine-carding would never answer for fine numbers. In weaving, no great alteration had taken place during these eighteen years, save the introduction of the fly-shuttle, a change in the woollen looms to fustians and calico, and the linen nearly gone, except the few fabrics in which there was a mixture of cotton. To the best of my recollection, there was no increase of looms during this period, but rather a decrease.”

They had decreased for the simple reason that, whatever the increased production of yarn through Hargreaves' invention of the spinning-jenny and Arkwright's successes with his rollers, the use of Kay's fly-shuttle enabled the weaver to do more than keep pace with it. But, on the introduction of the mule, all this was changed. Multitudinous indeed must have been the mules set to work, and enormous the increase in the quantity of the yarn produced through them, to lead to such a multiplication of hand-looms, and such an improvement in the position of the hand-loom weaver, as are described in the following passage :—

“The next fifteen years, viz., from 1788 to 1803, I will call the golden age of this great trade. Water-twist,” spun by Arkwright's rollers, “and common jenny-yarns,” from Hargreaves' famous machine, “had been freely used in Bolton, &c., for some years prior to 1788 ; but it was *the introduction of mule-yarns about this time*, along with the

other yarns, all assimilating together and producing every description of clothing, from the finest book-muslin, lace, stocking, &c., to the heaviest fustian, that gave such a preponderating wealth through the loom.

“The families I have been speaking of, whether as cottagers or small farmers, had supported themselves by the different occupations I have mentioned in spinning and manufacturing, as their progenitors, from the earliest institution of society, had done before them. But the mule-twist now coming into vogue *for the warp as well as weft*, added to the water-twist and common jenny-yarns, with an increasing demand for every fabric the loom could produce, put all hands in request, of every age and description. The fabrics made from wool and linen vanished, while the old loom-shops being insufficient, every lumber-room, even old barns, carhouses and outbuildings of every description were repaired, windows broken through the old blank walls, and all fitted up for loom-shops. This source of making room being at length exhausted, new weavers' cottages with loom-shops rose up in every direction; all immediately filled; and, when in full work, the weekly circulation of money, as the price of labour only, rose to five times the amount ever before experienced in this district, every family bringing home weekly 40, 60, 80, 100, or even 120 shillings per week! It may be easily conceived that this sudden increase of the circulating medium would, in a few years, not only show itself in affording all the necessaries and comforts of life these families might require, but also be felt by those who, abstractedly speaking, might be considered disinterested spectators; but in reality they were not so, for all felt it, and that in the most agreeable way too; for this money in its peregrinations left something in the pockets of every stone-mason, carpenter, slater, plasterer, glazier, joiner, &c., as well as the corndealer, cheesemonger, butcher, and shopkeepers of every description. The farmers participated as much as any class by the prices they obtained for their corn, butter, eggs, fowls, with every other article the soil or farmyard could produce, all of which advanced at length to nearly three times the former price. Nor was the proportion of this wealth inconsiderable that found its way into the coffers of the Cheshire squires who had estates in this district, the rents of their farms being doubled, and in many instances trebled.”¹

The rude machine of the Hall-in-the-Wood had done all this for the community in general, and for the hand-loom weaver in particular. Those were days when what has

¹ William Radcliffe, *Origin of Power-Loom Weaving*, quoted by Baines, *Cotton Manufacturer*, p. 338.

become the trade of almost a pariah class of handicraftsmen could be described as "that of a gentleman." "The hand-loom weavers," according to the same authority, "brought home their work in top-boots and ruffled shirts, carried a cane, and in some instances took a coach." "Many weavers at that time," adds a commentator on this statement, "used to walk about the streets with a five-pound Bank of England note spread out under their hat-bands; they would smoke none but long 'churchwarden' pipes, and objected to the intrusion of any other handicraftsmen into the particular rooms in the public-houses which they frequented."¹ Several causes were soon at work to bring down the hand-loom weaver to a lower level; among them was the invention of the power-loom by Edmund Cartwright, who took out his first patent in 1784, though years elapsed before it was perfected, and before the power-loom largely displaced the ancient and immemorial hand-loom. Moreover, while these causes were operating, the independent mule-spinner, working at home, and his or her own master or mistress, was being gradually brought inside the factory system, which, with his rollers and the organisation of labour needed to work them, Arkwright had founded. In 1790, the manager of David Dale's New Lanark Mills for the first time drove mules by water-power, that of the rushing and falling Clyde. And a still more effective transformation of home into factory industry was made through the application of Watt's steam-engine to drive cotton machinery of all kinds—an application, too, localising and concentrating in districts where coal and iron abounded the manufacture which otherwise might have been diffused, and might have flourished wherever there were streams capable of affording water-power. Meanwhile, also, the machine of the Hall-in-the-Wood, in constant use by many hands, was being im-

¹ French, p. 102.

proved in various ways, and by various contrivances, towards its present form. One of the most noticeable results of all this expansion was, that some years before the nineteenth century opened, Crompton's mule had directly and indirectly led to the displacement of Indian muslins and light fabrics by those of British manufacture, Lanarkshire in this particular branch of industry already rivalling Lancashire. The year 1787 may be fixed on as about the date of the latest renewal by British manufacturers—in this case cotton, not woollen manufacturers—of the old protest against the competition of East Indian products with those of "native industry."¹ Six years afterwards, in 1793, the tables were so completely turned, that we hear the East India Company, in a "Report of the Select Committee of the Court of Directors upon the subject of the cotton manufacture of this country," uttering the lament that "every shop offers British muslins for sale equal in appearance and of more elegant patterns than those of India, for one-fourth, or perhaps more than one-third, less in price."² Nay, at one time, so versatile was the mule, it seemed likely that Arkwright's rollers themselves would be laid aside to make way for it. The use of the power-loom, however, which required for its operation a specially strong yarn, prevented the mule from displacing as a yarn-spinning machine the rollers of Arkwright,³ as it undoubtedly did at last completely displace, in the cotton manufacture at least, the spinning-jenny of Hargreaves. To the spinning-jenny and the water-frame is to be mainly ascribed, no doubt, the

¹ Ure, *Cotton Manufacture* (London 1861), i. 296.

² Baines, *Cotton Manufacture*, p. 334.

³ *Ib.*, p. 308. Mr. Baines adds as another cause of the survival of Arkwright's water-frame, that "improvements which were made in the machine also enabled the manufacturers to sell the water-twist of low counts cheaper than mule-twist."

increase in the import of cotton wool from less than four million pounds in 1764, to nearly eleven and a half millions in 1784. But it is to Crompton's mule that was chiefly due the still more striking increase in the same import between 1784 and the first year of the nineteenth century. In 1800 the import of cotton wool had risen to a quantity rather greater than fifty-six million pounds.

It was in this same year of 1800 that, struck by the contrast between the little or nothing which he had gained for himself, and the much which he had achieved for his country and his county, some Manchester sympathisers—foremost among them Mr. Kennedy, Crompton's first biographer, and one of the earliest historians of the cotton manufacture,¹—bethought them of attempting to raise a

¹ This is the Mr. Kennedy, one of the founders of the well-known firm of M'Connell & Kennedy, respecting whose humble beginnings in the cotton trade, when they were able to make only the rovings which the young Robert Owen and others bought and span upon mules into thread, see *First Series*, p. 453, note. Late in life Mr. Kennedy printed for private circulation a volume of essays (including the "Brief Memoir of Crompton"), which the writer has not been able to procure or to consult. In the Library of the Patent Office, however, there is a MS. transcript, from the printed volume, of one of these pieces, entitled, "Brief Notice of my Early Recollections, in a Letter to my Children," and from this interesting autobiographical fragment the following particulars are taken. John Kennedy was born in 1769, in the Stewartry of Kirkcudbright, on the slender paternal estate of Knockalling, some six miles from New Galloway. His father died when he was young, leaving him, with four brothers and two sisters, to be brought up by their mother, a superior Scotchwoman of the old type. When advanced in years, and living amid the stir of populous Manchester, he remembered the melancholy induced in his boyish mind by the silence of "the still valley and blue mountains" of his secluded and thinly-peopled Scottish home, where the arrival of a travelling pedlar made a sensation. From early years he was led to think of pushing his fortunes at a distance, as family after family of the few in his neighbourhood winged its flight to the West Indies and to England. One of the companions of his boyhood was Adam Murray, afterwards

public subscription for the benefit of the struggling inventor. Unfortunately, the circumstances of the time were unfavourable to the success of the benevolent scheme. To war with France and the fiscal burdens imposed by it—burdens, however, which the productiveness of the mule and the new development bestowed by it on the cotton manufacture enabled the nation more easily to bear—were added depressed trade and high prices of food, bringing occasional riots in their train. The year in which the subscription for Crompton was set on foot was that of a renewed suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and of the establishment (in Spitalfields) of the first of English soup-kitchens. Comparatively few subscriptions could in these circumstances be procured. Among the few was one meriting remembrance. “When Mr. Arkwright, the son

eminent as a Lancashire cotton-spinner, who migrated from their quiet glen to Chowbent, to be apprenticed to a machine-maker there, a fellow-countryman, Mr. Cannan, formerly of Kells, and among whose other apprentices was another young Scotchman, James M’Connell, afterwards Kennedy’s partner. At the age of fifteen, the young Kennedy accordingly left Knockalling to join his friend as a fellow-apprentice in the Chowbent establishment, and great was his astonishment when at Dumfries he saw for the first time a few lighted lamps in the streets, and a waggon not only with four wheels, but with four horses. His apprenticeship successfully over, he started in business in Manchester with the two Sandfords and his friend James M’Connell as machine-makers and spinners, the firm being Sandford, M’Connell, & Kennedy, he taking charge of the machine department. It was at this time that Robert Owen bought their rovings. Their first shop was in Stable Street, or Back Chetham Street, their capital not more than £700, and the machines which they worked as well as made “were put up in any convenient garrets.” After a few years the firm was dissolved, and a new one, M’Connell & Kennedy, formed, the operations of which were so primitive that their cards were turned by horse or by hand. Six or seven years later they built their first mill in Union Street, and rose in time to great manufacturing eminence and wealth. Mr. Kennedy died in 1855, in his eighty-sixth year, and, with faculties unimpaired, transacted business to the last.

and successor of Sir Richard Arkwright, was waited upon by Mr. Lee," Mr. Kennedy's active coadjutor in the good work, "he said that he would contribute cheerfully, candidly acknowledging the merit of the invention,—at the same time observing that 'Mr. Crompton had been his most bitter rival, as he had superseded the machine of his father's invention in all the finer numbers of yarn.' He contributed thirty guineas to the fund."¹ But liberality like this was rare, and those who had reaped profit from the mule were more backward with their money than was the second Richard Arkwright, who had suffered by its success. "So great, indeed, was the difficulty of collecting the sums subscribed, that the matter was of necessity prematurely abandoned. Between four and five hundred pounds was all that could be realised, and that was handed over to Crompton to increase his little manufacturing establishment for spinning and weaving. As a consequence of his possession of this additional capital, he soon afterwards rented the top-story of a neighbouring factory, one of the oldest in Bolton, in which he had two mules—one of 360 spindles, the other of 220—with the necessary preparatory machinery. The *power* to turn the machinery was rented with the premises. Here also he was assisted by the elder branches of his family; and it is our duty, though a melancholy one, to record that the system of seducing his servants from his employment was still persisted in, and that one, at least, of his sons was not able to withstand the specious and flattering inducements held out by wealthy opponents to leave his father's service and accept extravagant payment for a few weeks, during which he was expected to divulge his father's supposed secrets and his system of manipulating upon the machine."² The faithlessness, stinginess, and insolence of fellow-manufacturers

¹ French, p. 112.

² *Ib.*, p. 112-14.

enriched by his mule had deeply wounded the sensitive and honourable Crompton. And now came the heaviest blow of all, the sordid treachery of his own son.

As the years rolled on, Crompton became no richer, though his frugality and industry kept him from lapsing into anything like absolute poverty. Of his five sons, two were by way of helping him in his business, but they seem to have been young men of expensive habits, and Crompton's acquaintance with care did not diminish in familiarity. He felt that the community owed him something, but the endeavours of his friends to make it sensible of its obligations had not done much for him. Turning from Lancashire to London, in 1807 he made an abortive application to Sir Joseph Banks and the Society of Arts to aid him in procuring "from the Government or elsewhere," as he phrased it, "a proper recompense for his invention." Through some blundering, on all sides apparently, four years elapsed before Crompton discovered that nothing was to be expected either from Sir Joseph or from the Society. However, as it chanced, not long before this discovery, there happened something that encouraged him to make a more direct effort to obtain a national reward. In 1809, when he had wasted much of his substance in endeavours to manufacture by the power-loom, which he had invented years before, after the usual memorialising and petitioning, and the due process of investigation by a Committee of the House of Commons, the Reverend Edmund Cartwright procured from Parliament a grant of £10,000 for his invention. Crompton's claims to a parliamentary grant were much stronger than Cartwright's; for the mule was in general use, while the power-loom was as yet little valued or applied. Cartwright, however, had not only procured a patent for his loom, but an Act of Parliament (in 1801) prolonged its operation on its expiry without profiting the

inventor, whereas poor Crompton had presented his invention to his community and country. Stimulated, doubtless, by Cartwright's successful application to the Government and to Parliament, and perhaps urged forward by friends, Crompton resolved on what was for him rather a spirited enterprise. It was to visit the manufacturing districts of the United Kingdom and ascertain in person the results of the use of his invention, with the object of claiming from Government a national reward. He received considerable attention during his tour, and at Glasgow, where the mule had created a new and great Scottish industry, the muslin trade, arrangements were made to give him a public dinner. But any demonstration of this kind was too much for a man of his morbid shyness, and, to quote his own account of the matter, "rather than *face up*, I first hid myself, and then fairly bolted from the city.¹ The following is an exposition of the statistical results of Crompton's tour of investigation, completed from the evidence given a year afterwards before a select Committee of the House of Commons, of which more anon :—

"From the information obtained, he calculated that between four and five millions of mule spindles were then in actual use. But this estimate was afterwards found to be much too low. It referred to 360 factories only, and did not include any of the numerous mules used in the manufacture of woollen yarn.

"There is some difficulty in fully appreciating the value of very

¹ French, p. 150, where is the following note: "Another anecdote illustrative of Mr. Crompton's extreme modesty and shyness may be mentioned on the authority of his sons. Mr. Kennedy called upon him one day in King Street, accompanied by a foreign Count, who much desired to be introduced to him, but Crompton *was laid down in bed, and could not see him*. Mr. Kennedy went up-stairs, and said that if he did not get up and come down-stairs, his friend should visit him in his bedroom; but Crompton could not be persuaded. He declared emphatically that if the Count was brought up he would get under the bed."

high numbers by persons unaccustomed to their use; we therefore venture to suggest a familiar standard of measurement, to assist such of our readers as may be so placed, and assume that the Old Testament is made up of 2,728,100 letters. Now the number of mule-spindles which Mr. Crompton found to be in use in the latter part of the year 1811 amounted to upwards of three-fourths more than the number of letters in the Bible, or to 4,600,000." It is added, in a note, "from a MS. document in Crompton's handwriting," that "at this time the number of spindles used upon Hargreaves' jenny machines was 155,880, upon Arkwright's water-frame 310,516;" to such an extent had the mule out-stripped both of the two great inventions which preceded it. To return:—"It was further found that about forty millions of pounds of cotton-wool was spun upon these mules annually; that double the amount of wages was paid for spinning on the mule to that of all other machines for the purpose put together; that about two-thirds of the entire amount of steam-power employed in cotton-spinning was then applied to turning Crompton's mule-spindles; that at least four-fifths of the cotton-cloth bleached in the principal bleach-works in Lancashire was woven from yarn spun on mules; that the value of buildings, power, and machinery engaged in spinning on Mr. Crompton's system was between three and four millions sterling; that 70,000 persons were directly employed in spinning on mules; 150,000 more in weaving the yarn thus spun; and at the usual computation of two others dependent on each worker, the aggregate number of people depending on the mule for their living amounted to 660,000 people, without including the large addition of those who were engaged in working machinery, growing cotton, transporting it, dyeing, printing, embroidering, exporting and selling."¹

Home again from his tour, Crompton laid his facts and figures before his kind Manchester friends, Mr. Kennedy and Mr. Lee. They at once gave him every encouragement and aid in preparing a case to be laid before Government in support of a claim for a national reward, such as had been bestowed on the inventor of the power-loom, then a much less successful and productive machine than the mule had proved itself to be. A friendly Manchester solicitor tendered his gratuitous help in drawing up a memorial. Influential Lancashire gentlemen, men, and

¹ French, p. 148 50.

manufacturers, signed a certificate confirmatory of its statements, and, furnished with suitable letters of introduction, Crompton proceeded to London in the February of 1812. Spencer Percival, who had procured Cartwright his reward, was then Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer. He seems to have viewed Crompton's claim with favour, for, indeed, Chancellors of the Exchequer in that time of costly war knew the fiscal value of the cotton manufacture, and that to foster its development was a matter of grave national concernment. A petition of Crompton's to the House of Commons was referred to a select committee, several of the members of which were Lancashire gentlemen or manufacturers. The Lord Stanley of the day, afterwards Earl of Derby, the grandfather of the present Earl, was its chairman, and both in public and in private showed himself a kind friend to Crompton. Crompton's old diffidence and shyness prevented him from waiting personally on ministers and Members of Parliament, but he was not at all backward in urging his claims by letter. "Copies of a considerable portion of this correspondence have been preserved. The letters," we are told, "are invariably written in a style of respectful yet manly and straightforward independence, which we are compelled to admire, though at the same time it must be confessed that they might have been more useful had they been tempered with a little more worldly policy." Crompton still harboured the old grudge at the first Sir Robert Peel, and would not cultivate friendly relations with the man whose position, antecedents, and politics gave him great weight, especially in such a matter, with the Ministry. Sir Robert seems, nevertheless, to have exerted himself in behalf of the irritable inventor. He gave evidence before the committee, of which he was a member, in Crompton's favour, and so did the Mr. Pilkington who had advised

the surrender of the mule to the public. Other manufacturers testified strongly to the proved and incontestible value of the mule. The creator of the modern steam-engine, "Mr. James Watt, of the House of Boulton, Watt, & Co., Birmingham," being called, and asked if he had "erected many steam-engines for turning machinery upon Mr. Crompton's principle," gave this brief but emphatic reply: "A considerable number; I conceive about two-thirds of the power of steam-engine we have erected for spinning cotton has been applied to turning spindles upon Mr. Crompton's construction." One of the bits of evidence most likely to tell upon a Chancellor of the Exchequer and a House of Commons was the statement of Crompton's friend, Mr. Lee, "cotton-spinner of the house of Philips & Lee of Manchester," that the annual amount of duty paid merely upon the cotton imported to be spun by the mule was not less than £350,000 a year. The committee reported in Crompton's favour, without naming a sum, and the Prime Minister seems to have thought of proposing to give him £20,000, twice the amount of the grant bestowed on Cartwright. But, as poor Crompton's ill luck would have it (to say nothing of that of the victim him-elf), before the proposal was quite matured and made, came Bellingham's assassination of Percival:—

"On the 11th day of May" 1812, "Mr. Crompton was in the lobby of the House of Commons in conversation with Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Blackburne," one of the members for Lancashire and a staunch friend of the inventor's, "upon the subject of his claim, which was about to be brought forward, when one of the gentlemen remarked, 'Here comes Mr. Percival.' The group was immediately joined by the Chancellor of the Exchequer," Percival, "who addressed them with the remark, 'You will be glad to know that we mean to propose twenty thousand pounds for Crompton; do you think *that* will be satisfactory?'" Mr. Crompton did not hear the reply, as, from motives of delicacy, he

left the party and walked down a short stair leading out of the lobby, but before he left it, he heard a great rush of people and exclamations that Mr. Percival had been shot, which was indeed the fact. The assassin, Bellingham, in an instant had deprived the country of a valuable Minister, and Crompton lost a friend and patron at the moment of the most critical importance to his fortune.”¹

Even so. And when, after some few weeks of “ministerial crisis,” a new Government was formed, the long-lived Liverpool administration, Vansittart succeeded Percival in the Chancellorship of the Exchequer. He, too, was not

¹ French, p. 161. The Commons were sitting in committee of the whole House, at the instance of Brougham, to hear evidence against the Orders in Council. “For some days the examination of witnesses proceeded. On Monday the 11th May, Brougham, as usual, moved the order of the day for going into committee. Babington took the chair; Robert Hamilton, a manufacturer of earthenware in Staffordshire, was summoned for examination; and Brougham, after complaining of Percival’s absence, commenced to examine him. One of the members started off to Downing Street to summon the Minister; Brougham went on with his questions; finished his examination-in-chief; and Stephen, the real originator of the Orders, commenced the cross-examination of the witness. In the meantime, the member who had gone to fetch Percival had met the Minister in Parliament Street. Percival characteristically darted forward to the House. The lobby was comparatively full; a tall man in a tradesman’s dress was standing by the door through which the Minister passed into it. He placed a pistol at Percival’s breast and fired. Percival walked on one or two paces, faintly uttered, ‘Oh! I am murdered,’ and fell on the floor.”—Spencer Walpole’s *Life of The Right Honourable Spencer Percival* (Lond. 1874), ii. 295. The statement quoted in the text is scarcely consistent with this account of Percival’s assassination. French, however, adds elsewhere (p. 176, note), “Mr. Percival when he was shot had a memorandum in his hand as follows:—

‘Crompton, £20,000
10,000
5,000’

which was understood to signify, not less than £5000, but £20,000 if possible.”

unfriendly to Crompton, but at that period of great national stress—England in arms almost alone against a world—some of his colleagues seem to have regarded the unfortunate inventor as a bore, and one of them so far mistook Crompton's character and position as to drop the hasty, harsh, and calumnious remark, "Give the man £100 a year; it will be as much as he can drink." The circumstances of the time were indeed singularly unfavourable to a liberal treatment of Crompton's claim. The war in the Peninsula called for new taxes and new loans, and the manufacturing distress produced by Napoleon's Berlin and Milan decrees, and the Orders in Council with which the English Government retaliated on them, culminated in machine-breaking and other riots in the manufacturing districts. The Ministers were more anxious to pass new penal enactments multiplying capital punishments, with which to terrify these disturbers of the peace, than to weigh the value of Crompton's invention; and both rioting and active political discontent were rife in and about the very Bolton from which he came.¹ At last, on the 26th June 1812, and of course

¹ The severity of the law and its administration at this time, without additional penal enactments, may be estimated from the following contemporary record: "Manchester, 13th June, 1812. "About twelve o'clock on Saturday, the awful sentence of the law," death by hanging, "was put upon the eight persons condemned at the late special assize at Lancaster, viz., James Smith," and three others, "for burning, &c., Messrs Wroe & Duncough's weaving mill at West Houghton," in Bolton parish; "John Howorth," and two others, "for breaking into the house of John Holland in this town, and stealing bread and cheese, and Hannah Smith for highway robbery by stealing potatoes at Bank Top in this town."—*Annual Register for 1812, Chronicle*, p. 85. These riotous proceedings of the time, with which were mixed up simple thefts instigated by hunger, but equally punished by death, began with the frame-breaking Luddites in Nottinghamshire, and thence extended to other counties. To daunt the Nottinghamshire rioters, the Government introduced into Parliament the Framework Knitters' Bill, which made the destruction of the frames used in the

by previous agreement with Vansittart, Lord Stanley, as chairman of the select committee on Crompton's claim, rose and moved that a grant of £5000 should be made to

hosiery trade a capital offence. It was to oppose this bill that the young Lord Byron (*ætat* 24) delivered his maiden speech in the House of Peers, on the 27th February 1812, just two days before he became famous by the publication of the first two cantos of *Childe Harold*. Byron spoke on the occasion not only as an English peer, but as a Nottinghamshire man. "During the short time," he said, "I recently passed in Nottinghamshire, not twelve hours elapsed without some fresh act of violence, and on the day I left the county, I was informed that forty frames had been broken the preceding evening, as usual without resistance and without detection." Wellington was then pursuing his victorious career in the Iberian peninsula; he had stormed Ciudad Rodrigo on the 19th of January before Byron thus addressed his grave and reverend seniors of the Upper House: "All the cities you have taken, all the armies which have retreated before your leaders, are but petty subjects of self-congratulation if your land is divided against itself, and your dragoons and your executioners must be let loose against your fellow-citizens. You call these men a mob, desperate, dangerous, and ignorant, and seem to think that the only way to quiet the *Bellua multorum caput* is to lop off a few of its superfluous heads. But even a mob may be better reduced to reason by a mixture of conciliation and firmness than by additional irritation and redoubled penalties. Are we aware of our obligation to a mob? It is the mob that labour in your fields and serve in your houses, that man your navy and recruit your army, that have enabled you to defy all the world, and can also defy you when neglect and calamity have driven them to despair. You may call the people a mob, but do not forget that a mob often speaks the sentiments of the people." Here is the spirited peroration of this maiden speech of the author of *Childe Harold* and *Don Juan*: "With all due deference to the noble Lords opposite, I think a little investigation, some previous inquiry, would induce even them to change their purpose. That most favourite state measure, so marvellously efficacious in many and recent instances," the treatment of the "Catholic claims" among them—"temporising—would not be without its advantages in this. When a proposal is made to emancipate or relieve, you hesitate, you deliberate for years, you temporise and tamper with the minds of men, but a death-bill must be passed off-hand, without a thought of the consequences. Sure I am, from what I have heard and from what I have seen, that to pass the bill under all the existing

the inventor, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer having signified his approval, a resolution to that effect was passed at once. To Crompton, after his costly tour in search of statistics, followed by a five months' sojourn in London, away from his business, to say nothing of the expense incurred by him in promoting the parliamentary inquiry, and in dancing attendance on the magnates of the Legislature and the Ministry, the smallness of the grant was a terrible disappointment. This was enhanced by the taunts with which, when he returned home, he was, it seems, assailed by his sons. They had reckoned confidently on a much larger grant, and reproached him with having mismanaged a promising case.

Crompton was now verging on sixty, and perhaps it would have been better for him to have accepted, in lieu of the grant, even so small a pension as £100 a year. With what remained of it, after all the inevitable deductions to

circumstances, without inquiry, without deliberation, would only be to add injustice to irritation, and barbarity to neglect. The framers of such a bill must be content to inherit the honours of the Athenian law-giver, whose edicts were said to be written not in ink, but in blood. But suppose it passed, suppose one of those men, as I have seen them, meagre with famine, sullen with despair, careless of a life which your Lordships are about to value at the price of a stocking-frame, suppose this man surrounded by the children for whom he is unable to procure bread at the hazard of his existence, about to be torn for ever from a family which he lately supported in peaceful industry, and which it is not his fault that he can no longer so support,—suppose this man—and there are ten thousand such from whom you may select your victims—dragged into court to be tried for this new offence by this new law, still there are two things wanted to convict and condemn him—twelve butchers for a jury and a Jeffries for a judge.”¹ This burst received no response from the probably startled Ministerial Bench. The bill, which had been passed by the Commons, was passed by the Lords, and not long afterwards the capital punishment which it inflicted on frame-breakers was extended to the destroyers of machinery in general.

¹ *Parliamentary History* (Lond. 1812), xxi. 966.

be made from it, he started in the bleaching trade, which was receiving a great extension from the more and more successful application of the seemingly useless elemental gas discovered in 1774 by Scheele, then an obscure Swedish apothecary, and named by him chlorine. Crompton's bleachworks were at Over Darwen. Fortune did not smile on the new enterprise; and another into which he entered, by becoming a partner in a firm of cotton merchants and spinners, made him no richer than it found him. Some five years or so after the affair of the parliamentary grant, Crompton's sons, who had been associated with him in his bleaching and other undertakings, were either dead or dispersed, and, almost alone in the world, he "carried on his small original business without assistance, spending much of his time in devising the mechanism proper for weaving new patterns in fancy muslins." Here again his lack of business faculty neutralised his industry and ingenuity. Neighbours and "pretended friends" pirated his patterns, and undersold him by manufacturing them in fabrics of inferior quality. Suppose a state of things in which there was no law of copyright, and a gifted but unpractical author published his own books in competition with "the trade," his position would be analogous to that of Crompton during much of his life; and it is easy to see what would be the fate of a sensitive man of literary genius engaged in that trying struggle and unequal rivalry.

As old age crept on him, Crompton grew poorer, and a widowed daughter, who became his housekeeper, made things worse for him instead of better. He had reached his seventy-second year when, in 1824, some Bolton friends—the kind Mr. Kennedy of Manchester once more co-operating—raised unknown to him a subscription, with the result of which they bought him an annuity of £63. It is interesting to note, as a proof of the wide-spread use

of the mule, that to this subscription Continental industrialists contributed. "The amount raised," we are told, "was collected in small sums, from one to ten pounds; some of which was contributed by the Swiss and French spinners, who acknowledged his"—Crompton's—"merits, and pitied his misfortunes."¹ A year or two afterwards, a bustling and warm-hearted resident in Crompton's town (probably a newspaper editor), a "Mr. J. Brown," who was then writing and printing what remains an unfinished history of Bolton, took up Crompton's claims once more, and promoted with considerable ardour a movement to procure the ill-fated inventor a second parliamentary grant. There were precedents that warranted the attempt. Dr. Jenner, who gave up to his country and to mankind his discovery of vaccination, had received, by way of recompense, two parliamentary grants, one, in 1802, of £10,000, and another, in 1807, of £20,000. No fewer than three parliamentary grants had been lavished on the Scotchman, Macadam, for inventing the mode of manipulating roads which bears his name; and the third of them was voted about the time when Brown resuscitated Crompton's claims. The busy and bustling Brown began with the production of a pamphlet setting forth these claims, and then drew up a memorial, specially contrasting the reward given for the mule with the grant of double the amount to the inventor of the power-loom, whose rights, unlike Crompton's, were secured by patent, and whose invention, even then, had been very much less productive than the mule. The document was numerous and influentially signed in Bolton. Crompton would not hear of applications for signatures elsewhere, or of a public meeting to be held in his own town, to support the prayer of the memorial. Brown proceeded to London early in 1826,

¹ Kennedy, p. 324.

circulated a long petition to Parliament on behalf of Crompton, and worked hard to procure from the Government of the day a favourable consideration of Crompton's case. By 1826 the Vansittart of 1812 had become Lord Bexley, and was still a member of the Ministry as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, an office much inferior in importance to that of Chancellor of Exchequer, which he held at the time of the original grant to Crompton. "Lord Bexley"—it was thus Brown wrote to Crompton on the 22d of April 1826—"was sincere in his desire to serve, and only failed from the want of power, without losing his own declining weight in the Cabinet." The petition does not seem to have been so much as presented to the House of Commons, and "Mr. Brown's suicide,"—how caused, or at what time occurring, is not mentioned—threw a cloud over the transaction which it would now be difficult to penetrate. In a few months more than twelve from the arrival of the unsuccessful and unfortunate Brown in London, and after but a brief enjoyment of his petty annuity, Crompton was beyond the reach of human rewards or ingratitude, and had shuffled off this mortal coil. "He died in his house in King Street, Great Bolton, on the 26th June 1827, aged seventy-four years, of no particular complaint, but by the gradual decay of nature, increased, if not hastened, by a life brimful of corrosive cares and mental sorrows. These cares and sorrows were greatly accumulated in his latter days, so that, unhappily, neither mind nor body could at all times bear up against them, and he became occasionally less abstemious in his habits than had been his custom through his former life. To the last, however, he retained the esteem of his friends, and the regretful pity of all who knew him."¹

Some three years after Crompton's death, his friend and

¹ French, p. 212.

patron in life, Mr. Kennedy, read before the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society a "brief memoir" of the inventor. But nearly thirty years more elapsed before a local or general feeling of any depth or extent was created in Crompton's favour, and the minds of Lancashire men were led to ponder on the magnitude of his contribution to the staple industry of their county, and on the scantiness of the recognition and recompense which had been bestowed on it and on him. In the winter of 1858-59 two lectures on Crompton's life and work were delivered in the Bolton Mechanics' Institution by Mr. Gilbert James French, its president—a man of superior insight and attainments. The new generation which had come to maturity in Bolton since Crompton's death was much impressed by the narrative of the achievements and biography of their ill-fated townsman, and one of the results of this revival was the publication, in the succeeding autumn, of the first edition of Mr. French's "Life and Times of Crompton," the work to which the present memoir is so much indebted. Mr. French was not content with a merely literary tribute to the memory of the inventor of the mule. He exerted himself to raise a subscription for Crompton's then only surviving son, John, who was old and poor. The appeal received a warm response from the manufacturers and machine-makers of Bolton, and when a nephew of the old man's interfered and prevented the kind scheme from being carried out, the biographer of the father contributed generously to the support of the son. There was no one to interfere with Mr. French's next attempt to do honour to the inventor's memory, and he raised, easily and privately, a sum of £200, with which a plain monument was erected over Crompton's grave in the parish churchyard. Meanwhile, the Bolton community was becoming desirous of testifying, in some more public and conspicuous way, to

its new sense of Crompton's services, and of effacing the reproach which his biography stamped upon their town. Ultimately, after several changes of place, the erection of a statue of Crompton in Bolton was determined on. A public meeting was held, and a subscription raised, which finally produced nearly £2000. The execution of the statue, cast in copper-bronze, with bas-reliefs of Hall-in-the-Wood and Crompton working at his machine, was intrusted to Calder Marshall, and the 24th of September 1862 saw it presented to the Bolton Town Council with much pomp and circumstance. Bolton and its whole population held gala on the occasion, with processions, decorations, and triumphal arches. Streams of visitors from the surrounding districts poured in to keep Crompton's townsmen company in doing public honour to the ill-fated inventor's memory. There were civic, military, and trade processions, oratory without doors and at banquets within, by local authorities and notables, and even a balloon ascent for the recreation of the vast holiday-making multitude, with illuminations and fireworks at night. Poor old John Crompton, *ætat* 72, was not quite forgotten in the celebration of his father's achievements. "He was accommodated with a chair at the side of the statue,"¹ and a few weeks afterwards the then Prime Minister, Lord Palmerston, sent him a gratuity of £50. The statue in Nelson Square remains one of the chief public monuments of Bolton, but more striking or significant than any art-memorial is the purely industrial structure thus described by his loving biographer:—

"Near the Hall-in-the-Wood rises one of those octagonal columns so common in the manufacturing districts, which serve as visible

¹ *Bolton Chronicle* of 27th September 1862, where is a copious account of the day's proceedings.

symbols of the industry that surrounds them. The chimneys in and about Bolton are very numerous, and many of them are of great height, but all dwindle into pigmy dimensions compared with that near Crompton's former residence, which shoots up into the sky to a height of 366 feet (by far the loftiest structure in the district), and attracts to it every wandering eye in the surrounding country. Unintentionally, it has become a conspicuous landmark, indicating with power and precision the site of his invention. Built for an entirely different purpose, the principal use of this tall and really graceful structure is in connection with numerous steam-engines and furnaces in a huge factory, where some thousands of men and boys are employed in making mule-spinning machinery, not merely for the supply of the district or of the nation, but to be distributed through all the empires of Europe, and even to the outskirts of civilisation in Africa; for, wherever the humanising effects of their industry have become known, Crompton's mules and their accessory engines are welcomed and cherished. Thus another unintentional tribute to the honour of their inventor is perpetuated by the weekly production of thousands of mule-spindles almost on the very spot of their invention, propelling with regularity, as from a mighty heart, the life-blood which circulates through and sustains this stupendous system of manufacture."¹

Crompton's mule, improved into its present self-acting form, will probably keep his name alive while cotton-spinning endures. The mention of Crompton's name excites a feeling of compassion blended with regret that the industrialists of his county and the Government of his country did so little for the man who had done so much for them. By the splendour of its results, the national and individual wealth which it has created, the masses of population to which it has given employment, the mighty factories and hives of industry of many kinds which have grown out of that rude machine of the Hall-in-the-Wood, the mule has become far more conspicuous in the history of British industry and of the cotton manufacture, than the spinning-jenny of Hargreaves or the water-frame of Arkwright. Unlike Hargreaves or Arkwright,

¹ French, p. 230.

moreover, Crompton was never suspected of appropriating illicitly or unscrupulously the inventions of other men, and from first to last he was in all things an upright and honourable man. In this respect, as in his melancholy destiny, he resembles John Kay, the inventor of the fly-shuttle, the machine which first gave an impetus to our textile manufactures. The contrast between the struggle in which most of Crompton's life was passed and the successes and opulence developed by others from the machine of his invention, arouses the more pity and sympathy because the triumphs of the mule were achieved while he was yet alive. Other and greater men than Crompton have received wages much less proportionate to the value of their work. But for the most part, it was posterity that reaped where they had sown, and Crompton's was the unhappy case of one condemned to be satisfied with a few ears of corn from a mighty, far-spreading, and golden harvest, showing itself on ground which, unassisted and solitary, he had reclaimed from the wilderness. Faults of character and errors of conduct no doubt contributed to make his life what it was. But those faults and errors were of the unworldly and almost child-like kind, which, in a man of Crompton's pursuits and surroundings, excites surprise and sympathy rather than criticism and censure. Singular thing to have to say of a notable Lancashire man and Lancashire worker,—Samuel Crompton seems to have failed in life chiefly from a want of—push!

II.

*THE FOUNDER OF THE PEEL FAMILY.**

THE one industrial family which has given England a Prime Minister can be traced back to the beginning of the fifteenth century. Belonging to the yeoman class, the ancestors of Peel the statesman were then settled as Peeles, or De Peles, in the Yorkshire district of Craven, and were at the same time "seised of lands" in the Lancashire Hundred of Blackburn. Two centuries later, Peeles were still to be found in or near Blackburn, some of them boasting of gentle blood and of a coat of arms. Whether by a mere coincidence, or from a continuance of an old connection between the Yorkshire and Lancashire Peeles, is unknown, but certainly "about 1600" a William Peele (as the name was then spelt), progenitor of the family which became historic, migrated to the neighbourhood of that Lancashire town from East Marton in Craven. There is

* Sir Lawrence Peel, *A Sketch of the Life and Character of Sir Robert Peel* (London, 1860). W. Cooke Taylor, *Life and Times of Sir Robert Peel*, 3 vols. (London, 1847). Edmund Potter, *Calico-Printing as an Art Manufacture* (London, 1852). *Report of Select Committee of House of Commons on Trade, &c.* (1833), § Evidence of James Thomson (of Clitheroe). *Abridgments of Specifications relating to Bleaching, Dyeing, and Printing Calico and other Fabrics*. Published by the Commissioners of Patents (London, 1859). *Statutes at Large. Journals of the House of Commons*. Baines's *Lancashire and History of the Cotton Manufacture, &c., &c.*

no evidence of any consanguinity between this Yorkshire Peele and the pre-existing Lancashire Peeles in whose vicinity he settled. His unassuming descendants were content to derive their origin from the Peeles of Craven, from some of those "good yeomen whose limbs were made in England." The father of Sir Lawrence Peel, cousin and biographer of the statesman, was the brother of a baronet—the first Sir Robert; but he is said by his son to have been "impatient of the addition of Esquire to his name, which custom had then made general. I have heard him when I was a boy," Sir Lawrence continues, "more than once, something in the style of Jonathan Oldbuck, pish to himself over this superscription of his letters, half-playfully and half-peevisly muttering to himself, 'A pretty Esquire truly!' He would sometimes add, that he was a yeoman, and that his family before him were yeomen." When Sir Robert the statesman was shown a genealogical dissertation, the object of which was to establish, from the identity of surname, a connection between the earlier and the later Lancashire Peels, he is reported to have made a characteristic remark "upon the inconclusiveness of this sort of reasoning," and to have declared that he "preferred to follow the traditions of his family."¹

William Peele's living descendant, the candid historiographer of the family, describing the farm near Blackburn where his progenitor settled at the beginning of the seventeenth century, speaks thus of it, of him, and of his immediate successors. It was "in a melancholy site (whence the family may have drawn some of their hypochondriac humour), a low situation, which gave the farmhouse that they occupied the title of De Hole, or Hoyle House, for it was written both ways. Hoyle signifies hole. Low in

¹ *Sketch*, p. 9-10.

situation as in origin, here for many years they resided.”¹ Farmer William’s grandson, Robert (a favourite name in the family), who literally “flourished” about the middle of the seventeenth century, not only added, after what was just becoming the fashion of his time and district, a domestic woollen manufacture to his slender agriculture, but printed the woollen cloth spun and woven by himself, or by others, by either or by both. “The cloth was stamped with patterns from wooden blocks, on which they were cut. Some of these blocks were seen by my”—Sir Lawrence Peel’s—“father when a boy, lying neglected in a lumber-room in his grandfather’s house;” and this grandfather was a grandson of the first owner of the blocks. “He expressed his regret that they had not been preserved, and described them as curious from their very rudeness.”² The farmer, woollen manufacturer, and woollen-printer of the Hoyle House throve by his industry and enterprise, and associated with the respectabilities of his neighbourhood. Of his two sons, one became curate of Blackburn; the elder, another Robert, was able to purchase, after his father’s death, a small estate in the neighbourhood of Blackburn, then known as the Crosse, called subsequently Peel’s Fold, and still possessed by the Peels that are. William, the son and heir of the purchaser of the Crosse, was kept down by ill health, and with him the fortunes of the family rather receded than advanced. Under William’s son, again a Robert, and with him more particularly we have now to deal, the family fortunes took a fresh start, and went forward until his grandson, the famous Sir Robert, found himself Prime Minister of England. It was in the days of this particular Robert of ours that the family surname became Peel instead of Peele. A thrifty and practical man, who loved to economise labour, even when writing

¹ *Sketch*, p. 6-7.

² *Ib.*, p. 11.

his signature, he dropped the final "e" from his surname, "for no better reason," says his grandson, "than the utilitarian one which he assigned, that it was of no use, as it did not add to the sound."¹

Born in 1723, this first Robert of the Peels without the final *e*, who may be considered the founder of the family, was fairly bred and educated, and his patrimony brought him a hundred a year. He farmed his paternal acres, and as children grew up about him—for in 1744 he married Elizabeth Haworth of Lower Darwen, a wife of blood gentler than his own—he eked out his income, it seems, by domestic spinning and weaving, still after the fashion of the district and the time. His wife's brother had learned calico-printing in London; and, if Sir Lawrence Peel's version of the matter be correct, this marriage had an important effect on the fortunes of the husband. Haworth's persuasions, we are told, induced Robert Peel to give up farming and to try calico-printing, combined with manufacturing, in Blackburn town. Nay, according to the same authority, this Haworth "was reputed in his family, and I believe with truth, to have been the first calico-printer in Lancashire."² On account of which statement, and for other reasons, something falls to be said here concerning the history—as usual in such cases, an obscure one—of the English print-trade.

About the first trace of cloth-printing in England is discoverable in the description of "a special privilege," by which James I., *anno* 1619, granted to George Wood for

¹ *Sketch*, p. 13. Yet this elision must have been first practised when he was somewhat advanced in years, since in the patent taken out by him in 1779 (*atal* 55), and referred to *post*, p. 75, he designates himself "Robert Peele." Perhaps the final *e* was dropped after he had retired from business, and when such a modification of signature might be attended by a minimum of commercial or other inconvenience.

² *Ib.*, p. 16.

twenty-one years "the sole printing and stayning within England and Wales of linen cloth in colours ;"¹ in consideration of which privilege £10 was to be paid yearly into his Majesty's Exchequer. In the middle of the same century, it has been seen, Robert Peele, the great-grandfather of our Robert, printed with rude wooden blocks the woollens in which he dealt. Meanwhile, the importation, through the East India Company, of the printed calicoes of the East diffused a taste for such goods, and induced ingenious Englishmen to attempt to imitate them, and to compete with their importers and vendors. At a still earlier period, plain calicoes had been imported into England from India, and the printing both of these and British stuffs of various kinds began at home to compete with the Eastern wares. Thus in 1676, a certain William Sherwin receives from Charles II. a grant for fourteen years of the sole use of an invention described as "A new and speedy way for printing of broad calicoes and Scotch cloth with a double-necked rowling-*presse*, which," says the royal granter, prompted no doubt by the enterprising grantee, "being the only true way of East India printing and stayning such kind of goods, was never till now performed in our kingdom of England or dominion of Wales, and therefore may, as we are credibly informed and doe believe, bee no small use and advantage to our loving subjects."²

What with the import of Eastern prints, what with the English manipulation of plain cloths of one kind or another, sometimes imported calicoes, sometimes domestic, either wholly of linen or of linen and cotton mixed (since English calico composed wholly of cotton was not produced until a century later), the woollen manufacturers were already sounding an alarm. In 1678, two

¹ *Abridgments of Specifications relating to Bleaching, &c.*, p. 20.

² *Ib.*, p. 7 (No. 190).

years after the grant to William Sherwin, was issued a pamphlet, "The Ancient Trades Decayed and Repaired," in which the competition of these fabrics with the woollen manufacture is protested against thus :—

"This trade"—the woollen—"is very much hindered by our own people, who do wear many foreign commodities instead of our own ; as may be instanced in many particulars ; viz., instead of green say"—a sort of serge—"that was wont to be used for children's frocks, is now used *painted and Indian stained and striped calico* ; and instead of a perpetuana or shalloon"—a worsted stuff, so called from *Chalons*, the first place of its manufacture or sale—"to line men's coats with, is used sometimes a *glazened calico*, which in the whole is not above 12d. cheaper, and abundantly worse. And sometimes is used a *Bengal*"—made of silk and hair—"that is brought from India, both for linings to coats and for petticoats too ; yet our English ware is better and cheaper than this ; only it is thinner for the summer. To remedy this, it would be necessary to lay a very high impost upon all such commodities as these are, and that no calicoes, or other sort of linen, be suffered to be glazened,"—*i.e.*, glazened.¹

In which passage, the expression "calicoes or other sort of linen" shows that the term "calico" was used to designate any light textile fabric not made of wool or silk.²

In spite of English inventiveness and enterprise, it is probable, however, that the domestic print-trade was for long an inconsiderable branch of industry, and that the printed stuffs in ordinary use were chiefly imported from

¹ Quoted by Baines, *Cotton Manufacture*, p. 77.

² One of the earliest notices of calico as the name for an article of wear is in the "England's Heroicall Epistles" of Michael Drayton, published in 1598. Edward IV. is supposed to be addressing Jane Shore in this flattering strain :—

" If thou but please to walk into the Pawn,
To buy the cambric, *calico*, or lawn ;
If thou the whiteness of the same would'st prove,
From thy far whiter hand pluck off thy glove."

Here "calico" is probably a synonym for "linen."

the East. But some impetus, it is also probable, was given to it by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which sent to our shores thousands of ingenious Frenchmen, skilled in new or novel industries. The Edict of Nantes was revoked in 1685. According to a witness of some competency—literally a witness, since the following passage is quoted from the evidence given before a select committee of the House of Commons in 1833 by Mr. James Thomson, an experienced and instructed calico-printer of Clitheroe,¹—it was some five years later that this trade first possessed a distinguishable local habitation in England :—

“Its origin,” he says, “dates from about the year 1690, when a small print-ground was established on the banks of the Thames at Richmond by a Frenchman, who in all probability was a refugee after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The first large establishment was at Bromley Hall in Essex; it stood No. 1 in the Excise books when the duty was first imposed, showing that it was at that time the most considerable manufactory of printed calicoes near London. There was a lead pump there some years ago, when it was still a manufactory of printed calicoes, with the date 1710 upon it.”

But before this establishment at Bromley Hall could become “considerable,” or the English print-trade, then and long afterwards concentrated in London and the metropolitan counties, could attain dimensions large enough to induce financiers to subject it to an excise duty, an important event in its history occurred. The clamour of the woollen and silk manufacturers availed to procure a legislative prohibition of the import and use of the printed calicoes of the East; and had it not been for this prohibition, the nascent English industry would probably have been annihilated in an unequal competition with the cheaper as well as more prized and popular products of

¹ Q. 3821.

Asia. One protest of the woollen manufacturers has been already heard. Another and a more general protest is chronicled by a famous historian as raised at the very time of the establishment of the printworks at Richmond, to the domestic industry carried on in which the success of the outcry was to give a considerable stimulus. In 1690 and the following year, Sir Josiah Child and the monopoly of the East India Company, of which he was the head, formed the subject of a fierce pamphleteering controversy, the preliminary to a keen parliamentary struggle. A new company was started, which claimed a right to share the monopoly possessed by Sir Josiah's. It had its partisans, but in the strife were heard the voices of English manufacturers as little friendly to the new company as to the old, and disposed to invoke a ban on both of them. Says Lord Macaulay :¹—

“There were, however, great differences of opinion among those who agreed in hating Child and the body of which he was the head. The manufacturers of Spitalfields, of Norwich, of Yorkshire, and of Wiltshire considered the trade with the Eastern seas as rather injurious than beneficial to the kingdom. The importation of Indian spices indeed was admitted to be harmless, and the importation of Indian saltpetre to be necessary ; but the importation of silks and of Bengals, as shawls were then called, was pronounced to be a curse to the country. The effect of the growing taste for such frippery was, that our gold and silver went abroad, and that much excellent English drapery lay in our warehouses till it was devoured by the moths. Those, it was said, were happy days for the inhabitants both of our pasture-lands and of our manufacturing towns, when every gown, every waistcoat, every bed, was made of materials which our own flocks had furnished to our own looms. Where were now the brave old hangings of arras which had adorned the walls of lordly mansions in the time of Elizabeth? And was it not a shame to see a gentleman, whose ancestors had worn nothing but stuffs made by English workmen out of English fleeces, flaunting in a calico shirt and a pair of silk stockings from Moorshedabad? Clamours such as these had, a few years before,

¹ *History of England* (London, 1873), ii. 307.

extorted from Parliament the Act which required that the dead should be wrapped in woollen; and some sanguine clothiers hoped that the Legislature would, by excluding all Indian textures from our ports, impose the same necessity on the living."

The "sanguine clothiers" of this extract had not very long to wait for the fulfilment of these hopes, though, when it did come, they were not satisfied. Ten years afterwards, in 1700, was passed the Act 11 & 12 William III., cap. 10, the preamble of which is very curious reading in these free-trading times. "Whereas it is most evident," this enactment begins, "that the continuance of the trade to the East Indies, in the same manner and proportions as it hath been for two years last past, must inevitably be to the great detriment of this kingdom, by exhausting the treasure thereof, and melting down the coin and taking away the labour of the people, whereby very many of the manufacturers of this nation are become excessively burdensome and chargeable to their respective parishes, and others are thereby compelled to seek for employment in foreign parts"—"For remedy thereof," the Legislature in its wisdom prohibited, under very severe penalties, not merely the sale, but the use and wear, of all "wrought silks, Bengals, and stuffs mixed with silk or herba, of the manufacture of Persia, China, or East India, and all calicoes, painted, dyed, printed, or stained there." If they were "found in any house, shop, or warehouse, or any other place whatsoever," they were seizable, and the owner or possessor was liable to a penalty of £200, two-thirds of it to go to the informer. But the prohibition concerning calicoes touched only those printed in the East, and not such as might be printed at home. So far, therefore, as the measure proved to be effective for its object, it merely altered the form of what the woollen manufacturers considered to be a grievance. Oriental were replaced in the market by domestic prints, the fabric

of which was either made in England, or consisted of plain calico imported from the East, not prohibited by the Act, and printed at home. Thus it was that the Bromley Hall establishment grew to be "considerable." The ancient "pump," extant there in Mr. Thomson of Clitheroe's time, bore, it has been seen, the date of 1710. In the April of the preceding year, lively Richard Steele founded the "Tatler" and in No. 2. thereof testimony is borne to the conspicuous existence of the English calico-printer, with designs and patterns of his own. "Suppose," says Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq., "an ingenious gentleman should write a poem of advice to a calico-printer, do you think there is a girl in England that would wear anything but the taking of Lille or the battle of Oudenarde?"—Marlborough's and Eugene's prime military successes of the year before. "They would certainly be all the fashion till the heroes abroad had cut out some more patterns." A few years more, and in 1711 the English print-trade had so thriven that the financiers of the day, with the costly Spanish Succession War still lingering on their hands, were tempted to impose an excise duty of 3d. per yard on home-printed calicoes. In a "Spectator" of the following year (4th February 1712) we have, it may be added, a young woman "without a fortune, but of a very high mind," making the avowal, "I wear the hooped petticoat, and am all in calicoes what the finest are in silks." The calicoes taxed by the 10th Anne, cap. 19 (and in 1714 the duty was raised from 3d. to 6d. a yard), were either the cotton fabrics of the East, imported plain to be printed at home, or, if woven at home, they were of cotton and flax mixed. The duty on printed linens entirely of flax was and remained three-halfpence a yard, half of that originally laid on those other fabrics, and the linen branch of the print-trade was probably fostered by having a lighter fiscal burden imposed on it. The development of

the domestic print-trade of course stimulated invention, and in 1715 we have such a record as the following of a patent granted to Peter Dubison (whose name sounds like that of a Frenchman) for "A new peculiar way or method of printing, dyeing, or staining of calicoes in grain with colours more bright and lasting, and which shall bear washing and weather much better than any heretofore used in Europe, and that such calicoes shall equal, if not exceed in beauty and use, those stained in the Indies."¹

Through this increased printing at home of domestic fabrics, some partly cotton, partly flax, others wholly linen, and above all (probably), of plain calicoes imported from the East, the English market continued to be well supplied with goods of the kind to prevent the sale and use of which the woollen manufacturers had procured the Act of 1700. Four or five years, accordingly, after the grant of the patent to Peter Dubison, the woollen manufacturers again lifted up their voices, and began to agitate for more stringent legislative enactments against the sale and use of printed textile fabrics.² The result was the Act of 1721 (the 7 George III., cap. 7). A shopkeeper exposing for sale such calico, or any household stuff containing it, subjected himself to a penalty of £20, which was also imposed on anybody using or weaving the prohibited fabric in "any household stuff." The prohibition extended to all stuff, "made of cotton or mixed therewith, which shall be printed or painted with any colour or colours." There were a few exceptions from the operation of this stringent enactment. One of them, and, as it turned out, a most important one, was that of fustians. Printed linens

¹ *Abridgments of Specifications relating to Bleaching, &c.*, No. 400, p. 11.

² See in *First Series*, p. 298, the lively and almost picturesque protest of a contemporary pamphleteer against the general use of printed calicoes and linens even "among the meaner sort."

were not prohibited by the Act, and fustians were specially exempted from its operation. Thus the trade, though crippled by the prohibition of the use of calicoes imported from the East and printed at home, continued to exist, and even to thrive. Eight years after the passing of the Act of 1720, the author, probably Daniel De Foe, of "A Plan of the English Commerce," published in 1728, thus chronicled the growth of a traffic in domestic linen, printed and dyed at home :—

"I proceed," he says, "to another visible increase of trade, which spreads daily among us, and affects not England only, but Scotland and Ireland also, though the consumption depends wholly upon England,—and that is the printing or painting of linen. The late Acts prohibiting the use and wearing of painted calicoes, either in clothes, equipages, or house furniture, were without question aimed at improving the consumption of our woollen manufacture, and in part it had an effect that way. But the humour of the people running another way, and being used to and pleased with the light, easy, and gay dress of the calicoes, the calico-printers fell to work to imitate those calicoes by making the same stamps and impressions, and with the same beauty of colours, upon linen, and thus they fell upon the two particular branches of linen called Scots cloth and Irish linen. So that this is an article wholly new in trade, and indeed the printing itself is wholly new"—no, not quite—"for it is but a few years ago since no such thing as painting or printing of linen or calico was known in England; all being supplied so cheap and performed so very fine in India, that nothing but a prohibition of the foreign-printed calicoes"—followed by one of "foreign" calicoes printed in England—"could raise it up to a manufacture at home; whereas now it is so increased that the Parliament has thought it of magnitude sufficient to lay a tax upon it, and a considerable revenue is raised by it."¹

But besides this printing of home-made linens, there grew up again a printing of home-made fabrics partly of cotton, partly of flax. Fustians, it has been already mentioned, were exempted from the prohibition directed against the printing of fabrics of that mixed texture, and both manufacturers and printers availed themselves of the

¹ Quoted by Baines, *Cotton Manufacture*, p. 260.

exemption to evade the letter of the Act. Thus a petition of worsted-weavers of London, presented to the House of Commons in 1735, complained that "of late years a stuff made of linen yarn mixed with cotton, and improperly called by the name of fustian, hath been invented in this kingdom, and great quantities are now made thereof, which, when printed, cannot without the greatest difficulty be distinguished from an Indian calico, and that under colour of the said English-printed calicoes, all Indian calicoes may be worn in this kingdom in as open a manner as if no law had been already made to the contrary."¹ This evasion of the law had not been permitted by the woollen interest without attempts, or at least threats of attempts, to enforce the penalties imposed by the Act of 1720, and the consequence was a strenuous and at last successful struggle² of the Lancashire manufacturers of so-called fustians to induce the Legislature to legalise the production and printing of these fabrics. Happily for their efforts, they were aided by many even of the woollen manufacturers of Lancashire and Yorkshire (Norwich seems to have been the great stronghold of the prohibitionists), who, for their own interest, were averse to restrictions on the fustian manufacture. In illustration of their view of the matter may be quoted one of several petitions of the kind—that from Wakefield and adjacent places showing:—

"That great numbers of the poor of the said town and places adjacent have been brought up and are employed in the woollen manufacture, and entirely depend on the same for their maintenance, and that great quantities of the woollen goods made in the neighbourhood are exported to the coasts of Africa and the West Indies, and in return for the same, amongst other products, very large quantities of

¹ *Journals of the House of Commons*, 25th February 1735.

² See *First Series*, p. 298-9.

cotton wool are brought back, which have always been manufactured in several parts of this kingdom into fustians, many whereof are printed: and that the petitioners apprehend, that in case any of the goods made of linen and cotton in this kingdom be prohibited under pretence of an Act made in the seventh year of the reign of his late Majesty King George I., it will very much lessen the consumption of cotton, and consequently prejudice and prevent the exportation of woollen goods.”¹

Early in 1736, accordingly, the Legislature passed the famous “Manchester Act,” as it was called. “Whereas,” says this enactment (9 George II., cap. 4), “great quantities of stuffs made of linen yarn and cotton wool have for several years been manufactured, and have been printed and painted, within this kingdom of Great Britain, and the said manufactures, so printed or painted, are a branch of the ancient fustian manufacture of Great Britain”: therefore Parliament, in its wisdom, permits the production, sale, and use of “any sort of stuff made of linen yarn and cotton wool, manufactured and printed, or painted with any colour or colours, within the kingdom of Great Britain, provided that the warp thereof be entirely linen yarn.” As calicoes of which the warp was other than linen yarn were not then, or for long afterwards, produced in England, this last qualification was probably introduced in order to prevent the use of the cheap Indian calicoes made entirely of cotton, and the Eastern origin of which could thus be easily recognised and determined.

The passing of the Manchester Act of 1736 gave, as has been narrated elsewhere in some detail,² a great impetus to the production of mixed fabrics of cotton and flax, the only form of the cotton manufacture then practised in England.³ The impetus was of course shared by

¹ *Journals of the House of Commons*, 26th February 1735.

² *First Series*, p. 299.

³ It may be worth adding, as an odd little episode in this chapter

the print-trade; and, as it happened, much of the cloth, the printing of which was there and then legalised, was produced in and near the Blackburn of the founder of the Peel family, and of his contemporary and assistant, James Hargreaves, the all but undoubted inventor of the spinning-jenny. "The manufactures of Blackburn appear to have arisen in the time of the Commonwealth, and may be dated about the year 1650;" so that the Robert of the rude wooden blocks was among the earliest of Blackburn manufacturers:—

"The first fabrics for which this place was distinguished were called *Blackburn checks*, a species of cloth consisting of a linen warp and cotton woof, one or both of which being dyed in the thread, gave to the piece when woven a striped or checked appearance. This article was afterwards superseded by the *Blackburn greys*, so called from the colour, neither the warp nor the weft having been dyed. The component parts of this cloth consisted of a mixture of linen and cotton, and, when manufactured, the pieces were generally sent to London to be printed."¹

of our industrial history, that on the passing of the Manchester Act, the indignant woollen manufacturers of Norwich thought of avenging themselves on the victors by carrying the war into the enemy's country, and competing with the Lancashire men in their own peculiar sphere of operations. Here are two of the "resolutions of the Committee of Trade at Norwich since the passing the Act for allowing the wear of stuffs made of linen yarn and cotton wool, printed or painted, manufactured in Great Britain, provided the woof is entirely linen yarn:"—

"Experiment," say the resolutionists, "having been made by some of the principal woollen manufacturers of this city of cotton yarn spun here, it is very probable, if they proceed in that manufacture, that this city will be as famous for cotton as it is for worsted stuffs: Resolved, therefore, that a subscription be made for raising a sum of money to be given to such person as shall produce to the Committee of Trade, at the Guild Hall in this city, the best piece of stuff, twenty yards long and one broad, weaved of cotton wool and linen yarn within this city; and to encourage workmen to excel in weaving cotton stuffs, resolved that a guinea be given to the journeyman or person who shall weave the piece so judged the best as aforesaid."—*Gentleman's Magazine* (for March 1736), vol. vi. p. 169.

¹ Baines, *Lancashire* (first edition), iii. 323.

It was probably to engage in the manufacture of these Blackburn greys, the demand for which was stimulated by the passing of the Act of 1736, and by the general growth of British trade and commerce then and afterwards, that Robert Peel migrated from his farmhouse to Blackburn. The migration must have taken place years after the passing of the Manchester Act, since at that date he was only thirteen. He married in 1744, and, as there is probably some truth in the tradition that he was induced by his brother-in-law to exchange farming for manufacturing, his settlement at Blackburn may have been towards the middle of the eighteenth century. The earliest distinct notice that we have of him is, "about 1760," employing his neighbour, James Hargreaves, then an obscure carpenter or weaver, or both, to help him in carrying out improvements in the carding-machine of the unfortunate Lewis Paul, which, soon after its introduction into Lancashire and the death of its inventor, he had adopted, and was further adapting. The machine thus improved was laid aside by him after a few years (its story has been already told elsewhere¹); but that he was one of the first to see the merits of what, in the hands of Arkwright, became a great and notable success, and that he selected Hargreaves to aid him in his schemes for improving it, indicates that this Robert Peel was a man of more than ordinary insight and enterprise.

What are we to make, on the other hand, of the story that it was not to engage in spinning and weaving, but in cloth-printing, that he migrated from Peel Fold to a house which he bought for himself in Fish Lane, Blackburn?—what of the intimation that either he, as many say, or his brother-in-law, Haworth, as Sir Lawrence Peel says, was the first person who introduced calico-printing into Lancashire?

¹ *First Series*, p. 368.

It is indubitable that early in the second half of the eighteenth century the print-trade began to settle in Lancashire, in order to be near the producers of cloth, and that in time Blackburn and neighbourhood became one of its seats.¹ All, however, of the chroniclers of the print-trade who are not exposed to the temptation of enhancing the achievements of the founder of the Peel family agree that cloth-printing was introduced into Lancashire by the Claytons of Bamber Bridge, near Preston, "about 1764," long after our Robert Peel migrated from Peel Fold to Blackburn. Yet, according to Sir Lawrence Peel, the notion of printing Lancashire-made cloth in the county, or near the place, of its production, first occurred to Haworth. He communicated it to his brother-in-law, and the result is represented to have been that our Robert Peel resolved to migrate from Peel Fold and its agriculture to manufacturing Blackburn, there to become a cloth-printer. In Sir Lawrence Peel's narrative, he raises some money for the purpose by mortgaging his farm. Haworth contributes what he can, and Yates of the Black Bull Inn in Blackburn (called in the vernacular, according to another authority, *not* Sir Lawrence, "Billy fro' the Bull"²), the richest of the three, is persuaded to join them with £500 down. Thus all at once starts into existence a firm of cloth-printers trading as Haworth, Peel, & Yates, with works at Brookside, near Blackburn, in addition to Robert Peel's new house in Fish Lane of the same town. Is it

¹ Potter, p. 11.

² The "authority" is the writer of some instructive and entertaining papers on "The Peel Family," which were contributed to the *Manchester Examiner and Times* in October and November 1850. Such dubiety and indistinctness enshroud the early story of the Peels, that this writer assigns the formation of the firm of Haworth, Peel, & Yates, not to Robert Peel, the founder of the family, but to his son, the first baronet, and father of the statesman.

not more likely that the firm began as manufacturers of Blackburn greys, and that only some time after the Claytons had introduced cloth-printing into Lancashire did they add that new branch to their other business? This view, supported by dates, receives a certain confirmation from a tradition that the notion of engaging in cloth-printing was first suggested to the firm by an accidental proof of the profits to be realised in that department of industry. Some cloth of theirs had in the weaving been spoilt, it is said, for its original purpose, and they sent it to the Claytons at Bamber Bridge to be printed for them as handkerchiefs. These they disposed of at such a profit that they were induced to add cloth-printing to their other industrial operations.

However this may be, it is clear that, in the traditional biography of the founder of the Peel family, there has been at work the familiar process—as old as biography itself—which exaggerates the achievements of the progenitors of celebrated men. The grandfather of a Prime Minister ought, there was a feeling, to have done something notable. Our Robert Peel was known to have been a calico-printer, and round this atom of fact accreted myths of various kinds suited to the fame and position of his grandson at the time when most of them emerged into existence. Thus one tradition ascribes to this Peel of ours the discovery of the “acetated aluminous mordant” said to have been “first employed by the English calico-printers,” and to be “the most valuable known;” though “it was discovered by no induction of reasoning from experiment, but was the gradual result of a series of tentative processes, tried empirically and by guesswork.” “Alum,” according to the same authority, “was the only mordant used by the first English calico-printers, and is still the only one known in India. Several ingredients were tried at hazard to increase

its efficacy, but it was found that none was of avail save the acetate of lead, commonly called sugar of lead. It has been supposed that this mode of acetating the alum may have been found out by Peel, and the secrecy used in the calendering is quoted as a proof of the hypothesis."¹ This "secrecy used in the calendering" refers to "a tradition in the family that he made his first experiments secretly in his own house ; that the cloth, instead of being calendered, was ironed by a member of his own family ; that the first pattern was a parsley leaf, and that hence he acquired the nickname of ' Parsley Peel.'"² "The local story," this writer proceeds, "told by some old inhabitants of Blackburn is a little different. They say that the experiments were made in the house at Fish Lane, not at the farm of Peel's Fold ; that the pattern was a parsley leaf scratched on a pewter plate, such as was then ordinarily used at the tables of the middle classes ; and that the calendering was performed by a poor woman named Milton, who lived in an adjoining cottage." As "the secrecy of the calendering," in the one version of this story, produced the notion that Peel was the first to discover the merits of acetate of lead as a mordant, so, "on the other hand," according to the same authority, "the mention of the pewter plate is by some imagined to indicate the substitution of engraved metal for wooden blocks in printing the patterns ; but we believe"—the fact is undoubted³—"that this improvement was first effected in London." Indeed, there is, among the specifications of patents, one for "printing calimancoes by copper-plate," taken out as early as 1754. After they have been treated in various ways, "cleanse them," says the patentee, "in fair water, and then emboss, print, or stain them on a copper plate designed and engraved for that purpose."

¹ Cooke Taylor, i 5.

² *Ib.*, p. 2.

³ Baines, *Cotton Manufacture*, p. 265.

Let us turn to Sir Lawrence Peel's more recent, and, in all probability, much more authentic version of the story of the parsley leaf, and the myth which makes Peel a great inventor of any kind in calico-printing dwindles to nothing. Speaking of the operations of Haworth, Peel, & Yates, Sir Lawrence says:—

“In the course of their experiments in printing, they introduced some improvements also in that art, but I know nothing as to their nature or degree of importance. *My father*”—the son of the alleged inventor—“*did not speak of them to me, as he probably would have done had they been considerable.* One story, of several which are in print, relating to the first steps which they made, I am able to confirm, as I have heard it from several members of the family; and as, independently of family associations, it possesses a certain interest in itself, I am glad to repeat it. Mr. Peel was in his kitchen making some experiments in printing on handkerchiefs and other small pieces, when his only daughter, then a girl, afterwards Mrs. Willock, the mother of the postmaster of Manchester, brought him from their ‘garden of herbs’ a sprig of parsley. It is some proof of taste in so young a girl that she could discern beauty in a common pot-herb, since I believe that the common thought even now about parsley, once like the laurel leaf in honour, is that it was created for a garnish or a fry. She pointed out and praised the beauty—exquisite beauty—of the leaf, and looking by habit of imitation, naturally, to the useful side, she said that she thought it would make a very pretty pattern. He took it out of her hand, looked at it attentively, praised it for its beauty and her for her taste, and said that he would make a trial of it. She, pleased not to be pooh-poohed, as discoverers among juniors often are, lent her aid with all the alacrity of fourteen. A pewter dinner-plate, for such was then the common dinner-plates in families of that degree, was taken down from the shelf, and on it was sketched, say rather scratched, a figure of the leaf, and from this impressions were taken. It was called in the family ‘Nancy’s pattern,’ after his daughter. It became a favourite; in the trade it was known as the parsley-leaf pattern; and apt alliteration lending its artful aid, gave its inventor the nickname of ‘Parsley’ Peel, which, not having the least mixture of ill-nature in it—no barb to make it stick—did not adhere.”¹

Here, then, is no suggestion that any improvement in the

¹ *Sketch*, p. 18-20.

processes of calico-printing was connected with the facts of this agreeable story. But once more, in recent years, the myth which makes the founder of the Peel family a great inventor in the print-trade thus emerged, embellished and magnified :—

“ Robert Peel’s attention was principally directed to the *printing* of calico—then a comparatively unknown art—and for some time he carried on a series of experiments with the object of printing by machinery. The experiments were secretly conducted in his own house, the cloth being ironed for the purpose by one of the women of the family. It was then customary, in such houses as the Peels, to use pewter plates at dinner. Having sketched a figure or pattern on one of the plates, the thought struck him that an impression might be got from it in reverse and printed on calico with colour. In a cottage at the end of the farmhouse lived a woman who kept a calendering machine, and going into her cottage, he put the plate, with colour rubbed into the figured part and some calico over it, through the machine, when it was found to leave a satisfactory impression. Such is said to have been the origin of roller-printing on calico. Robert Peel shortly perfected his process, and the first pattern he brought out was a parsley leaf : hence he is spoken of in the neighbourhood of Blackburn to this day” (?) “as ‘Parsley Peel.’”¹

Thus it is that stories grow and swell, until, in popular periodicals, we have it gravely set down that Robert Peel of Blackburn “produced the first piece of printed cotton the world had ever seen”! “and even the first mangle”!² But concerning both the roller-printing or cylinder-printing (the application of which forms an era in the history of the print-trade) referred to in the preceding extract, and the process antecedent to its discovery, something must now be said and quoted, or quoted and said :—

“Calico-printing has been the subject of modern improvements,

¹ Smiles, *Self-Help* (London, 1866), p. 38.

² Assertions seriously made in a paper entitled “The Blackburn Farmer,” *i.e.*, Robert Peel of Blackburn, contributed to the *Leisure Hour* for March 1857.

which may be compared in importance with those in cotton spinning and bleaching; and most of these improvements have either originated or been matured and perfected in Lancashire. The old method of printing, still continued for certain parts of the work, was by blocks of sycamore, about ten inches long by five broad, on the surface of which the pattern was cut in relief, in the common method of wood-engraving. On the back of the block was a handle, by which the workman held it; the surface was applied to a woollen cloth stretched over a vessel containing the colour, and in contact with that colour, so as to be saturated by it, and was then laid upon the piece of cloth (there being wire-points at the corners of the block to enable the workman to apply it with exactness), and struck with an iron mallet. Thus the figure was impressed upon the cloth, one colour only being used at once; and if other colours were required to complete the pattern, it was necessary to repeat the operation with different blocks. In order to produce more delicate patterns than could be engraved on wood, copper plates were introduced in the neighbourhood of London, and the cloth was thus printed from flat plates with the kind of press used in copper-plate printing. Each of these modes was tedious, as no more of the cloth could be printed at once than was covered with the wooden block or copper plate, and a single piece of calico twenty-eight yards in length required the application of the block 448 times."¹

Ingenious men must have betimes endeavoured to strike out some swifter than this slow process of block-printing, and in 1764, if not earlier, we light upon traces of cylinder-printing. In that year, Thomas Fryer, Thomas Greenhow, and John Newbery patented "a machine for printing, staining, and colouring of silk, stuffs, linen, cottons, leather, and paper,"—the specification adds, "by means of copper cylinders, on which the colours are laid by smaller cylinders, which are put in motion by other plain cylinders." "A gentleman of Paris," says Sylvanus Urban in the following year, 1765, "has invented a machine which, by means of some engraven cylinders and the help of three workmen, prints 200 ells of calico in an hour, which before employed fifteen men. A machine of the like kind has

¹ Baines, *Cotton Manufacture*, p. 20-25.

long been invented in England, a model of which may be seen by the curious at St. John's Gate,"¹ where Mr. Cave was much given to the patronage of mechanical projects.² Nearly twenty years elapsed, as is often the way in these cases, before cylinder-printing was made fruitfully applicable by a contrivance for which Thomas Bell took out a patent in 1783, and which he sets forth to be "a new and peculiar art or method of printing with one colour, or with various colours at the same time, on linens, lawns, calicoes, woollen cloths, silks, &c." :—

"This specification contains a description of a six-coloured cylinder printing-machine. The six rollers are arranged round a large central bowl, but placed over the bowl, instead of under, as now practised. The chief interest in this invention consists in the introduction of the steel doctor. The colour is supplied to each roller by what is called the box-doctor. There are springs and screws to push the box-doctor up to the rollers; also screws to press the rollers to the bowl, and brass steps to carry them; and there are toothed wheels to drive the rollers simultaneously. There is also a winding-on frame, by which the unwinding of the cloth from one roller before printing winds the printed cloth on another, with a coupling-box to detach the roll when filled."³

Another year all but a few days, and the same Thomas Bell takes out a second patent, thus described by the same hand :—

"The drawing exhibits a three-colour cylinder printing-machine which does not appear to contain much novelty"—though, as will be seen, there is something in it that is both novel and important. "It is merely a representation of a smaller machine than that described at 1378. The doctor-box is again given; a scrimp-rail is introduced. The centres of the printing rollers are still made of iron, and covered

¹ *Gentleman's Magazine* (for September 1765), vol. xxxv. p. 439.

² See *First Series*, p. 349.

³ *Abridgments of Specifications relating to Bleaching* (July 17, 1783), No. 1378, p. 41.

with copper or other metal, which can be taken off at pleasure, and by these means fresh patterns put on as often as required.”¹

In fact, “a Scotchman of the name of Bell,” as he is styled in the following extract, had made cylinder-printing applicable in a fashion and with results thus described by the historian of the cotton manufacture :—

“The grand improvement in the art was the invention of *cylinder-printing*, which bears nearly the same relation in point of despatch to block-printing by hand as throstle or mule spinning bears to spinning by the one-thread wheel. This great invention is said to have been made by a Scotchman of the name of Bell, and it was first successfully applied in Lancashire, about the year 1785, at Mosney, near Preston, by the house of Livesey, Hargreaves, Hall, & Co., celebrated for the extent of their concerns and the magnitude of their failure in 1788, which gave a severe shock to the industry of that part of the country. This new mode of printing may be thus described : A polished copper cylinder, several feet in length (according to the width of the piece to be printed), and three or four inches in diameter, is engraved with a pattern round its whole circumference, and from end to end. It is then placed horizontally in a press, and, as it revolves, the lower part of the circumference passes through the colouring matter, which is again removed from the whole surface of the cylinder, except the engraved pattern, by an elastic steel blade placed in contact with the cylinder, and reduced to so fine and straight an edge as to take off the colour without scratching the copper. This blade has received the name of the doctor, which may be a workman’s abbreviation of the word *abductor*, applied to it from the purpose which it answers; or may have been given from a vulgar use of the word ‘*to doctor*,’ meaning to set to rights. The colour being thus left only on the engraved pattern, the piece of calico or muslin is drawn tightly over the cylinder, which revolves in the same direction, and prints the cloth. After the piece is printed, it passes over several metallic boxes, six feet long, ten inches broad, and six inches deep, heated by steam, which dry it. A piece of cloth may be thus printed and dried in one or two minutes, which by the old method would have required the application of the block 448 times. Nor is this all. Two, three, four, and even five cylinders may be used at the same time in one piece, each cylinder having engraved upon it a different portion of the pattern, and being supplied with a

¹ *Abridgments of Specifications relating to Bleaching* (July 9, 1784), No. 1443, p. 43.

different colour. The piece passes over them successively, and receives the entire pattern almost in the same moment. To produce the same effect by hand-block printing would have required 896, 1344, 1792, or 2240 applications of the blocks, according as two, three, four, or five cylinders may have been employed. The saving of labour, therefore, is immense; one of the cylinder-printing machines, attended by a man and a boy, is actually capable of producing as much work as could be turned out by 100 block-printers and as many tear-boys. In consequence of the wonderful facility given to the operation, three-fourths of all the prints executed in this country are printed by the cylinder machine.¹

It was the invention of cylinder-printing that enabled the print-trade to attain its modern gigantic development, one which is in striking contrast to its humble beginnings. In 1754, before, in all probability, the print-trade had begun its migration from London and neighbourhood to Lancashire, a patent, it has been seen, was taken out for printing "calimancoes" by means of copper plates. In that same year, to have produced "a piece of English chintz," "printed on a British cotton" (which must have contained, however, an admixture of flax), was considered such a marvel, that the fabric was formally presented to the then Princess of Wales, the widow of Prince Fred. ("who was alive and is dead") and mother of George III. :—

Her Royal Highness was graciously pleased to accept of it as "being of our own manufacture," and the presentation was elaborately chronicled by the court newsman of the day. The happy donor was a "Mr. Sedgwick, a very considerable wholesale trader in printed goods." "And," says the semi-official record, "on Sunday morning" (!) "the said gentleman was, by Sir William Irby, introduced to Her Royal Highness at Leicester House," in what were then Leicester Fields, and the abode of semi-royalty, their memory being preserved in the dubious Leicester Square of our own day, "and had the honour to kiss her hand, when Her Highness was pleased to say she was very glad we had arrived at so great a perfection in the art of printing, and that in her opinion it was preferable to any Indian chintz whatsoever, and" she "would

¹ Baines, *Cotton Manufacture*, p. 265-6.

give orders to have it made up into a garment for Her Highness's own wear immediately, as an encouragement to the labour and ingenuity of this country." ¹

There was no Queen in the England of those days, George II. having been long a widower, and this Princess of Wales, with a court and pretensions of her own, was not indisposed to gain a little popularity by the patronage of native industry. In 1750, four years before this presentation, only some fifty thousand pieces of so-called calico were printed in England. A century after Mr. Sedgwick's appearance at Leicester House, the number of pieces printed was twenty millions, "containing a weight of cotton about one-seventh the entire import of cotton." ² But to return to the founder of the Peel family.

If our Robert Peel contributed no great invention to the print-trade, he was, nevertheless, an energetic and sagacious man, who from modest beginnings rose to have works and mills at Church and Altham, both of them in the Blackburn vicinage. He combined cotton manufacturing with the print-trade; the former business he seems to have carried on at Altham, the latter at Church. In so far as he may have been an inventor or adapter of inventions, the cotton manufacture, pure and simple, much more than calico-printing, was his sphere. His quick adoption and attempted improvement of the carding-machine of poor Lewis Paul, and his employment of Hargreaves, have been already noticed, and show him to have possessed, in that department, a discernment beyond the common. "He," Sir Lawrence Peel's father, "told me," Sir Lawrence, "that his father," our Robert Peel, "was born a thinker and an inventor; that his genius for mechanics was considerable, and that he was the real inventor of one

¹ Quoted by Baines, *Cotton Manufacture*, p. 260.

² Potter, p. 15.

very important improvement in the machinery for cotton-spinning, for which, if he had chosen to claim his own, he might have had a patent. He added, that his father was a shy and reserved man, who was averse from putting himself forward."¹ As it happens, however, we have a distinct record of one cotton-spinning patent taken out by this Robert Peel. Arkwright's rollers, as well as the spinning-jenny of Hargreaves, had long been successfully at work, when, in 1779, there was granted to "Robert Peele of Church, near Blackburn, calico-printer," a patent for what the specification calls a "method of dressing, carding, slubbing, roving, and spinning cotton;" but it does not seem to have made a mark in the history of the manufacture.

The year 1779, in which this patent was taken out, contributed an era to Robert Peel's career. He was now fifty-six, and he found himself forced to begin, in a certain sense, life over again. He had adopted in his cotton-manufacturing business, no doubt, whatever machinery invented by others could be used without infringing patents, and his zealous use of machinery is proved by his own patent itself. But in 1779 came that violent uprising of the Lancashire working people against machinery, the story of which has been already told in some detail elsewhere.² Peel was among its victims. Possibly his mill at Altham, like Arkwright's at Chorley, was destroyed by the furious multitude. In any case, after that outbreak, says Sir Lawrence:—

"Mr. Peel, fearing to expose his business again to similar interruptions, and his property again to injury, removed to Burton-upon-Trent in Staffordshire"—even then famous for its ale—"where he took a lease for three lives from the Earl of Uxbridge of some land favourable to his purpose, part of which abutted on the Trent. He built three mills there, to supply one of which with water he cut a canal, at the cost, as

¹ *Sketch*, p. 18.

² *First Series*, p. 423-7.

I have been told, of £9000. All the works which he erected or caused to be made there were of a solid and enduring kind; the same things would be done now in a better and more economical mode, but they evidence a man who built upon solid foundations, and liked nothing of a flimsy character. His business from this time prospered, and underwent no further material change. It proceeded in a course of material prosperity, and enriched himself and his family."

More than two years before what must have been, at his age, a 'painful vicissitude of migration, met, however, as has been seen, manfully and energetically, his partnership with his brother-in-law seems to have been dissolved. Haworth, it appears, established printworks of his own near Bury, in partnership with a Mr. Yates, probably a relative of the same Yates of the Black Bull Inn at Blackburn, who helped to found the firm of Haworth, Peel, & Yates. The old firm became Peel & Yates; and of its existence in 1776 we have an indication, and rather a curious one.¹ Whether Yates accompanied his partner to Burton is not stated, but after Robert Peel migrated thither the firm retained the style of "Peel & Yates."²

¹ "The subjoined paragraph is extracted from an old newspaper:—'The following memorandum was wrote in a Bible now in the possession of a family at Rishton, near Blackburn, for the purpose, no doubt, of recording the period when the manufacture of calico was first introduced into this county:—'15th September 1776. Thomas Duxbury, of Rishton, near Blackburn, sold to Messrs Peel, Yates, & Co., Church Bank, two common-fine calico pieces for £5, 9s. 8d. These were the first calico pieces ever manufactured in this kingdom.' This is an erroneous statement, as Arkwright and his partners made calicoes in 1772 or 1773; but these may have been the first pieces of calico manufactured in Lancashire, and the memorandum shows the extraordinary price which they fetched."—Baines, *Cotton Manufacture*, p. 333-4, *note*.

² "Three extensive cotton manufactories erected a few years since near this town"—Burton-upon-Trent—"by Messrs Peel, Yates, & Co., now afford employment to some hundreds of persons."—Stebbing Shaw, *History and Antiquities of Staffordshire* (London, 1798), i. 14.

One son, his third, Robert, who became the first baronet of the family, had left the paternal roof years before to join the establishment of Yates & Haworth at Bury, as will be duly chronicled hereafter. Some of his sons, of whom there were not a few, probably accompanied him to Burton, while others of them may have remained in charge of the printworks at Church:—

“He understood thoroughly every branch of the cotton trade,” says Sir Lawrence Peel, “and instructed his sons himself. He loved to impress on their minds the great national importance of this rising manufacture. He was a reflecting man, who looked ahead; a plain-spoken, simple-minded man, not illiterate, nor vulgar either in language, manners, or mind; but possessing no refinement in his tastes, free from affectation, and with no desire to imitate the manners or mode of life of a class above his own. His sons resembled him, and a strong likeness pervaded the whole family; they were, without exception, hard-working, industrious, plain, frugal, unostentatious men of business, reserved and shy, nourishing a sort of defensive pride, and hating all parade, shrinking perhaps too much from public service and public notice, and, it may be, too much devoted to the calm joy of a private station. They were ‘loyal men,’ Tories in politics, a party on which their opponents have since dexterously affixed the un-English name of ‘aristocrat,’ a kind of moral retribution certainly, since it was first applied by the Tories to the heads of the Whig party—a party whose strength, nevertheless, has commonly been derived from the best support of a party, the middle ranks of the people. Tories, however, as the Peels generally were, they were at all times fair samples of the English national spirit of self-reliance and sturdy independence.”¹

Thus it was from his progenitors that Peel the statesman inherited not only his politics but the “reserve” with which he was sometimes reproached. Of the gait and personal appearance of the grandfather of the statesman, Sir Lawrence adds the following interesting description:—

“Old Mr. Peel was rather an absent man. When he walked the streets of Burton, he used to look downwards, and seemed ever to

¹ *Sketch*, p. 21.

be calculating some stiff question; and the common folks, shrewd enough commonly in their perception of eccentricities, dubbed him 'The Philosopher.' They gave him also another nickname, which I have forgotten, which was derived from his habit of looking downward as he walked. He must have been a philosopher indeed who, walking upon them, could calmly contemplate the then round pebbles of Burton pavement. He stooped a little in his latter days; in his youth he had been remarkably erect. He wore a bushy Johnsonian wig; like that sage, he was dressed in dark clothes of ample cut; he leaned as he walked upon a tall gold-headed cane, and as he was a very handsome man, he looked a figure stately enough for a mediæval burgomaster."¹

So much for the outward man of the founder of the Peel family. Now, from the same hand, for a trait and anecdote or two, partly of himself, partly of his wife, a dame of gentler blood than his. They are not very significant, but still are acceptable in the great scarcity of information respecting this first in any way conspicuous Peel household:—

"It chanced one day that the Earl of Uxbridge, from whom he rented his mills, called upon him on some business, on the conclusion of which his Lordship was invited by Mr. Peel to his house, an invitation which was courteously accepted. They walked together to the house, which was at no great distance. As they approached it, Mr. Peel saw that the front door was closed, and being always impatient of form and also a valuer of time, he led his honoured guest into the house by the back way on a washing-day, and whilst piloting him through a North-West passage, not without its obstructions of tubs, pails, and other household utensils, was observed by the reproachful eye of his wife, who failed not, with a due observance, however, of time and place, to make continual claim, in the name of decorum, against an entry scarcely less lawless in her eyes than a disseisin."

Of the next story Mrs. Peel is more prominently and strikingly the heroine:—

"This dame was quite able to guide the helm herself, as the following anecdote will prove:—

"There was a panic; some great house had fallen. Mr. Peel was from home when the news arrived, which came on a Saturday night.

¹ *Sketch*, p. 24.

Rumour immediately puffed out her livid cheeks and began to throw out ugly hints, and she did not spare the Peels, who were at this time connected with a bank on which a run was apprehended. The next morning Mrs. Peel came downstairs to breakfast dressed in her very best suit, and seeing her daughter less handsomely attired than she in her politic brain judged expedient, she desired her to go upstairs and put on her very best clothes (for she respected raiment, and did not call it 'things'). She counselled her also as to her looks. 'Look as blithe as you can,' said she, 'for, depend upon it, if the folks see us looking glum to-day, they will be all at the bank to-morrow.' So out they sallied to church, and straight on in their ample garments they sailed, slowly, serene, wearing no false colours, saluted and saluting in return, holding their own, making no tacks, neither porting nor starboarding their helms, but proceeding as though they could sweep over any ugly-looking craft which might cross them. And we may fancy some of their humbler female neighbours mentally pricing their gowns as they passed, with an 'Oh, bless you! they are as safe as the church!' for people will estimate solvency, rather illogically, by what has been already expended. Who will say that this dame was not fit to be the grandmother of a politic Minister?"¹

Who, indeed?

When quite an old gentleman, Robert Peel retired from business, and spent with his wife his last years in a house which he built for himself at Ardwick Green, then a suburb of Manchester as rural as its name would betoken. "The old people were present at the christening of their Robert's sixth child. Their grandson Robert, the late Minister, used when a child to visit them at Ardwick; he spoke of them always with respect and affection, and used to describe his grandfather as a venerable, fine-looking old man. The founder of the Peel family died in September 1795, nine months before his wife, who was about his own age, and who, though from no selfish motive, had hoped to survive him. "Robert," she said to her husband, one evening, towards the close of their lives, as they sat by their fireside at Ardwick Green, "Robert, I

¹ *Sketch*, p. 24-6.

hope that I may live a few months after thee." To his interrogatory "Why?" she replied, "Robert, thou hast been always a kind, good husband to me; thou hast been a man well thought of, and I should like to stay by thee to the last, and keep thee all right."¹ The kindly old dame's wish was granted, and some six months after the death of her husband, she was laid by his side in a vault of St. John's Church, Manchester. It was one built by himself for himself—as if, even in death, he did not care to return to Blackburn, where, in the parish church, was the old family vault of the Peels.

Thirty years or so afterwards, an industrious if almost forgotten historian of Lancashire asked the first Sir Robert Peel for some account of his father, and received the following reply:—

"It is not in my power to furnish you with any particulars of much interest. He moved in a confined sphere, and employed his talents in improving the cotton trade. He had neither wish nor opportunity of making himself acquainted with his native country, or society far removed from his native county of Lancaster. I lived under his roof until I attained the age of manhood, and had many opportunities of discovering that he possessed in an eminent degree a mechanical genius and a good heart. He had many sons, and placed them all in situations where they might be useful to each other. The cotton trade was preferred as best calculated to second this object, and by habits of industry, and imparting to his offspring an intimate knowledge of the circumstances of the cotton manufacture, he lived to see his children connected together in business, and, by their successful exertions, to become, without one exception, opulent and happy. My father may truly be said to have been the founder of our family, and he so accurately appreciated the importance of commercial wealth in a national point of view, that he was often heard to say that the gains to the individual were small compared with the national gain. The only surviving record of my father is to be found in the memory of his surviving friends."²

¹ *Sketch*, p. 28.

² Corry, *History of Lancashire* (London, 1825). In the original

This emphatic and trustworthy testimony proves that the founder of the Peel family was no ordinary man, no mere accumulator, however successful and energetic, of wealth; but that though his culture was probably as limited as his sphere, he was capable of viewing from a national, as well as from a personal, point of view the new industries in the development of which he was aiding. The Burton people had more reason than they knew of to dub him "The Philosopher." Practical sagacity and energy are common enough among industrial architects of their own fortunes, but in the founder of the Peel family these qualities were combined with a trace, at least, of the patriotic feeling which bore fruit in the lives of the two Roberts, his son and his grandson. Before he died he saw his third son, a prosperous and opulent man, sitting in the House of Commons, where the earliest measures of beneficent factory legislation were to be originated by this first Sir Robert, as he was to be. His son, again, a boy of seven, when the founder of the family died, was already in training for the career destined to carry to all the ends of the earth the fame of the name of Peel.

edition of Baines's *Lancashire*, iii. 670 (and the error is repeated in the second edition of 1870, i. 519 note), this interesting extract from Corry's book is quoted as a sketch of Sir Robert Peel, the first baronet, by his son the statesman. The mistake, or even perversion, is the more singular that Corry's statement is perfectly distinct; and he says that he received the sketch from "the present baronet," who in 1825 was of course the first Sir Robert Peel. Further, the passage as given by Corry concludes thus:—"He was born at the family estate, called Peel Cross, near Blackburn, and died at Manchester about the year 1800, in the 79th year of his age." This is not Sir Lawrence Peel's date, adopted in the text; but clearly it is quite inapplicable to the first baronet, who died in 1830. Baines, however, actually transformed the concluding sentence of the sketch in Corry, finishing off the extract thus: "And died at Drayton Park, Staffordshire, on the 3d of May 1830, in the 74th year of his age."

III.

*THE FIRST SIR ROBERT PEEL.**

THE first Sir Robert Peel was born in 1750, about the time when, as is surmised, his father, the founder of the family, exchanged farming at Peel Fold for manufacturing at Blackburn. Very little of his early life has been chronicled or is known. Most of that little is found in a memoir of him, published the year after he was made a baronet, in a volume of *Public Characters*, a biographical annual which catered to the curiosity of our fathers concerning the careers of notable men, their contemporaries. The style of the memoir is inflated, but it contains anec-

* *Public Characters of 1803-1804* (London, printed for Richard Phillips, 1804), § Sir Robert Peel, Bart., M.P. *The Peel Family, its Rise and Fortunes*, a series of papers published in the *Manchester Examiner and Times* during October and November 1850. *The History of the Factory Movement, from the year 1802 to the Enactment of the Ten Hours Bill in 1847*, by Alfred (London, 1857). *The Life of Robert Owen*, written by himself (London, 1857). Earl Stanhope's *Life of the Right Honourable William Pitt* (London, 1861). *Public General Statutes, 1802 and 1819*. *Report of the Minutes of Evidence taken before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on the State of the Children Employed in the Manufactures of the United Kingdom*, 25th April-18th June 1816. Sir Lawrence Peel's *Sketch*, and W. Cooke Taylor's *Life and Times of Peel*. Smiles's *Self-Help*. *Parliamentary History, &c.*, &c.

dotes and traits of him mentioned nowhere else, and possibly contributed by some who knew him. In this performance it is loftily recorded that the first Sir Robert Peel "gave early proofs of uncommon quickness of perception, and betrayed an impatience of being excelled ; for when a boy he could little brook a superior. . . . The contemporaries of his youth are unanimous in their testimony that he discovered a precocious attachment to books, and an insatiable thirst of knowledge. In his early, as well as his more mature years, even when his commercial concerns were most urgent, he rarely omitted to devote some part of every day to reading. . . . The hours that others dissipated under pretence of recreation were employed by him in books, and the midnight lamp incessantly witnessed the patient labour with which he cultivated his intellectual faculties." Sir Lawrence Peel calls him "an ambitious man," and his ambition, according to his contemporary biographer of 1803, displayed itself betimes. "Very early in life, and while fortune appeared to shut the door of advancement against him, Sir Robert Peel entertained strong hopes of being the founder of a family ; and at the age of fourteen, to the great entertainment of his brothers" (he was the third of seven sons), "he avowed his determination to raise himself to rank and consequence in society. He bottomed these hopes on a conviction that any situation in this free country is accessible to a good capacity, aided by prudence and industry." Wonderful, if true, for a boy of fourteen.

In the more sober narrative of his nephew Sir Lawrence, the future baronet and millionaire "certainly evinced at an early age sagacity and forethought, and a desire to depend upon himself alone. When he was eighteen, he told his father that he thought they were 'too thick upon the ground.' These were his words, and he offered to go

elsewhere if his father would give him £500 to begin life with—a proposal which was not then conceded.”¹ Possibly Mr. Peel had not many sums of that amount to spare, and the ambitious youth plodded on for several years in his father’s business. Meanwhile his uncle Haworth, with a Yates whom one takes to be a relative of the partner of Peel, senior, had quitted the Blackburn firm, and established printworks on the banks of the Irwell, five or six miles from Manchester, at Bury, the birthplace of John Kay, the inventor of the fly-shuttle, and from of old a seat of manufacture. Haworth resolved to choose another partner among his brother-in-law’s sons, and he pitched upon the energetic as well as ambitious Robert, to whose departure, at the age of twenty-two,² it seems, with a definite prospect of this satisfactory kind, the father consented. The Bury firm of Haworth & Yates was in its infancy, and young Robert had been brought up frugally. On his arrival at Bury, he boarded in the house of Haworth’s other partner, Yates, a married man with a family. The sum paid for board and lodging by the junior to the senior partner was at first, says gossip, “only 6s. a week ; but Yates considering this too little, insisted on the weekly payment being increased a shilling, to which Peel at first demurred, and a difference between the partners took place, which was eventually compromised by the lodger paying an advance of sixpence a week,”³—a story which may be believed or not, as the reader pleases. Certain it is, however, that this sojourn under Yates’s roof was the means of colouring with a little romance the young man’s laborious life. “William Yates’s eldest child was a girl named Ellen, and she very soon became an especial favourite with the young lodger. On returning from his hard day’s work at ‘the Ground,’”

¹ *Sketch*, p. 32.

² *Public Characters*, p. 6.

³ *Sely-Helf*, p. 40.

as the printworks on the banks of the Irwell were called, "he would take the little girl upon his knee, and say to her, 'Nelly, thou bonny little dear, wilt be my wife?' to which the child would readily answer 'Yes,' as any child would do. 'Then I'll wait for thee, Nelly; I'll wed thee and none else,'"¹—a story founded upon fact, and which, as thus told, one would wish to be true. The first Sir Robert Peel was a man of strong feeling, and tenacious in his attachments. He waited and he worked until the little girl had grown to be a beautiful young woman of marriageable age. Who knows how much of the prosperity of the Bury house may have been due to the young man's affection for the daughter of his partner, and to his ambition for her sake, as well as for his own?

Prosper the firm did, and mainly through the energy and ability of the junior partner. The discernment of his uncle had brought him into the Bury firm, and his father-in-law that was to be strengthened his position in it. "Eventually Mr. Haworth left the firm, and Mr. Yates became its senior partner. He, however, deferred a great deal to his junior partner. To every remonstrance which the innovations of young Robert Peel excited among the older hands, Mr. Yates—his Goulburn, and an excellent second—used to give invariably this one answer, 'The will of our Robert is law here.'"²

"He was a man," Sir Lawrence continues, "of untiring energy. For many a day his life was one of hard, incessant labour. He would rise at night from his bed, when there was a likelihood of bad weather, to visit the bleaching-grounds; and one night in each week he used to sit up all night, attended by his pattern-drawer, to receive any new patterns which the London coach, arriving at midnight, might bring down; for at first they were followers and imitators of the London work, but they soon aspired to lead their masters, and it

¹ *Self-Help*, p. 40.

² *Sketch*, p. 33.

was soon apparent to the Londoners themselves that their trade would desert them and flow into these new channels." Elsewhere his nephew says, "My father, who, though he loved his brother, was not blinded or biased by natural affection, always spoke with great respect of his brother's understanding, and allowed him the palm for sagacity and ability as a man of business. I remember asking my father—I hope in no spirit of impertinent curiosity—why it was that 'the Bury house,' of which my uncle was the head, had so far surpassed in success that in which my father and his other brother were partners? He said, after a short pause, 'I think they had more brains.'"

Young Peel settled at Bury, and began the development of the print business on "the Ground" some ten years after the introduction of the trade itself into Lancashire by the Claytons. But the processes of the print-trade, both in Lancashire and in London, were still primitive and slow, and they remained such until cylinder-printing came into vogue. In taste, too, the English calico-printers were sadly deficient.

"The simplicity and stiff, awkward appearance of some of the earliest patterns designed and used at 'the Ground' would now excite a smile, and are such, both as regards position and colouring, as the merest tyro in the art would now scarcely think of executing. Yet these things sold high, and for one description of work alone there was for many years a regular demand of 20,000 pieces, the profit on each piece being one guinea clear."¹

The English product, whatever its defects, was the only one of which the law permitted the purchase or the use, and supply created a demand even at a high price. The young Peel's success in developing the Bury business was so rapid, that a year or two after he joined the firm they were driving a considerable colonial, called the "foreign" trade in the passage about to be quoted. Supposing that he went to Bury in 1772, the firm must have been exporting to the American colonies two years after-

¹ *The Peel Family*, chap. vi.

wards, since 1774 is the date of the non-importation agreement referred to in the following extract :—

“The firm early began a foreign trade, and kept a shipping warehouse in Liverpool. It was the chintzes of Peel & Yates, among others, that, previous to the League of Boston, the good citizens of that city prohibited their wives and daughters from wearing; and many American ladies, in their zeal for the public cause, burnt their stock of English-printed gowns, rather than wear an article of British taxation. The style of the calico patterns continued the same almost invariably from year to year, the high price readily obtained for them making it not so strictly essential to obtain newer, richer, or more original designs. The patterns generally consisted of leaves variously disposed, small circles, pippins, clubs, dice, and diamonds, and spots, and flower-heads of the daisy or buttercup form, which mostly presented, not a delicate profile view, but, disposed over the calico, stared the beholder full in the face—what are called ‘set’ patterns, trails, &c., not being then in use; whilst on the ‘furnitures,’ some fully-opened sunflowers were five inches across, and the thorns of rose-stalks most palpably displayed, as if the artist conceived that was being very true to nature. But notwithstanding the inferiority of the patterns, the price of a garment-piece of goods of the above description, containing twenty yards, was from £4 to £5, or 3s. to 3s. 6d. a yard, and even more. Many years later, the very commonest print possible to purchase was 1s. 6d. a yard”—they can now, 1876, be had, it seems, for a fourth of the sum—“and down to 1810, good prints of one or two colours only, on a white ground, were 2s. 6d., or higher, muslins 3s. 6d. a yard, and printed ‘furnitures’ the same price.”¹

So much for the aspects and prices of those earlier products of the Lancashire print-trade; now for its printer’s *modus operandi*:—

“Prints at first received from the hands of the printer only an impression from the block, or one colour, which was generally an outline of the object, if more colours were to be laid on. The laying on of colours was done by women, of whom a large body were maintained, called ‘pencillers,’ and long ranges of workshops were set apart for their use, as that of Peel Street and New Street, now divided into dwellings, but which were built for pencilling-shops, and mistresses

¹ *The Peel Family*, chap. vi.

appointed over them. The number of 'pencilers' was very great, and the work most delicate and beautiful, as may be seen upon an inspection of any of the best old pieces of print so treated. One then considered very costly and beautiful was a chintz pattern upon a white ground; the outline of dark purple was laid on by the block; the remaining colours, two greens, two reds, two blues, a drab and a yellow, being pencilled upon the cloth by the women; and it must be remembered that every single leaf or object all over the work had to be *separately* touched with a pencil of the colour required. Thus it will be found the surface of the cloth required passing over nine times previous to the completion of the pattern. Sometimes, in a great press of business, pencilling was given out to be done at home, apart from the works; but this was rather inconvenient on account of the pieces having to be drawn upwards from the work-table, for the colours to dry. In the shops each woman had her piece suspended before her, with a supply of hair-pencils of different degrees of fineness, according to the size of the figure or *object* to be touched, and saucers containing 'colour' of red, green, blue, yellow, &c., of each variety of shade, according to the pattern required. When the outline only required filling up with the appointed tint, the work was easily and expeditiously performed, and a good workwoman might sometimes earn £2 a week. In this state of things there was no lack of suitors, and a young woman had then no more to do than to signify whom she would choose among those too often mercenary swains!"¹

Lastly, and to conclude :—

"A number of females were also employed at Bury ground as 'block pinners,' and apprentices were regularly received to the business, which consisted in inserting small lengths of brass wires or pins, of different degrees of fineness, into a wooden block to form the pattern required, which was delineated on the block by a putter-on or dresser. Sometimes rollers of lead or boxwood"—metal, it will be observed, is here spoken of as a material familiar to the print-trade—"were used to receive the pinning pattern; but from the hardness of the metal or wood these were more difficult than the common block, whose surface was generally plane-tree. I have known one block of an extra size contain nearly 63,000 pins. This work is now seldom required except for the printing of silk handkerchiefs and tablecovers, and this is of a very coarse description. A woman in this business could well earn from 12s. to 24s. a week."²

¹ *The Peel Family*, chap. vi.

² *Ib.*

Such were the tedious processes of a hundred years ago, whereas now four, five, and six colour cylinder machines are in use, turning over a piece of 200 yards in a minute, each cylinder applying its special portion of the pattern to the cloth as this passes along. One man to regulate the rollers, with two boys to supply the colours, can do as much work as 200 men were needed for in the days of block-printing. So great has been the consequent extension of calico-printing, that one-seventh of the whole cotton imported goes to feed the British print-trade with raw material.

And this mention of cotton brings us to another large enterprise in which the Bury firm was soon engaged. "Until a regular supply of calico could be procured, much"—not all, since a mixture of flax and cotton was sometimes used—"was of linen, of rather coarse texture; and it was the very limited supply they were able to obtain of this material that principally directed the attention of those who could estimate the capabilities of the printing trade to the much more extensive manufacture of cotton into calico." Fortunate in this respect for him were the circumstances of the time at which the young Peel settled in Bury and threw his energies into the print-trade. Soon after his arrival there, Arkwright, in 1774, took out the patent which made possible the manufacture of calico all of cotton, and five years later Crompton invented the mule, which gave completeness, as it were, to the new cotton manufacture. The reader has seen how Robert Peel pounced upon the mule, and offered to take its inventor into partnership.¹ For already, and no doubt from the earliest practicable moment, Peel and his partners had begun to manufacture calico for their printworks, and with the mule at their disposal, their operations in this

¹ *Ante*, p. 19.

way could become larger and larger. Five years after the invention of the mule, Peel and the firm of which he was now the working head had no fewer than 6,800 persons in their employment. The calicoes, which they bleached, as well as printed, were manufactured by weavers whom they hired, out of yarn spun by their own "hands." In our own days—days of the division of labour—there is—indeed, for a long time there has been—a separation of the businesses of spinner and manufacturer, of bleacher and calico-printer. But the Bury house performed all four operations, gaining a profit upon each, and thus it came to employ a number of workers, probably much greater than any single firm in the cotton trade of to-day can boast of having in its service.

"They soon had in the neighbourhood around Bury what were then considered immense establishments, as the Radcliffe Mill, Makin Mill, Hinds, the Burrs, White Ash, and Summerseat, and employed weavers in Yorkshire and over a large portion of North and East Lancashire. They had also a printwork, afterwards purchased by Messrs Grant, at Ramsbottom, in connection with the works at Bury, and a bleaching and chemical work situated between Bury and Radcliffe; besides which, the extensive grounds and crofts around their printing establishments, and in front of Chamber Hall, to the extent of many acres, were covered with pieces stretched to bleach. To persons unaccustomed to the sight of these white fabrics in great numbers, side by side and length by length, overspreading and completely hiding the green grass, they have all the effect at a distance, especially in sunlight, of extensive and brilliant sheets of water."¹

A pleasant and picturesque spectacle then and for some time afterwards, since it was only in 1776 that a certain Swedish apothecary's assistant, named Scheele, discovered a greenish-looking gas, and called it chlorine, little suspecting that it was to be the great bleaching agency of the future, and

¹ *The Peel Family*, chap. iv.

by its swift and potent efficacy in that way, economising space as well as time, was to contribute enormously to the development of the cotton manufacture in general, and of calico-printing in particular.

Long before the business expanded to these dimensions, Peel must have quitted the house of his partner, Yates, and set up some frugal little bachelor-home of his own. Doubtless, too, he might have married, and married well, long before he could point to more than 6,000 human beings as dependent upon himself and his firm. But he waited and waited, hopefully and happily, until the little girl who sat upon his knee when he first settled at Bury had grown to marriageable womanhood; and in this case the course of true love seems to have run with perfect smoothness. Here—fancy filling in an outline of fact—is a little sketch of some of the surroundings of these *promessi sposi*, and of some of their pre-matrimonial perambulations:—

“Her”—the young lady’s—“father lived at Woodhill, a house and grounds lying on the opposite bank of the river Irwell to that on which the works were situated, and in consequence of this convenient position, during Mr. Yates’s residence at Woodhill a wooden bridge was thrown across the river, which is not deep, from the garden, and formed a very agreeable and expeditious mode of transit between ‘the Ground,’ as the printworks and their appurtenances were called, and Woodhill, as will appear to any one acquainted with the road, that must else have been taken over Bury Bridge and down the Mill Brow. But it was not Mr. Yates and his son Edmund alone who realised all the benefit of this positive mode of communication; it was also over this bridge that Mr. Peel sped to visit his lady-love in the days of his happy and successful wooing. And when ‘the Ground’ was silent, and the people retired from their daily labour, Miss Yates often returned across the bridge with him, and, in the pleasant and quiet summer evenings, strolled along towards the higher grounds, whilst he would point out to her with pride and pleasure the rapid rise of quickly-extending buildings, all too little for the large and increasing demands that assailed them.”¹

¹ *The Peel Family*, chap. vii.

Ellen Yates is described by Sir Lawrence Peel as "a young girl of sweet disposition, sense beyond her years, pleasing manners, and with a handsome person." Take, on the other hand, this slight portraiture of her mature wooer, twice or so the age of his beloved :—

"His walk when in the prime of manhood was slow, dignified, and majestic. His dress was of good material, but worn in a careless and slovenly manner, as if it occupied little share of his attention. His hands were often crossed behind his back under his coat, and unless engaged in conversation, his attention and thoughts appeared almost always pre-occupied. He was a man whom no one would venture lightly to accost even upon a trifling subject."¹

At last arrived the day, the happy day, when the two were made one, and some time in 1783 Ellen Yates became Mrs. Robert Peel. The match turned out excellently well, "though he was a grave man of business, thirty-six"—no, thirty-three—"years of age, and she a handsome lively girl,"—Sir Lawrence Peel not forgetting to mention "with a large dowry." "She was," he adds, "an excellent wife, affectionate and sweet-tempered, possessed of a good understanding and a sound judgment. She conformed in all things to her husband's tastes and views, and though naturally inclining to a gayer life, she reconciled herself at once to those quiet domestic habits which were in a manner indigenous among the Peels." Nay, she was useful to her husband even in his business, as is recorded thus :—"Mr. Peel was a very indifferent and unintelligible writer, using the pen just in the position he chanced to take it up, which was as often the wrong side before as not. In the earlier years of his marriage, when Mr. Peel had much of the correspondence under his own notice, his wife was the person who wrote the letters of most consequence that fell to the husband's more immediate share of the

¹ *The Peel Family*, chap. vii.

home and foreign business transactions.”¹ Yes ; and in those earlier years of his marriage, even in his domestic arrangements business was not forgotten. After the wedding, the bridegroom took his bride home to a very small house, “the front part of which is still”—A.D. 1850, that is—“the counting-house on ‘the Ground,’ consisting only of an entrance hall, two parlours and a kitchen, with corresponding rooms above ; and over the yard a room was built,” says the faithful chronicler, “because it would make a large packing-room for printed goods, and they were short of a place for that purpose.”² In this small house were born to the Peel couple their first two children, daughters both ; but just when the arrival of a third child was expected they had migrated to a larger residence, not far from the works—Chamber Hall, to wit, an ancient building, improved for its new tenants by the addition of a “splendid front,” and otherwise. In due season, on the 5th of February 1788 (the year before the first French Revolution broke out to alter the whole course of the British politics in which the little stranger was to play a prominent part), the third child arrived, and proved to be a boy,—Sir Robert Peel, the statesman that was to be. It was a great day for the Peel household, and ale flowed in copious streams from Chamber Hall to refresh the workers of “the Ground” in honour of the birth of a son and heir to their employer. The happy sire’s gladness and gratitude found another, a more solemn and a more fruitful, expression. “When the glad tidings reached him that he was the father of a son, he fell on his knees in his closet and returned thanks to the Almighty, and in the same moment he vowed that he ‘would give his child to his country,’—an offering which, however lightly it may have been treated by those who knew not the deep earnest-

¹ *The Peel Family*, chap. vii.

² *Ib.*

ness of the man's nature, was as piously formed in hope, and as gratefully in spirit, as was ever, in times of old, a solemn dedication made of a child of hope to the service of God." So says undoubtedly the truthful historiographer of the Peels,¹ a veteran, experienced, and far from credulous lawyer and judge. And such really seems to have been the vow registered by a calico-printer in a remote, petty, and obscure provincial town in the England of the old age of the arch-trifler Horace Walpole; the England of the dissolute youth of the Prince of Wales, afterwards his Majesty George IV.; the England of that at first splendid theatricality, political and parliamentary (it grew dim and dreary enough before long), the impeachment of Warren Hastings by Mr. Edmund Burke, which began in Westminster Hall eight days after the birth of the little boy at Chamber Hall. It was in considerable measure due to the simple-minded enthusiasm, the unquestioning and ardent patriotism,—backed effectively by their money,—of men of this Bury manufacturer's stamp, that England was enabled to traverse unscathed the domestic and foreign perils of the Revolutionary period which opened in the year following the birth of the second Sir Robert Peel.

In 1790, two years after the birth of the future Prime Minister, the inventions of Arkwright and Crompton, in their combined and fruitful operation, were largely developed, and the Bury firm had them at command for the manufacture of the calicoes to be printed on. As regards the special business of Peel and his partners, cylinder-printing, brought into play in Lancashire some three years before, had also given the print-trade a great impetus. In 1790 the import of cotton wool into this country was five times what it had been ten years before, and in the same

¹ *Sketch*, p. 40.

interval the value of the British cotton manufactures exported had increased nearly eightfold, to say nothing of home consumption. The Bury firm participated largely in the prosperity indicated by these figures or facts,—a prosperity which, with occasional breaks, eclipses, and depressions, increased as the years rolled on, though never, seemingly, at a greater ratio than during the last decade of the eighteenth century. “About 1790,” with capital overflowing in his hands, the wealthy and thriving Peel began to buy property in and near Tamworth, the Staffordshire borough in the parliamentary representation of which the Peel family has shared ever since. He built cotton mills in the neighbourhood, too, and this gave him a further hold on the borough. In 1797 he so increased his purchases that they included the whole of the estate of Drayton, with which the memory of Peel the statesman is familiarly associated. He pulled down most of the old manor-house, and built upon its site the modern mansion owned by his grandson, the third baronet, and Sir Robert Peel of to-day. These successive purchases of Drayton and its manor were made from the Thynnes, now Marquises of Bath, into whose possession they had gradually come from the Devereuxes, Earls of Essex. It was from Drayton that Queen Elizabeth’s Earl of Essex set forth on his ill-fated Irish expedition, about two hundred years before its purchase by the Bury calico-printer.¹ But Bury was not as yet neglected for the new and at first only occasional home at Drayton, though the journey from the one place to the other took the family coach “two entire days and a portion of a third” to perform.² For some time Bury remained the headquarters of the Peels. It

¹ Stebbing Shaw, *History of Staffordshire* (London, 1798, &c.), vol. ii. part i. p. 8.

² *Sketch*, p. 59.

was during the interval between Peel's first and last purchases at Drayton that Dr. Aikin's bulky and useful quarto appeared; and from his description of the Bury of 1795, which, thanks chiefly to Peel and his firm, had doubled its population since their settlement in it, let the following passage be quoted:—

“The town and neighbourhood of Bury have been highly benefited by the establishment of the very capital manufacturing and printing works belonging to the company of which that very respectable gentleman, Robert Peel, Esq., member of Parliament for Tamworth, is the head. The principal of these works are situated on the side of the Irwell, from which they have large reservoirs of water. There is likewise a separate reservoir, supplied by a spring of fine clear water, which is used for the washing of goods when the river is muddied by floods. The articles here made and printed are chiefly the finest kinds of the cotton manufactory, and they are in high request both at Manchester and London. The printing is performed in the most improved methods, both by wooden blocks and copper rollers, and the execution and colours are some of the very best of the Lancashire fabric. The premises occupy a large portion of ground, and cottages have been built for the accommodation of the workmen, which form streets and give the appearance of a village. Ingenious artists are employed in drawing patterns,¹ and cutting and engraving them on wood and copper, and many women and children in mixing and pencilling the colours, &c. The company has several other extensive works in the neighbourhood,

¹ At first the Bury firm had no drawing-shop, receiving most of their patterns from London, and employing only one pattern-designer, also from London, who had a small room to himself, and was called “Mr.,” a great distinction, doubtless, in the Bury of a hundred years ago. At the date, however, of Aikin's description, things had altered in this respect. “In those palmy days of calico-printing, pattern-drawers were considered a very fashionable” (!) “body of men.” In society—wonderful to relate—“they appeared in breeches, white silk stockings, silver buckles on the shoes and at the knee, ruffles at the waist, soft cravat of fine muslin tied round the throat, with long ends falling on the breast, and often embroidered, and the hair powdered.”—*The Peel Family*, chap. vii. According to the same authority, men employed in block-printing earned from 40s. to 60s. a week, which represents, of course, a much larger value than the same wages now.

as well on the Irwell as on the Roch. Some of these are confined to the carding, slubbing, and spinning of cotton; others, to washing the cottons with water-wheels, which go round with great velocity, but can be stopped in an instant for taking out and putting in the goods. Boiling and bleaching the goods are performed at other works. In short, the extensiveness of the whole concern is such as to find constant employ for most of the inhabitants of Bury and its neighbourhood, of both sexes and all ages; and notwithstanding their great number, they have never wanted work in the most unfavourable times. The peculiar healthiness of the people employed may be imputed partly to the judicious and humane regulations put in practice by Mr. Peel, and partly to the salubrity of the air and climate. At a short distance from Bury and the works is a large well-built house called Chamber Hall, in which Mr. Peel himself resides, and in an adjoining meadow is a cottage or nursery for his young family,"—among them a Master Robert, one day to be known to fame. "The whole is fitted up in a style of neatness and elegance, and surrounded with ornamental grounds and rising plantations." With an eye to the future as well as the present, the Doctor adds: "The canal from Bury to Manchester, which will come within the breadth of the Irwell from Mr. Peel's works, will greatly facilitate the conveyance of goods and raw material."¹

A not unpleasing picture of a scene of thriving and wholesome or wholesome-looking industry.

"That very respectable gentleman, Robert Peel, Esq.," is spoken of in the foregoing extract as "member of Parliament for Tamworth." Yes; and before he attained this dignity he had become more or less of a public man; to explain the how and the why of all which, we must go back a little in his story. In the intervals of business, Peel, it will be remembered, was bookish from his youth upwards; and being of a reflective turn, he formed notions of his own about many things that lay beyond the sphere of calico-printing. His reading, however, had not included the *Wealth of Nations*, or if so, it left him unconvinced on one important question of national economics, nay—as will be seen hereafter—as to the absurdity of

¹ *Country Round Manchester*, p. 26S.

the so-called "commercial system" of political economy, to overthrow which was one of the chief objects of Adam Smith in writing his famous book. Adam Smith, in 1776, refuted the notion that, since a national debt is held by the nation itself, there is no harm in it, and four years afterwards, Peel, it seems, published a pamphlet in support of the thesis which had been impugned in the *Wealth of Nations*. Peel's present biographer has not fallen in with a copy of this pamphlet; but it is thus described in the contemporary memoir of its author already quoted from:—

"The first"—was there ever another?—"literary essay attempted by the subject of these memoirs was a pamphlet published in 1780 on the national debt. The ingenuity and novelty of the inferences maintained in that work excited considerable attention; and although they might then appear paradoxical to superficial minds, yet every subsequent year has more and more confirmed the truth of them"—nonsense. "At the close of the American war, the fears of the nation were very powerfully excited by the vast increase of our funded debt,"—to something less than two hundred and fifty millions sterling;—"and the commercial part of the community suffered more than any other body of men from apprehensions that our increased burdens would soon fetter our exertions, if not ultimately involve the nation in bankruptcy. Sir Robert very early discovered, and, if we are not mistaken, was the first"—not at all—"to maintain, that the national wealth was not diminished by the increase of the national debt, and that statesmen had misconceived its operations by confounding a public with a private engagement.

"With a view to correct this radical error, as well as to remove the apprehensions of the timid, and to restore confidence in the people in respect to their own resources, he published his thoughts, under the title of 'The National Debt productive of National Prosperity.' He seems at that time to have stood alone in this novel opinion; but, as the subject has since become better understood, and his arguments have derived strength from subsequent occurrences, the generality of men view with more complacency the present state of the nation, although the debt has been nearly trebled since the pamphlet appeared. In this work he maintained that a domestic public debt, owed by the community at large to a part of the same community, cannot impair the aggregate wealth of that community, and that if a given sum, how-

ever large, was annually raised from the people to pay the interest of the debt, the same sum being received by the public creditors, and laid out in the purchase of articles of necessity and comfort for themselves provided by national industry, circulates at home, and in its transit from one possessor to another gives birth to new sources and modifications of wealth."¹

Of this wonderful pamphlet Sir Lawrence Peel makes no mention. Another of Peel the statesman's biographers dismisses it with the remark,² that "it has long since sunk into the oblivion which usually awaits speculations on such subjects; but it is supposed to have had some share in bringing him"—its author—"acquainted with Mr. Pitt, who soon regarded Mr. Peel as his safest adviser on manufacturing and commercial subjects." A very unlikely supposition, followed by a very questionable statement. Four or five years after the publication of the pamphlet, which, if he ever read it, Pitt, as a disciple of Adam Smith,³ must have tossed aside with contempt, Peel was

¹ *Public Characters of 1803-4*, p. 9.

² *Taylor's Life and Times of Peel*, i. 9.

³ "In his"—Pitt's—"speech on the Budget this year"—1792—"one of the greatest and most comprehensive financial statements that he ever made, it is striking to find the Prime Minister ascribe the merit of his system in no small degree to the author of the *Wealth of Nations*, 'an author,' said Pitt, 'now unhappily no more, whose extensive knowledge of detail and depth of philosophical research will, I believe, furnish the best solution to every question connected with the history of commerce or with the systems of political economy.'"—*Lord Stanhope's "Life of Pitt,"* ii. 141. Elsewhere in the same work (iv. 402), is quoted the following interesting reminiscence of a meeting between Pitt and the philosopher, showing how thoroughly Pitt had mastered the doctrines of the *Wealth of Nations*:—"There is an anecdote which Lord Sidmouth was also fond of telling of Pitt in company with another eminent man. Pitt, so Lord Sidmouth used to premise, had a talent of improving a man's own sentiments, and returning them to him in a better dress. Once, when Lord Sidmouth had dined at Pitt's house with Dundas and Adam Smith, the latter said to Lord Sidmouth after dinner, 'What an extra-

probably brought—but as a practical man, not as a speculative pamphleteer—into contact with Pitt. In course of time, the self-made manufacturer conceived the strongest admiration for the Heaven-born Minister; but there is not the slightest evidence that Peel was ever a special adviser of Pitt's "on manufacturing and commercial subjects." In point of fact, Peel first emerges into public life as a keen opponent of a fiscal scheme of Pitt's, and of one of Pitt's early attempts to carry out free trade principles; which emergence into public life befell in this wise:—

In 1784 the young Pitt, Prime Minister in his twenty-fifth year, triumphed over the Fox-North coalition, which he had displaced at the fiat of the King, and the result of a general election showed the nation to be of the same mind as George III. But Pitt received from his beaten opponents a troublesome legacy of national debt and difficulty, the result chiefly of the American war, partly of their own financial inefficiency. One of his first tasks was to reorganise the financial and fiscal system of the country, and he performed it, on the whole, very successfully, as well as very skilfully, and with the general approval. But whatever his skill, he could not do without new taxes, and, among other sources of revenue, the rising, thriving, and prosperous cotton manufacture seemed to him, as it had seemed to his immediate predecessors, one promising and profitable. The print-trade had long been subject to an excise duty, and Pitt bethought him that, besides increasing this old duty, he might levy a new impost of the same kind on home-made plain calicoes. His proposal to this effect, with the larger budget in which it was a little item, received the sanction of Parliament,¹ the whole sum

ordinary man Pitt is! He makes me understand my own ideas better than before."

¹ In 1774 the prohibition to print or dye English calicoes was

expected from the new duties not being estimated at much more than £30,000. The extension of the always unpopular excise to bleached calicoes and the imposition of the "fustian tax," as it was called, produced a great ebullition of discontent in Lancashire—discontent enhanced by the fact that the year before there had been a great reduction in the very heavy import duties previously levied on muslins and calicoes, and, in any case, far louder and more threatening than any possible yield from the tax was worth. To this grievance, moreover, was almost simultaneously added another, arising out of Pitt's Irish policy. Chatham's son, already the advocate at once of free trade, of parliamentary reform, and of true justice to Ireland, traced the Irish distress of the time to what seem now the almost incredibly absurd restrictions then imposed on the commerce between England and the sister island. On most of the manufactures of and exports from Ireland prohibitory duties were imposed in England, while those of England were admitted into Ireland at duties comparatively low. One of Pitt's proposals was that the duties should be reduced in the country where they were highest to the amount payable on the same commodities in the

removed, and they might be printed on paying an excise duty of 3d. per square yard. In 1779 and 1782 three several additions of 5 per cent., making in the whole 15 per cent., were made to that duty. "In 1784, when Mr. Pitt imposed new taxes to repair the finances of the country, injured by the American war, he taxed not only printed but even *bleached* goods, and compelled the bleachers, printers, and dyers to take out licences, for which the sum of £2 was to be paid annually. By the Act passed for this purpose (24 George III., c. 40), he laid a new duty on all cottons and mixed goods of 1d. per yard, if bleached or printed, under 3s. per yard in value, and 2d. on all above that value, in addition to the former duties of 3d. per yard, and 15 per cent. additional was charged on the new duties as well as on the old. These impositions excited great alarm and discontent throughout Lancashire, &c.—Baines, "*Cotton Manufacture*," p. 279.

country where they were lowest. The indignation of the Lancashire manufacturers at the fustian tax was aggravated by this proposal to establish free trade between England and Ireland. The doctrines of Adam Smith were accepted by the manufacturers of Lancashire then just as little as now, a hundred years after the publication of the *Wealth of Nations*, they are accepted by those of the United States, of France, Austria, and Russia. To complete the contrast between the England of that day and this, Fox and the Whigs were vehemently opposed to free trade between England and Ireland, and the "Liberal" statesmen and politicians of 1785 aided and abetted to the utmost of their power the "Protectionist" manufacturers of Manchester and Lancashire. The Lord Derby of 1785, as a Whig and Lancashire magnate, welcomed Fox to Knowsley, where he introduced him to the spokesmen of the malcontent manufacturers of the county; and the Whig parliamentary leaders, in their then political straits, were delighted to form an alliance with the representatives of the cotton manufacture—a young but already great and a rapidly growing industrial interest. Of the "fustian tax," more may have to be said in the memoir of Thomas Walker the elder, the Lancashire worthy who headed the agitation against the impost. Meanwhile here are a few elucidatory extracts from the reports of the proceedings of the House of Commons arising out of the twofold grievance—Pitt's fustian tax and his Irish propositions:—

"March 16, 1785.—'Mr. Stanley,' one of the members for Lancashire, 'informed the House that the petition which then lay at his feet (for it was too heavy for him to carry in his hand), had been transmitted to him with directions that he should present it to the House; it was signed by 80,000 manufacturers in different parts of Lancashire.' By "manufacturers" the honourable gentleman meant "persons engaged in manufacture;" 80,000 being really, it seems, the whole number of human souls then dependent, as employers and employed, on the

Lancashire cotton manufacture. 'They complained,' the honourable gentleman continued, 'of the tax imposed last year on the fustian and other cotton manufactures as absolutely ruinous to their trade, and of the introduction of excise officers into their houses. They stated that, without any benefit to the revenue, this tax would subject their manufactures to full 8 per cent. in the exportation, which would necessarily deprive them of the markets that they actually had, and drive their workmen to the necessity of emigrating to other countries.' Then comes a deploring and almost despairing reference to the Irish grievance. 'They added, that the admission of Irish fustians and cottons into England was all that was wanting completely to annihilate the cotton trade of this country, by which so many thousands of industrious and useful subjects got their bread. The petition having been read by the clerk, Mr. Stanley moved that it be referred on Monday next to a committee of the whole House.' This was agreed to after a discussion, in which Mr. Stanley, rising again, made, among others, the following remarks: 'The manufacturers, unwilling to submit any longer to the hardships arising from a burdensome tax, and from a still more burdensome mode of collecting it, had resolved to discharge their workmen as they brought home their work. This had already been done to a great degree, and so numerous was the body of men thus thrown out of employment, that they were begging through the streets in crowds, living only on the bounty of their opulent fellow-citizens, who were thus obliged to tax themselves very high in order to prevent the manufacturers from emigrating to some other country in search of employment.'"¹

On the very day when the grievance of the fustian tax was thus gravely handled, the House of Commons seems to have gone into committee to hear, on the other and Irish grievance, the evidence of remonstrant English manufacturers. One testimony reported as given on the occasion is very germane to our subject:—

"Wednesday, March 16.—Mr. Peel, an eminent manufacturer of Manchester, was then called to the bar. The questions proposed to him led into a very minute detail of the expenditure incident to the different branches of the manufactures of both kingdoms. From what he said, it appeared that the Irish manufacturer, after paying a duty of 10½ per cent. (which was looked upon as the equivalent to

¹ *Parliamentary History*, xxv. 362, &c.

the internal excise of this kingdom), would afterwards retain a superiority of 13 per cent.¹ This gentleman being asked, said he employed 6,800 persons, and paid an annual excise of £20,000. He was then asked what number he should employ if the Irish 'propositions were passed into law. His answer was, 'Most certainly the same, if not a greater number; but it should be in Ireland''—where labour was so cheap; nominally cheap, that is—a distinction with a difference,²

¹ Pitt in one of his speeches thus ridiculed Peel's statement :—"The Irish cotton trade was to be imported into England, according to his plan"—this theory of Peel's—"at 10½ per cent. duty, and yet it was said they were to undersell the English manufacture 13 per cent. These two sums amounted to 23½ per cent. This, therefore, added to the other two sums, would amount to 34 per cent. ; at which disadvantage, therefore, if the manufacturers who had stated this degree of danger to the House deserved any degree of credit, they had been hitherto dealing in Ireland, so as to have almost exclusively engrossed that market, and had increased and flourished to an extent hardly to equalled by any other branch of trade known—a thing perfectly beyond the reach of relief, and even unworthy of a single serious thought."—*Parliamentary History*, xxv. 585.

² Pitt, in the speech just quoted from, dwelt forcibly on this difference. "Mr. Pitt then went into that part of the question which related to the apprehensions of certain persons of being undersold by the import of the manufactures of Ireland in our own markets. He combated the doctrine that Ireland, from the cheapness of labour, must necessarily be able to undersell the English manufacturer. Was it," he asked, "because the rudest species of labour was somewhat cheaper in Ireland than in England, that the former therefore had the advantage of the latter? No; it did not depend on that sort of work which was required for the roughest and rudest occupations of agriculture whether a nation was to flourish in manufacture or not; it was a habit of industry and ingenuity which was to effect it. He drew a distinction between the meaning of the words 'wages' and 'labour,' observing that a man's wages might be extremely low, and yet the price of his labour very dear, provided that he did but a small quantity of work. He instanced the example of an Englishman and an Irishman, that perhaps the latter, though receiving but 5s. per week, might really be a dearer workman to his employer than the former at 8s., provided the one worked hard and the other was idle. He said also, that besides the different degrees of the industry of the two nations, he was well informed and sufficiently convinced that the rate of wages, as well as

since cheap labour is often the dearest, as Peel would probably have found if he had migrated with his capital to Ireland. "Being further asked respecting the sentiments of his friends, he affirmed, that all he had conversed with on the subject were of the same mind,"—ready to migrate to Ireland if the Irish propositions became law.¹

Neither of the two grievances survived long to harass and alarm the Lancashire manufacturers. A month or so after that evidence of Peel's, Pitt gave way in the matter of the obnoxious fustian tax, and brought in a bill (his rival Fox eagerly seconding him) to repeal so much of the Act of the preceding year "as imposed a duty on plain cottons and fustians," which duty was accordingly repealed amid the general approval of the House. With his Irish propositions the Minister persevered, but the opposition to them in Parliament (where Peel's evidence was often quoted against them) and out of it was so strenuous and persistent, that he was obliged to modify them in a way which made them unpopular in Ireland.² The Irish Parliament had accepted

of labour, was greater in Ireland than in England in any branch of manufacture which required execution and ingenuity, instancing a gentleman, whom he described to be the first and the principal person in the cotton business in Ireland (Major Brooke), who was several times in danger of losing his life because he refused to allow his workmen a greater price than they had in Manchester." Very encouraging for the English manufacturers intent on migrating with their capital to Ireland!

¹ *Gentleman's Magazine*, lv. 449.

² Ireland, it appears, from one of the first debates in the House of Commons on the commercial propositions, was regarded by some non-Irish members as so completely a foreign country that a Scotch representative, Sir William Cunyngham, urged an objection which seems perfectly astounding now:—"If the resolutions were agreed to as they stood at present," he said, "the Irish would import grain into the western ports of Scotland, and greatly undersell the Scotch farmers; the consequence of which would be, the latter would not be able to pay their rents, and thus the landowner would be ruined."—*Parliamentary History*, xxv. 34.

them in their first form, but it rejected them as they had become when they issued from the debates and divisions of the English Parliament. England and Ireland were obliged to wait for the Union before anything like reciprocal free trade could be established; and immediately after the failure of Pitt's scheme, the English "Liberal" leader was feasted in Manchester for aiding in this victory of "protection!"

"To Pitt," says his latest biographer, "the failure of the Irish commercial measures was a deep disappointment, a bitter mortification. To them, to the framing or to the defence of their details, he had applied himself for almost a twelvemonth; and here was the result—the object of public good not attained, the jealousy of both nations stirred anew, and to himself for a time the decline of public favour alike, though on exactly opposite grounds, in England and in Ireland. . . . On the other hand, Fox, as the champion of high protective duties, enjoyed in many quarters the gleam of returning popularity. Being at Knowsley in the course of that autumn on a visit to Lord Derby, the two friends went together to Manchester, and were warmly welcomed by the great metropolis of manufacturers. Here is Fox's own account of it: 'Our reception at Manchester was the finest thing imaginable, and handsome in all respects. All the principal people came out to meet us and attended us into the town with blue and buff cockades, and a procession as fine, and not unlike that upon my chairing in Westminster. We dined with one hundred and fifty people. The concourse of people to see us was immense, and I never saw more apparent unanimity than seemed to be in our favour.'"¹

Lancashire manufacturers denouncing free trade with Ireland, and, if it should befall, threatening to transport themselves and their capital to that poor island, in their fear of the competition of cheap Irish labour;—"Liberal" leaders and statesmen echoing and swelling their clamour, and receiving a triumphant welcome in Manchester for helping to make it successful:—what a difference between Then and Now!

Thus it was not as a counsellor or confidant of Pitt's,

¹ Lord Stanhope, *Life of Pitt*, i. 275.

but as an opponent of his fiscal proposals and commercial policy, and one in alliance so far with Fox and the Whigs, that Peel made his first recorded appearance on the stage of public affairs. But a time came when the Bury manufacturer correctly appreciated Pitt's commercial as his other policy, and said of the author of the fustian tax and the advocate of the Irish propositions: "No Minister ever understood so well the commercial interests of the country. He knew that the true sources of its greatness lay in its productive industry."¹ A year or so after the collapse of the Irish propositions, Pitt attempted another step in the direction of free trade, and negotiated

¹ *Sketch*, p. 42. The following interesting testimony, from a manufacturer's point of view, to Pitt as a Minister may be worth giving. After the passage quoted in the text, Sir Lawrence Peel proceeds thus:—"I may observe here, that my own father entertained a similar opinion of Mr. Pitt, though he entertained no high one of that Minister's colleagues or successors. His own political opinions were those of Mr. Pitt in the first years of the administration of that statesman, before the French Revolution had made the times unpropitious for political changes, and put all the machinery out of gear. He once described Mr. Pitt to me as the fairest Minister he had ever known. He said that he was often struck, when he attended that Minister on deputations from the city, with the great fairness with which he treated adverse opinions, receiving and placing in their best light opinions at variance with his own. My father added, that if it chanced, as it sometimes happened, that they had but a poor spokesman, Mr. Pitt would put their arguments for them in the best light which they could receive; 'he would state our own case for us,' he said, 'better than we could have stated it for ourselves, and then he would give his own answer; he never hid himself, but would say, "Gentlemen, I have stated your case for you, now I will state my own."' I observed that though he praised the dexterity and ability of the Minister highly, my father praised his openness and candour more. This praise made the more impression on me because it came from one who by no means approved of the whole policy of Mr. Pitt, and remained throughout his life the firm supporter of parliamentary reform."

the commercial treaty with France.¹ Laid before Parliament early in 1787, it was vehemently attacked by Fox and the Whigs, both because its principle was that of commercial freedom, and because it tended to establish what in our day is called an Anglo-French alliance; Fox declaring France to be "the natural foe" of England—a doctrine against which Pitt earnestly protested. Little thought the rivals then how soon their parts were to be exchanged. Fox and the Whigs hoped to raise against the commercial treaty with France the same outcry which had marred the success of the Irish propositions. But they found themselves mistaken. "Our merchants and manufacturers were, upon the whole, well pleased, or at least acquiescing and quiet. There came from any body of them to the House of Commons only one considerable petition, and that petition prayed only for postponement. Notwithstanding every effort, and in spite of all the eloquence of Fox and Sheridan, of Francis and Grey," afterwards the first Earl Grey of the first Reform Bill, "an address in approval of the treaty was carried by overwhelming numbers—236 against 116."²

What Peel and the Lancashire manufacturers as a body thought of the commercial treaty with France does not appear; but in any case, events were approaching destined to make them the firmest supporters of Pitt's general policy. They were unexpected events, unforeseen even in the February of 1792, though by that time the French Revolution was vigorously developing itself, and though, only five months before, the flight to Varennes had been followed by the Declaration of Pillnitz. Early in the year of the first coalition against France, and the commencement of one of the longest and fiercest of general European wars, Pitt brought in the last of his skilful peace-Budgets, little sus-

¹ Signed 26th September 1786.

² Lord Stanhope, i. 327.

pecting that it was to be the last. He had a surplus, one-half of which he was to apply to the Sinking Fund, the other half to remission of taxation, and, in his sanguine exuberance, he thought of reducing the four to three per cents. For the system of finance and the commercial policy which had yielded these results he was indebted to Adam Smith, and in his Budget-speech he owned his obligations to the author of the *Wealth of Nations*: "an author," said the Minister, "now unhappily no more, whose extensive knowledge of detail and depth of philosophical research will, I believe, furnish the best solution to every question connected with the history of commerce or with the systems of political economy." With Europe just about to burst into flames, and despite such premonitory symptoms of coming domestic commotion as the anti-Priestley Birmingham riots of the preceding year, Pitt saw before him a decade and a half at least of probable peace, of additions to the Sinking Fund, and of remissions of taxation; "for although," he said, we must not count with certainty on the continuance of our present prosperity during such an interval, yet unquestionably there never was a time in the history of this country when, from the situation of Europe, we might more reasonably expect fifteen years of peace than we may at the present moment."¹ Another year, and in the February of 1793, the French Republic declared war against England, and a few months afterwards the Duke of York with ten thousand British troops was in front of Valenciennes. The great war against the Revolution abroad had opened, and at the same time Pitt found himself forced to wrestle with the Revolution at home. Everywhere the nation was divided into two camps of ardent friends and ardent foes of the French Revolution. To take out of many one instance of the doings

¹ Lord Stanhope, ii. 140.

and attitude of the sympathisers with France :—"In Sheffield there was appointed a day of rejoicing to celebrate the success of the French arms. An ox was, in the first place, roasted whole and eaten, after which the members assembled, walked in procession with the French tricolours flying, and with a picture at the end of a pole which represented Dundas,"—Pitt's right-hand man,—“and Burke stabbing Liberty. An officer quartered at Sheffield wrote as follows to his brother next day : ‘They are as resolute and determined a set of villains as I ever saw, and will gain their object if it is to be gained. They have debating societies, and regular correspondence with the other towns; they have subscribed to purchase firearms, and are endeavouring to corrupt the soldiers.’”¹ But all English towns and seats of industry were not like Sheffield. In the Manchester of 1792, as in the Birmingham of 1791, the Church-and-King party was the strongest in the lower as well as in the upper strata of society. Of the state of feeling in Manchester at this time, more will have to be said in the memoir of Thomas Walker. Here, meanwhile, is a sketch of Peel's first recorded appearance in public life, after he became a member of Parliament. He entered the House of Commons in 1790 as member for Tamworth, and in the December of 1792, these were the things said and done in the Manchester which, not many years before, had given a triumphal reception to Charles James Fox, now as fierce a friend of the French and their revolution as Pitt had become, slowly and reluctantly, the resolute enemy of both :—

“On the 11th of December 1792, he”—Peel—“attended a meeting at Manchester to establish an association for the maintenance of constitutional order, and in the course of the proceedings is represented to have said, ‘That it was time for the people to rouse from their lethargy, for there were incendiaries in the country.’ These incautious words

¹ Lord Stanhope, ii. 275.

stimulated the populace ; a " Church and King " mob assembled ; the office of a Liberal newspaper, the *Herald*, was attacked, and some injury was done to the dwellings of Mr. Walker and others, who, as earnest advocates of reform, were obnoxious to the zealous royalists.

" Mr." afterwards Earl " Grey introduced the subject in the House of Commons, and having censured the violence used, called on Mr. Peel to name the incendiaries he had stigmatised. Mr. Peel denied the authority of the newspaper report. He disclaimed having said anything more than ' God save the King.' He vindicated the Manchester Association ; it consisted of men of independent principle ; every man in it spoke his sentiments, and none but sentiments of loyalty were uttered. With regard to the riots, he stated that when he left the town all was quiet, and he regretted that the people afterwards broke into disorder. The objects of the Association were to protect the laws, and to discourage any attempt to break in upon the peace of society. There were in Manchester some few disaffected persons ; but in general they were contented, happy, and attached to the Government and constitution. As to party among them, there was once a division ; one party was called Pittites, and the other Foxites ; but that had ceased ; they had all coalesced, and called themselves Kingites.

" This was a very correct account of the state of public feeling in Manchester at the period ; most of the master manufacturers were firm supporters of the Government, and so zealous were the populace in their attachment to the Church, that the children of dissenters were frequently hooted at and insulted in the street. But this flaming loyalty was not destined to endure ; it was burned out by its own intensity.¹

Not in the case of our Robert Peel. The next glimpse we have of him, four years or so later, shows no diminution of *his* loyalty. The war with France had gone on, producing few or no English triumphs on land, whatever the successes of Howe, Jervis, and Duncan on the sea. In 1797 the victories of the young Napoleon left England without an ally. After the failure of one attempt to negotiate, Pitt was forced for a time to prosecute the war alone. Surpluses and remissions of taxation were now things of the past, and towards the end of 1797, Pitt had to announce a deficiency of nineteen millions, which he proposed to cover by a loan

¹ Cooke Taylor, i. 10.

of twelve millions and by new taxes. "The plan was to augment the assessed taxes at once to three times, and progressively to four times their existing amount, with, however, some deductions and exceptions in favour of those least able to pay. The number of persons immediately affected by this impost was calculated by Pitt at about 800,000." The nation was as yet unused to have its burdens thus increased. Considerable, accordingly, was the public dismay, loud the clamour of the Whig orators. But even more than Pitt asked for and received was needed. In his financial strait he resolved to carry out the suggestion of a non-official friend for an appeal to the nation, and to this appeal, it will be seen, a notable response was given by the Bury manufacturer and his partner:—

"Already in the preceding December, when the financial scheme of Pitt was in committee, a practical suggestion had been thrown out by the Speaker"—Addington. "He was confident, he said, that many persons of affluent fortune, sensible of the delicacy which forbore from searching too minutely into capital, would be willing to come forward with free contributions beyond the rate of their assessment, and he advised a clause to give such persons the opportunity. The Minister availed himself of the idea; and during the months of February and March 1798 such contributions rapidly flowed in. To receive them, hustings, as though for an election, had been raised beneath one of the piazzas of the Royal Exchange. There came crowding by hundreds merchants and tradesmen of all ranks, and with divers gifts, varying from one guinea to £3000. On the first day the subscriptions exceeded £46,000. Nor did that generous spirit decline. Mr. Robert Peel, father of the celebrated statesman, and at that time in partnership with Mr. Yates as a manufacturer of calicoes at Bury in Lancashire, paid in, from a loyal impulse, no less than £10,000." For which statement Lord Stanhope cites Macpherson's *History of Commerce*, vol. iv. p. 440. "As I"—Lord Stanhope—"have heard the story told, Mr. Peel having subscribed this large sum on the spur of the moment, and without consulting his senior partner, travelled back to Bury in some anxiety as to that partner's assent. But Mr. Yates had a spirit as loyal as his own. On being told by Mr. Peel what he had done, he merely turned round and said, 'You might as well have made it

£20,000 while you were about it.' In relating the fact, Mr. Macpherson," A.D. 1805, "adds, 'Is there any other country in the globe that could produce a manufacturer who can spare such a sum?'"¹

It was early in the year of this magnificent gift of the Bury firm that reports of a French invasion, with the young General Bonaparte to organise and head it, gave a new impetus to the volunteer movement in England. Pitt suspended the Habeas Corpus; the King with his own hand struck Fox's name from the list of Privy Councillors; while the militia was embodied and the navy increased—the nation supporting, with money and with men, Monarch and Minister in their war against the Revolution at home and abroad. Peel was ready not only with money, but with men. "In 1798, besides the large contributions he made, and the powerful patronage extended to the Lancashire Fencibles and the Tamworth Armed Association, he placed himself at the head of a corps of volunteers, consisting of six companies, mostly of his own artificers; and if ever officer possessed the hearts of his soldiers, it was the Lieutenant-Colonel-Commandant of the Bury Loyal Volunteers."² His speech made at the consecration of the colours has been preserved, and is much more animated than almost any other extant specimen of his oratory. There is something both patriarchal and feudal in the tone and tenor of the following address, and deep must have been the general loyalty evoked when a Bury calico-printer could address his "artificers" thus:—

"I should be extremely wanting in justice to you and to my own feelings, if I did not embrace this opportunity of testifying the high sense entertained by myself and brother officers of your soldier-like behaviour and good conduct. At a time when the British shores are menaced by a hostile invasion; when our rapacious enemies—enemies

¹ Lord Stanhope, iii. 92.

² *Public Characters of 1803-4*, p. 16.

alike of the cottage and the palace—thirsting for our blood and treasures, and anticipating the promised destruction of our religion, government, and commerce, are appointing taskmasters to be stationed in our workshops, to seize the fruits of our industry, and to fetter us in perpetual bondage, a new spectacle presents itself, appalling to the slaves of despotism. Men forced into military service by the terror of the guillotine were palsied at the sight of British volunteers serving their sovereign without pay; of peaceable citizens converted into soldiers; of the industrious mechanic supporting his family by labour in the day, and learning the use of arms by night. This spectacle dissipated every apprehension at home, and penetrated with despair the hirelings of ambition.

“Having the honour of being placed at the head of this highly respectable corps, and considering you as a part of my own family, allow me to call your attention to the discharge of those duties which our new engagements have rendered indispensable. Continue a regular attendance at the places appointed for your exercise; associate not with the vicious, but having raised yourself to a situation commanding respect, continue to deserve it by your conduct. Attend to your officers, and you will ever experience from them a return of kindness and friendship. With regard to myself, I wish to be considered rather as your parent than commander; and in your sickness and distress, I shall ever feel happy in affording every assistance in my power to yourselves and families”¹—instead of being content to refer you to the parish authorities and the relieving-officer.

Whether the worthy man’s interpretation of contemporary historical facts was correct or not, certainly the meditated French invasion had not come off, and General Bonaparte sailed with his expeditionary force to Egypt instead of to England. But in 1798 there did break out an Irish rebellion; and in the August of that year the French General Humbert, with eleven hundred “slaves of despotism,” did land at Killala to aid it. General Humbert had to surrender, and the rebellion was crushed; but having vanquished the domestic, leagued with the foreign foe, Pitt resolved on a healing measure—nothing less than a legislative Union of Ireland with England and Scotland.

¹ *Public Characters of 1803-4*, p. 16.

The history of the Union does not fall to be written here. Peel's contribution, however, to the success of the memorable measure is noteworthy. His first appearance in public life had been made as the champion of the English manufacturers to oppose Irish competition; and though restrictions on the commerce between the two kingdoms were not abolished by the Union, commercial concessions were made—if chiefly on one side, and much more to than by the Irish. Yet, in view of the imperial value of the Union, Peel, who, in 1785, had been foremost in opposition to anything like free trade with Ireland, heartily supported the Minister, and in a speech far longer and more elaborate than his usual House of Commons' deliverances. Beginning with a contrast between his attitude then and now—

“The support,” he said, “I have given to the present measure does not arise from a change of sentiments, but of circumstances. This plan embraces great advantages, both political and commercial, which, by uniting two countries into one country, are calculated to add strength and security to the empire; and is so essentially necessary at this time, when a daring attempt has been made, both by intrigue and force, to separate the countries, that inferior considerations ought not to weigh against a plan which bids fair to frustrate such attempts, and to consolidate both the interest and affections of the sister kingdoms. By an union we shall become one people; and though the benefits in a commercial point of view will be chiefly enjoyed by Ireland, yet, if an opinion may be formed of the sentiments of the trading body of this nation from their patriotic and respectful silence”—very different from the clamour of 1785—“a disposition is manifested to reach out a friendly arm to their distressed brethren, to raise them from their present unhappy state to a condition of ease and comfort similar to our own”—a hope benevolent but futile. “This conduct does the British merchants and manufacturers so much honour, that I feel particular pleasure in classing myself among that highly valuable and respectable body of men.”

With all his wish to maintain a “patriotic and respectful silence” on the injustice done to England by this new

instalment of "justice to Ireland," Peel could not refrain from one mild protest and warning.

"Though a friend," he continued, "to the principle of the measure, I think it my duty to draw the attention of the House to the sixth resolution. It must be the intention of every one to place both countries on an equal footing; and though nothing can be apprehended unfavourable to this country during the present low circumstances of Ireland, it may have an operation, at a future time, highly prejudicial to our domestic industry. Each country is to provide for its own public debt; and that of Great Britain being infinitely larger than the debt of Ireland, heavy taxes are necessarily imposed on almost every article of consumption, which has so strong a tendency to enhance the price of labour, that goods manufactured under such a pressure cannot be rendered on equally low terms with the produce of labour in places where similar burdens do not exist. Unless this objection be removed, the measure cannot be expected to have the concurrence of Great Britain. I feel it the more necessary to urge this point, having perceived a want of that liberality in the Irish Government which characterises our own. The commercial intercourse now subsisting betwixt the two countries has lost every feature of reciprocity; British manufactures being heavily taxed on their admission into Ireland, whilst the goods of that kingdom meet with every encouragement here"—a great change, seemingly, since 1785. "Whatever the conduct of Ireland respecting the proposition of a union, I trust the firmness of administration will be such as to refuse all concession to menace and intrigue; and that the aid which may be deemed necessary to extend in future to that nation will be received as the genuine offspring of affection. I always will oppose the giving much for nothing, when demanded as a matter of right.

"Having said thus much as a commercial man, I beg the further indulgence of the House as a Member of Parliament."¹

But the reader need not be troubled with Peel's general views of the advantages of a Union, the chief opponents of which, bating a few English Whigs, belonged to the nation gaining everything by the measure. It was probably because it was an expression of opinion from one who might be considered the spokesman of the English manufacturers, and who expected to lose commercially by the

¹ *Public Characters of 1803-4*, p. 20-21.

Union which he advocated as useful imperially, and as an act of charity to impoverished Erin, that Peel's speech was circulated pamphlet-wise in Ireland, and was deemed a valuable aid by the Government. It was delivered on 1st May 1799. In the November and December of the following year a batch of baronets was made; among them "Robert Peel, of Drayton Manor, in the county of Stafford." A few weeks more, and, thwarted by the King in his attempt to concede Roman Catholic Emancipation by way of crowning the Union, Pitt ceased to be Premier (February 1801), and Addington reigned in his stead. In the October of the same year the preliminaries of the Peace of Amiens were signed, followed by general rejoicings in England and in France, wearied of the long conflict. In the May following, stimulated partly by the popularity of the peace, the Whigs made a dead-set at the fallen Minister with votes of censure, direct and indirect. These were confronted by a motion of thanks to Pitt for his conduct during the war. In the debate which thus arose, Sir Robert Peel spoke warmly and generously in support of the ex-Minister, who had by this time become his model statesman.

"He had," he said, "the honour to be a member of the commercial world, and had had frequent occasion to transact with the late Chancellor of the Exchequer"—Pitt—"business of great difficulty and importance. From personal knowledge he was therefore able to state, that no Minister ever understood so well the commercial interests of the country. He knew that the true sources of its greatness lay in its productive industry. Circumstances obliged him to lay burdens on the country, but he had first taught the country how to bear those burdens. Large debts were indeed contracted, but they were more than equalled by the increase of wealth arising from his wise measures. It was not unusual for a country to flourish in peace, but where was there another Minister to be found under whose auspices the resources of the country had been doubled in the midst of an expensive and vigorous war? Debts had been contracted, but they were all domestic debts, and the interest was spent among ourselves"—the doctrine of his old pamphlet still upheld. "Whatever might be said of our burthens, the country

under their pressure was more flourishing than at any former period. . . . The late Minister had been the benefactor of his country, and had neglected no one's interest but his own. It had indeed been said, that though he did not enrich himself, he had secured his influence by bestowing pensions and titles on others"—a certain baronet among them. "But he had no occasion to have recourse to such arts; he had secured sufficient support by honourable measures. Three parts of the House, who were incapable of being bribed, were his friends. When such was the case, the House ought not to content themselves with a bare vote of thanks, but to bestow on him some more solid mark of their approbation. It would be disgraceful to the nation to allow such a man to retire to languish in poverty. He, for one, would be happy to contribute to prevent this; not from any personal motives, but on account of the important services he had rendered his country."¹

A peroration which, if not in the best of taste, was inspired by warm and generous feeling.² Pitt, sooth to say, so successful as a national financier, and though simple in his personal habits, as well as without wife or child, had been sunk for years in pecuniary embarrassments, caused mainly, it seems, by waste on and in the servants' hall. Unfortunately, debt weighed heavily on him when he formed his first and only attachment; and he felt forced by it to give up further thought of the woman whom he loved, and by whom, as his wife, order might have been restored to, and preserved in, his domestic finances. The London merchants offered him £100,000, delicately assuring him that he need never know the names of the subscribers—a delicacy absent from Sir Robert Peel's peroration. When

¹ Cooke Taylor, i. 15-16.

² Sir Robert Peel's contemporary biographer (*Public Characters of 1803-4*, p. 15) speaks of the effect produced by this speech as so great "that a subscription was opened in the City the day following, and he himself was one of the most liberal subscribers, to erect a statue of Mr. Pitt, expressive of the lively sense entertained of his services, and to convey to the world a lasting mark of the gratitude of the nation, which, if not occasioned, was greatly promoted by this speech."

the proud Pitt declined the generous and graceful offer, the King was ready with an also anonymous £30,000; but neither would Pitt accept this. Ultimately private friends made up a "loan" of £11,000, which relieved him from his most pressing difficulties, and enabled him to live in comfort, though with a greatly reduced establishment, and, what he felt more, with Holwood sold—Holwood among its oaks (the present Earl of Derby bought it some years ago for an occasional residence) looking over Keston Common and Cæsar's Camp, and but a mile or so from Hayes, where still stands what was Chatham's Kentish house and home, with the yews and cypresses planted by the great Minister. Pitt was born at Hayes, and there, "when a boy," he once told a friend, "I used to go bird-nesting in the woods of Holwood; and it was always my wish to call it my own." He lived to call it his own; and it was "after a conversation with him in the open air I well remember," Wilberforce writes, "at the root of an old tree at Holwood"—where a seat with a suitable inscription commemorates the fact—"I resolved to give notice, on a fit occasion, in the House of Commons, of my intention to bring the subject" of the slave trade "forward." And it may be as well to mention here, that the first Sir Robert Peel was on this point a decided opponent of Wilberforce and the philanthropists. An abolition of the slave trade, which in his opinion was,—and it really seems to have been—conducted much more humanely by England than by any other nation, he pronounced to be mischievous. "Instead of benefiting the cause of humanity," he said once, "it will injure it exceedingly. What is given up here will be adopted elsewhere, and without any of the humane regulations established by this country."¹ A fierce European war was raging when he urged this objection—one not

¹ *Speech* (on Slave Importation Bill), May 1, 1806.

unpractical at the time, since the possibility of a general *consensus* of civilised nations to abolish the slave trade could scarcely have been then foreseen by the most prescient and far-sighted of philanthropic enthusiasts.

With the growth of the English cotton manufacture, however, there had arisen a system of white slavery at home, and of this Sir Robert Peel was the first to effect a mitigation. We have come now to the earliest of those measures of factory legislation, of which he was the originator, though expanded and extended as they have been by later labours, and by men living nearer our own time, other names than his are mainly associated with the history of the movement. But his is the merit of having originated it—a merit all the greater that he was himself an employer, and on the largest scale, of the labour which neither prejudices naturally cherished by men in his position against the interference of the State with the operations of the manufacturer, nor the fear that profits might be diminished by such interference, prevented him from calling on the Legislature to protect from the cupidity or carelessness of the capitalist. The factory legislation which Sir Robert Peel asked for and obtained was not very stringent from the modern point of view, nor did it at the time prove extremely effective for his object. But it was the beginning of all that has been done since, and of all that may yet be done in any and in every sphere of industry, to substitute the operation of just and humane laws for the tyranny and caprice of the employer, whether he be a capitalist, or, as often happens, himself a working man, employing and paying for the labour of children. It was the first distinct recognition by the State of its parental relationship and duties to the helpless children of the poor. All our modern systems of inspection, now nearly as wide as industry itself, prescribing and regulating the hours and

conditions of the toil of children and women in mine and field, as well as workshop and factory, forbidding the young to be overworked, and compelling them to receive school instruction as a condition of employment—all of them have sprung out of the first Sir Robert Peel's modest and tentative efforts to improve the condition of apprentices in the cotton manufacture. But before chronicling his legislative efforts in this direction, something must be said of the juvenile labour called into existence, under new conditions, by the expansion of the British cotton manufacture, and by the birth and growth of the factory system.

The water-frame of Arkwright, like the spinning-jenny of Hargreaves, was worked chiefly by children, and though the fine spinning on Crompton's mule was done chiefly by adults, the rovings to be fine-spun seem to have been generally prepared by children also. With the gigantic expansion of the cotton manufacture, through the inventions of Hargreaves, Arkwright, and Crompton, there thus arose an enormous demand for juvenile labour—a demand far greater than the natural growth of population in the manufacturing districts could supply. In Lewis Paul's time, it has been seen, the ingenious inventor went with his machines to the children in workhouses and foundling hospitals, hoping that the cheapness of their labour, which cost little or nothing, would compensate for the practical imperfection of his experimental machinery, or that those who had to support them would cheerfully give him a trial, and set them to work at machines the product of which might contribute to defray the expense of their maintenance. But with the proved success of Arkwright's water-frame and Crompton's mule all this was altered. Every child in the manufacturing districts was able to find employment, and many children out of them were needed. The new cotton industry could not be supported by the children born and

bred in the seats of the manufacture, and other parts of the country were put under requisition to supply the deficiency. The administrators of the poor-law throughout the kingdom hailed the opportunity to rid themselves and the rates of the burden of pauper children. From the workhouses of London, as elsewhere, there set in a steady stream of covered waggons freighted with children to be apprenticed to the cotton manufacturers of the North of England. So great was the demand for the labour of these children, that at least an assertion was once made in the House of Commons to the effect that the workhouse authorities of a London parish were said to have forced on a Lancashire manufacturer the agreement that with every batch of twenty sound children he should take one idiot!¹

An apprenticeship system of this kind, it can be easily supposed, led to many abuses. There was no one to care for, or possessing authority to protect, the helpless youngsters, many of them brought from a distance. There was no limitation of the age under which they should not be worked; nor of the number of hours of labour, and very general was the now forbidden practice of working the factories all through the twenty-four hours, one set of children during the day preparing the material to be spun by another set during the night. "The cotton trade introduced here," says good Dr. Aikin in 1795, speaking of Dukinfield, "while it affords employment to all ages, has debilitated the constitutions and retarded the growth of many, and made an alarming increase in the mortality. This effect is greatly to be attributed to the pernicious custom, so properly reprobated by Dr. Percival,"—a Worthy of whom more hereafter,—“and other physicians, of making the children in the mills work night and day, one set getting out of bed

¹ Speech of Leonard Horner (6th June 1815), quoted in *History of the Factory Movement*, i. 41.

when another goes into the same, thus never allowing the beds to be well ventilated.”¹ Dr. Aikin is the better worth quoting, both because he wrote in the childhood of the factory system, and because he often speaks admiringly of the nimbleness of the children employed in working the then comparatively new machinery, and of the profitable occupation thus given to the families of the poor. Writing, at the same date, of the parish of Eccles, he suspends his narrative to philosophise—not a frequent practice of his—and to this effect :—

“The inventions and improvements of machines to shorten labour has had a surprising influence to extend our trade, and also to call in hands from all parts, especially children for the *cotton-mills*. It is the wise plan of Providence, that in this life there shall be no good without its attendant inconvenience. There are many which are too obvious in these cotton-mill and similar factories, which counteract that increase of population usually consequent on the improved facility of labour. In them, children of very tender age are employed, many of them collected from the workhouses in *London* and *Westminster*, and transported in crowds as apprentices, to masters resident many hundred miles distant, where they serve unknown, unprotected, and forgotten by those to whose care nature or the laws had consigned them. These children are usually too long confined to work in close rooms, often during the whole night; the air they breathe from the oil, &c., employed in the machinery, and other circumstances, is injurious; little regard is paid to their cleanliness, and frequent changes from a warm and dense to a cold and thin atmosphere are predisposing causes to sickness and disability, and particularly to the epidemic fever, which is so generally to be met with in these factories. . . . It must be added, that the want of early religious instruction and example, and the numerous and indiscriminate association in these buildings, are very unfavourable to their future conduct in life. To mention these grievances is to point out their remedies; and in many factories they have been adopted with true benevolence and much success. But in all cases ‘the public have a right to see that its members are not wantonly injured, or carelessly lost,’”—a quotation from an unknown author, but a sensible, whoever he may have been.²

¹ *Country Round Manchester*, p. 456.

² *Ib.* p. 219.

Such was the state of things as it struck a calm and impartial observer five years or so before the beginning of our century. Some little movement to better it seems to have begun a year or so after the publication of Dr. Aikin's book, and there is one faint indication of a talk of legislative action for the improvement of the condition of factory children. In 1796 a self-constituted body, without any official status, but calling itself the "Manchester Board of Health," received from the benevolent Dr. Percival (of it, as of him, more hereafter), a paper of reflections and suggestions on the condition of the factory children of Manchester and neighbourhood, very strongly resembling in tone and tenor the passage just quoted from Dr. Aikin. It concludes thus: "From the excellent regulations which subsist in several cotton factories, it appears that many of these evils may, in a considerable degree, be obviated; and we are therefore warranted by experience, and are assured, that we shall have the support of the liberal proprietors of these factories, in proposing an application for parliamentary aid (if other methods appear not likely to effect the purpose), to establish a general system of law for the wise, humane, and equal government of all such works."¹ And we are further vaguely told that "Mr. Wilbraham Bootle was the first to moot the question in the House of Commons."² But Sir Robert Peel, before a committee of that House, testified to a complete ignorance of this mooting of the question by Mr. Wilbraham Bootle; nor has the present writer been able to discover anything more about him and it. Not until 1802 was a bill introduced into Parliament dealing with the system of juvenile labour which the expansion and extension of the cotton manufacture had created, and aiming at the correction of the more flagrant of its evils. The bill was introduced by

¹ *History of the Factory Movement*, i. 29.

² *Ib.*

Sir Robert Peel, and fortunately so, since he was known to the House of Commons not to be a mere philanthropist, but to have an enormous stake in the trade legislative interference with which he proposed. In fact, he was credibly reported about this time to have in his employment 15,000 persons, and to be paying £40,000 yearly to the excise.¹ Whatever mischief the war and Pitt had done to others, he could not, and did not, complain that either or both had injured him. The story of the legislation proposed by him in 1802 is characteristic of a man humane and benevolent, but slow to innovate, and not the least given to pry into or to find fault with his neighbours' ways. It came out first some thirteen years later in evidence given by him before, and statements furnished by him to, a committee of the House of Commons then inquiring into the necessity for further factory legislation—evidence and statements which no one writing about these matters has seemingly, until now, taken the trouble to read. Peel was not impelled to propose factory legislation by what he had seen or heard of misdoings in other people's works, but by what he knew to be misdome in his own. Some fifteen years before the opening of the present century, complaints were rife for a time concerning the bad condition of the children in one of his works—the Radcliffe—and the neighbourhood feared the spread of the malignant fever said to be raging among them. One of the public-spirited and philanthropic persons who afterwards founded the Manchester Board of Health aforesaid procured the appointment—doubtless with Peel's own cheerful assent and co-operation—of a sort of Medical Commission of Inquiry into the state of things at this mill, and their report clearly indicated their belief that the children worked too long, too unremittingly, and too

¹ *Public Characters of 1803-4*, p. 31-3.

far into the night.¹ Yet the owner of the Radcliffe Mill was an employer careful of the well-being of his work-people in general, and of his apprentices in particular. Among his humane arrangements he had established a "prentice-house for boarding the children at Radcliffe, and another at Hinds, each under the superintendence of a mistress—strict attention being paid to their health, cleanliness, and clothing."² Concerning the general internal arrangements of his mills, this is the answer which Peel gave to the committee of 1815, when questioned as to their ventilation at an earlier time. It is an answer worth quoting, not only from its bearing on the subject in hand, but from the interesting reference to Richard Arkwright:—"Complete ignorance of the nature of building requiring ventilation," he said, "might afford some excuse, but I believe my buildings took pattern from buildings that were erected by a man who has done more honour to the country than any man I know, not excepting our great military characters—I mean Sir Richard Arkwright. He originated the buildings, and I believe they were made conformable to his machinery. We all looked up to him, and imitated his mode of building." Yet, in spite of buildings modelled upon Arkwright's, in spite of 'prentice-houses, mistresses, injunctions, and all that a benevolent employer could do in the way of organisation and regulation, Peel found that things were not going as they ought to go, and even that one of his mills was complained of as a nuisance and a danger. The master was in Parliament, or at Drayton, or in his counting-house, and the master's eye could not supervise every item of that vast industry and business. In a statement which he handed in to the committee of

¹ *The Works of Thomas Percival, M.D.* (London 1807), ii. 294, "Memoir of T. B. Bayley."

² *The Peel Family*, chap. iv.

1815, and after mentioning that at the earlier time now spoken of—the first years of the present century—he had in his employment about 1000 apprentices, he proceeds to say, with noticeable and commendable frankness:—

“Having other pursuits, it was not often in my power to visit the factories. But whenever such visits were made, I was struck with a uniform appearance of bad health, and, in many cases, stunted growth, of the children. The hours of labour were regulated by the interest of the overseer, whose remuneration depending on the quantity of work done, he was often induced to make the poor children work excessive hours, and to stop their complaints by trifling bribes. Finding our own factories under such management, and learning that the like practices prevailed in other parts of the kingdom where similar machines were in use, the children being much overworked, and often little or no regard paid to cleanliness and ventilation in the buildings—having the assistance of Dr. Percival and other eminent medical gentlemen of Manchester, together with some distinguished characters both in and out of Parliament, I brought in a bill in the forty-second of the King,” &c., &c. And further on in the Blue Book his reported evidence contains the following emphatic statement: “I did it”—*i.e.*, I introduced the bill of 1802—“not so much for the benefit of others, but finding that my own mills were mismanaged, and that, with my other pursuits, I had it not in my power to put them under a proper regulation.”

It was not, therefore, as a philanthropist in search of a mission, or from any ambition of the “friend of humanity” kind, that Peel became a factory legislator. It was mainly because he saw his good wishes for his work-people defeated by the greed of subordinates that he felt compelled to invoke the aid of the Legislature and the law, and that he framed and brought into the House of Commons the first of all factory bills. His motion for leave to introduce it was made on the 6th of April 1802, at a time which he might consider favourable to such legislation, since the Peace of Amiens had been signed some weeks before, and the public mind was in a state of comparative quiescence. The *Parliamentary History*, though copious enough on

much more trivial contemporary events, takes no notice of his motion, and the discussion on it must be sought for in the newspapers of the day. Sir Robert Peel's speech on the occasion is briefly reported in them, and was probably itself a brief one. He acknowledged the advantages which manufacturers received from juvenile labour, but pointed out the great evils produced by it while unrestricted, unregulated, and unprotected. "From an immense number" of children "being crowded together, impurity often arose, and disease followed." The mind and morals, as well as the body, suffered. "A greater evil still was want of instruction. Leaving their parents at a tender age, they were afterwards often completely neglected, and contracted the most profligate habits." Peel's motion was seconded by Lord Belgrave, afterwards Marquis of Westminster, in what the newspaper report calls a "very animated" speech, which he concluded by saying, "that if the case of these children was disregarded, they would bring down the vengeance of insulted Heaven upon a hard-hearted and reprobate nation." It is added, "Every one who spoke paid a high compliment to the humanity and public spirit of the honourable mover."¹ Indeed, though objections on the familiar ground of the impropriety of legislative interference with labour were not wanting, Sir Robert Peel's chief difficulty then seems to have been not so much with those who said that he went too far, as with those who said that he did not go far enough. Honourable gentlemen who knew nothing of the feeling of "the trade," whose personal interests were not compromised, and who had never thought of factory legislation until Sir Robert Peel proposed it, now wished to extend the operation of the bill from apprentices in factories to all "young persons" engaged in labour anywhere. When the House went into

¹ *Morning Chronicle* of April 7, 1802.

committee on the 18th of May, suggestions of this kind were urged, and it was even recommended that the number of apprentices whom any one master might employ should be restricted by law. To such attempts Sir Robert Peel offered a determined resistance. He "expressed surprise at these endeavours to lay under burdensome restrictions a great branch of manufacture. The House would act more consistently with its usual good sense by sanctioning a reform than by encouraging speculative innovation"—a characteristic remark. There were from 10,000 to 12,000 apprentices then employed, and all of them would be affected by the measure. "Was not this enough by way of experiment? Would it not be better to wait and see the effect of these regulations before Parliament went further?" And again:—

"Sir Robert Peel assured the House that such propositions would excite the greatest alarm in the country, and that the table would soon be covered with petitions. Had it not been known that he took the lead in the business, many would already have been presented. When, in an unprecedented manner, the cotton manufacturers had come forward and offered to lay themselves under many restrictions, it was rather hard that gentlemen, who before were quite inactive, should now propose regulations which would go nigh to ruin them, and, along with them, the most important branch of manufactures the country carries on."

On the 2d of June the bill was read a third time and passed, after a discussion in which the two classes of objectors—"You go too far;" "You don't go far enough"—said their say. And be it noted that among the objectors of the first class was Mr. William Wilberforce himself. Mr. William was a member for Yorkshire, and complained that the bill, as it stood, would affect injuriously the interests of some of his constituents, for it dealt with the woollen as well as with the cotton industry. Mr. Wilberforce, so tender of the distant black, proposed a

clause to extend the period of nightwork beyond the date named in the bill as that at which it was to cease !

The Lords passed the bill, probably pretty much as it came to them ; and, with greater swiftness than has marked the parliamentary progress of most of its progeny, it took its place in the statute-book as the 42d George III., cap. 73, in the same year which had witnessed its introduction into the House of Commons. It called itself " An Act for the preservation of the health *and morals* of apprentices and others employed in cotton and other mills, and in cotton and other factories ;" and both the spirit and wording of some of its provisions seem now old-fashioned enough. Foremost among these was a limitation of the hours of work to twelve hours a day, reckoned from six in the morning to nine at night, thus leaving three hours of the possible working-day for meals, recreation, and instruction. Nightwork was to be abolished gradually, not ceasing altogether until the June of 1804, so that the blow might not fall too suddenly on Mr. William Wilberforce's constituents, among other people. A separation of the sleeping apartments of the sexes was enjoined. Regulations were imposed for the instruction, secular and religious, of the young people. During the first four years the apprentice was to be taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, " or either of them, according to the age and abilities of such apprentice," and " by some discreet and proper person," to be appointed and paid by the master or mistress ; the instruction to be given " in some room or place " in the factory. One hour every Sunday the apprentice was to be " instructed and examined in the principles of the Christian religion ;" if belonging to the Church of England, to be taken once every year " to be examined by the rector, vicar, or curate of the parish ;" and between the ages of fourteen and eighteen " to be duly instructed and

prepared for confirmation," and "to be brought and sent to the Bishop of the diocese to be confirmed." In Scotland, the apprentice was to be examined once a year "by the minister of the parish," and between fourteen and eighteen "to be carried to the parish church of Scotland to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper as the same is administered in churches in Scotland." All apprentices were to be sent to church or chapel once a month at least, or in case they could not attend on Sunday, "the master or mistress, either by themselves or by some proper person, shall cause divine service to be performed once at least every Sunday; and it is added emphatically, "such master or mistress is hereby strictly enjoined and required to take due care that all his or her apprentices regularly attend divine service according to the directions of this Act." The sanitary clauses ordered all "rooms and apartments" in the mill to be "twice at least a year well and sufficiently washed with quicklime and water," and due care to be taken to "provide a sufficient number of windows and openings" to "ensure a proper supply of fresh air." If any infectious disease broke out, a physician was to be called in, and apply remedies to be administered, and make regulations to be carried out, at the expense of the master or mistress. A copy of the Act was to be hung up conspicuously in the mill, and, for an infraction of its provisions, a penalty was to be imposed of not more than £5 or less than 40s.; one half to be paid to the informer, the other to the overseers of the poor. Further, and to ensure, as it was fondly hoped, the execution of the provisions of the Act, the Justices, at Midsummer Sessions, were directed to appoint two persons not interested in or connected with factories—one of them a Justice of the Peace, the other a clergyman of the Established Church, or, if that arrangement was not convenient, two Justices or two clergymen—

mere unpaid amateurs—to visit and inspect, and report from time to time in writing to the Quarter Sessions on the condition of the factories, and whether the Act was observed.

Such were the main provisions of this first of all the Factory Acts that have been or are to be. Of its working more hereafter.

Peel's own children, meanwhile, were growing up around him, among them the little boy born at Chamber Hall, and christened Robert, the year before the first French Revolution broke out. This was the child at whose birth, and in his gratitude that it was a boy, the father, as already told, vowed to "give it to his country." The vow, he thought, could not be better kept than by attempting to make the little Robert a second Pitt. Thirty years after the happy birth in Chamber Hall, when the father was withstood in Parliament on the currency question by the son, a rising young legislator, the old Sir Robert took the House of Commons rather affectingly into his confidence, on the occasion of having to "oppose a near and dear relative"—the new Robert. For his own part, he said, he was content to abide by the monetary policy of Mr. Pitt, whom he had "always thought" to be "the first man in the country. He well remembered, when that near and dear relative was only a child, he observed to some friends who were standing near him, that the man who discharged his duty to his country in the manner Mr. Pitt had done, was most to be admired and most to be imitated; and he thought at that moment, if his own life and that of his dear relative should be spared, he would one day present him to his country to follow in the same path."¹ Thus, from his earliest days, the child was in training for a great part to be played in public life. "When he was a very little fellow, his

¹ Cooke Taylor, i. 33-4.

father would sometimes playfully lift him on to a little round table which stood by the breakfast-table, and would hear from that 'tribune' the recitation of some juvenile lesson. No sounds pleased the father so well from his boy's lips as those which showed that the work was going on. . . . At a maturer age, at about twelve years, the boy was accustomed to repeat each Sunday to his father, commonly in the study, all that he could remember of the sermon; and occasionally a guest at the dinner-table, some member of the family, or intimate friend, was permitted to hear that which was more generally repeated to his father alone. He was taught not merely to repeat the discourse, but to give the substance of it in his own words, was encouraged to ask questions, and to obtain a solution of any difficulties which the subject might have presented." ¹ Thus betimes was trained the flowing orator and ready debater of after years.

"And what were the natural gifts of this child, the object of such unceasing cultivation?" asks Sir Lawrence Peel, who proceeds thus to answer his own question. "He was a quick, clever boy, and also a thinking boy, naturally observant and reflecting. He was no prodigy certainly. His parts and his promise were such as many boys have and give. My father used to say that he thought his second nephew, William Yates Peel, had naturally the quicker parts. He received an early aim, one great advantage. He was stimulated to exertion by the thought that great things were expected from him; he was disciplined, and was soon able to go, from the force of habit, in that direction to which duty pointed, then to transfer his allegiance from custom to a higher motive and a higher discipline. On the other hand, the discipline acted on his mind like an overtight ligature on a plant; it checked and dwarfed the plant. His originality and the freedom of his mind, though not destroyed, was impaired by it. He grew up graver than becomes a boy. His thoughts, as his manners, were cast too much in an artificial mould, and were tinged by a certain formality. A tendency to follow where he should have led was long observed in

him," &c., &c. "As a boy, he was always under a strict discipline; a good boy, of gentle manners, by choice rather seeking older than younger companions, shrinking from all rudeness or coarseness, praised by the old, and therefore not over-popular with the young. He was quick in feeling, very sensitive, impatient of opposition from his young companions, and dreading ridicule overmuch. He would walk a mile round rather than encounter the rude jests of the Bury lads, which his young companions bore with more philosophy. This was not altogether a healthy state, and resembles the tenderness of a forced plant. I have said that the elder Peels were shy and reserved men; he had his full share, naturally, of this defect, and shrank from strange approach."

There is a rather curious contemporary testimony borne by the elder Peel's flowery biographer of 1803-4 to this parental tutorship of his son, who, of course, however, had also ample professional instruction. "The plan of reading which he," Peel senior, "early prescribed to himself, and which he has never" (?) "discontinued, was as judicious, as it was singularly adapted to give originality and quickness to his perceptions—a plan which he not only recommends his children to pursue, but daily trains them in the practice of. His eldest son, *a youth of the most promising talents*"—the young Robert, and statesman that was to be—"who is little more than fifteen years of age, has been so much in the habit of exercising the retentiveness of his memory, conformably to this method, that very few indeed of his age can carry with them more of the sentiments of an author than himself. When he reads a portion of a book, closing the volume, he immediately retraces the impressions which were made on his memory, and the mind, we know,"¹ &c., &c. But a youth of fifteen could not be always kept at his father's side, and to Harrow he was sent. There the Bury calico-printer's son found himself the school-fellow of the young Lord Byron, whose nature was,

¹ *Public Characters of 1803-4*, p. 9.

and whose upbringing had been, so different from that of the model boy with the nurture that has been seen; and who afterwards in his journal thus wrote of those old Harrow days: "Peel, the orator and statesman that was or is or is to be, was my form-fellow, and we were both at the top of our remove. We were on good terms, but his brother"—William Yates Peel, the son who was thought to have "naturally the quicker parts of the two"—"was my intimate friend; there were always great hopes of Peel amongst us all, masters and scholars, and he has not disappointed them. As a scholar, he was greatly my superior; as a declaimer and actor, I was reckoned at least his equal; as a schoolboy, out of school I was always in scrapes, and he never; and in school he always knew his lesson, and I rarely; but when I knew it, I knew it nearly as well; and in general information, history, &c., I think I was his superior, as well as of most boys of my standing." From Harrow onwards, the paths of the two school-fellows diverged—Byron went to Cambridge, Peel to Oxford.

"Admitted as a gentleman commoner of Christ Church, the young man seemed not entirely devoted to absorbing study. . . . He was a boater and a cricketer; his dress, too, was fashionable. A reading man with boots by Hoby and a well-tied cravat! He affects the Admirable Crichton! This is a common criticism to which variety is subject. . . . There was not, however, any affectation in his case, nor is there anything in it to be wondered at. Peel had no need of cramming; he had been well fed with learning from the cradle. . . . A portion of his time sufficed amply for the studies of the place; a portion of his time might then be devoted safely to the ordinary business of the little world around him. The result proved the wisdom of his course. In a remarkably good year, in which were found the names of Gilbert, Hampden, Whately, he took a double first-class. He was the first man so distinguished. At the preceding examinations under the then new system, no one had gained the first class in mathematics."¹

¹ *Sketch*, p. 52-4.

“At twenty-one he was attentive to his dress, and dressed well and fashionably, though not to the full of the *outré* style which then prevailed. It was still the fashion to wear powder in the hair at a dinner or evening party; and this fashion, which concealed the sandy colour of his hair, and suited his complexion, became him well. With good features, a sweet smile, a well-formed head, high and ample forehead, not too grand a portico, and a countenance which, when animated, was not wanting in expression or fire, he was generally thought a very good-looking young man. . . . His appearance and manners were those of a gentleman. In any society where he was intimate he was an amusing, intelligent, and instructive companion. . . . He conversed well, and when any subject interested him, his face lighted up, and you saw by the animation of his manner and the glow of his countenance his enthusiastic admiration of genius, nobleness, or any greatness.”¹

Such was the young Robert Peel, as nature had fashioned him and education and circumstances had developed him, when, *at* 21—his wealthy father having bought for him, with the co-operation of the Treasury, the then purchasable Irish borough of Cashel—he entered the House of Commons. His university reputation had preceded him; his father was a staunch supporter of things as they were, and, after a year's silence, the young Peel was commissioned by the new Percival Ministry to second the address at the opening of the session of 1810. At his very *début* he was called on to defend the indefensible—the ill-timed and mismanaged Walcheren expedition; and he performed his task with spirit and skill. Pitt, his father's idol, had died three years before, but what small opening there might have been for a successor to Chatham's son was already filled—at least, so the world thought—by Canning; and in truth the young Peel was not, nor could all his father's care and money make him, a second Pitt. Industry he had, however, and capacity, and he became private secretary to Lord Liverpool, who was then Secre-

¹ *Sketch*, p. 60.

tary for the Colonies and for War—offices since, and very properly, dissociated. “He filled this office for a short time only, but he filled it long enough to increase the good opinion which that nobleman, who observed in him from the first a remarkable love of and aptitude for business, had formed of him. It happened that whilst he held this office a letter, written by him on some public but domestic occurrence of the time, was laid before the old King, who was interested in the subject of it. The King was pleased with and praised the letter, called it ‘a good business letter,’ and then passing on, in his quick manner, from the commendation of the son’s letter to the character of the father, he spoke warmly in praise of the latter, concluding with an emphatic declaration that he was ‘a very honest man’—the culmination of his praise. Sir Herbert Taylor, who was present on the occasion, wrote, with much good nature, an account of the matter to old Sir Robert Peel, conferring thereby all the pleasure which he expected to flow from this communication ;”¹ pleasure doubtless greater because his son was praised than because the King had spoken thus of himself, since nothing could exceed old Sir Robert’s interest in the sayings and doings of the promising youth in whom his hopes were centred. Indeed, the audience in the theatre of politics were soon made aware of the presence of an old gentleman in the boxes accompanying his son’s performances with expressions of approval, pointing the attention of friends and neighbours to their merit, and displaying visible emotion as often as the slightest applause was bestowed upon his hopeful. He made no secret of his expectation that his son was to be Prime Minister, and thus a handle was given to scoffers. “One of the clever squibs of the day was a pretended ‘last will and testament of a patriot,’ in which the qualities they were

¹ *Sketch*, p. 101.

supposed to want most was bequeathed to the principal public men of the period; the paragraph relating to Peel is not bad:—"I give and bequeath my *patience* to Mr. Robert Peel—he will want it all before he becomes Prime Minister of England; but in the event of such a contingency, my patience is to revert to the people of England, who will stand sadly in need of it."¹ The "contingency" was not regarded as very probable, even on the Ministerial side of the House. Not only was Canning preferred to Peel, but he "was deemed inferior to such young men as Lord Palmerston, Mr. Charles Grant, and Mr. Frederick Robinson," afterwards first Earl of Ripon, who rose high enough, but also sank low enough before all was done. There was nothing for it but to wait and work, and submit to be overshadowed by showier or more expert competitors. His chief, who saw his solid value, soon promoted him from private secretaryship to the Under Secretaryship of his own department, War and the Colonies; and when, after the assassination of Percival (which dashed poor Crompton's hopes of an adequate reward), Lord Liverpool himself entered on his long Premiership, he appointed the young Peel to the difficult post of Irish Secretary. In the letter to the then Viceroy announcing the appointment, the new Premier bore testimony to Peel's "particular good temper and great frankness of manners."²

It was at a critical period that Peel, *atq.* 24, found himself virtual ruler of Ireland, under a Lord-Lieutenant given over to "drunken orgies." Catholic Emancipation had been made an "open question" by Lord Liverpool; a majority of the House of Commons favoured it; and had wisdom ruled the councils of the Irish Roman

¹ Cooke Taylor, i. 47.

² Yonge's *Life, &c., of Second Earl of Liverpool* (London 1868), i. 425.

Catholics, a measure of emancipation might have been carried before the Peace. The English Catholics were for assenting to something like a Concordat in return for Emancipation, and even the Pope approved. But O'Connell, then rising into prominence, denounced the scheme of reciprocal concession, and "the slaves of Rome" who favoured it. In the House of Commons Peel had resisted unconditional, and his residence in Ireland made him the opponent of conditional emancipation. The turbulent O'Connell ridiculed him as "Orange Peel," as a "raw youth squeezed out of the workings of I know not what factory in England, who began his parliamentary career by vindicating the gratuitous destruction of our brave soldiers in the murderous expedition to Walcheren; and was sent over here before he got rid of the foppery of perfumed handkerchiefs and thin shoes." With such a reception from the representative of Irish patriotism, with a chief sunk in "drunken orgies," with the Irish hierarchy and priesthood deaf to all proposals of a compromise, Peel was thrown back, when in Ireland, upon the alliance of the friends and champions of Protestant ascendancy, and became, what he might not else have been, a decided opponent of "Catholic claims," in any form. Otherwise, as Irish Secretary, he began already to show that practical ability which through life continued to be his characteristic. He found chaos in his office, and he made it order. He reformed the system of Irish Police. He did his utmost to foster the trade and commerce of Ireland, and fondly hoped to mitigate the rancour of Catholic and Protestant by bringing the children of both religions to be taught together in the same public school. All was in vain. Agrarian outrage supervened on political and religious agitation, and had to be met. Weary at last of presiding over the seemingly hopeless anarchy into which Ireland had sunk, he resigned his office,

and betook himself for a season to the study of the currency question, and to the solution of the great problem "What is a pound?" But to return to his sire.

From the passing of the Parish Apprentices Act, in 1802, to the Peace of 1815, Sir Robert Peel figures occasionally in the pages of the predecessor of *Hansard*, the *Parliamentary History*. His speeches, brief or briefly reported, are chiefly on commercial, trade, and fiscal topics, and generally sensible and to the point. One of the earliest of them, subsequently to the passing of the Act aforesaid, was in the debate on an address to the King two days after England declared war against France once more; the peace of Amiens having proved a mere hollow truce. The retention of Malta by England had been made by Napoleon, then First Consul, one of the excuses for the measures by which he provoked the new war; and the patriotic Sir Robert, when referring to this plea, said in his good old Tory way, and with an attempt, rare in his oratory, at point:—"It did not appear to be so much the desire of the French Government to obtain the rock of Malta; the rock of the English constitution was what they really aimed at." About two years afterwards, low prices of corn having resulted from two productive harvests, the Ministers (Pitt once more at the head of affairs) brought in a bill raising from 54s. to 66s. the price at which wheat might be imported duty free. Then, as again twelve years later, Sir Robert Peel made a stand. He loved Pitt partly because Pitt, he thought, understood the value of the manufacturing industry of the country; and though it was with Pitt as Premier that this corn bill was proposed, he resisted it. "Sir Robert Peel argued that the manufacturing interest should be supported against foreign competition by supplying the necessaries of existence at a reasonable rate. A temporary depression of the farmers' profits ought not to be made the cause of a

permanent burden on the consumer." Nevertheless the bill was passed. Against measures directly affecting for the worse the interests of the cotton manufacture, whether they were to limit the number of apprentices in the print trade (as that great philanthropist Sheridan once proposed), or to fix a minimum of wages for cotton weavers by way of alleviating their distress, or to lay a tax on raw cotton (in favour of our colonies as against the United States), his voice was always raised. Once he had an opportunity of ventilating in the House of Commons his old notion that the national debt was no evil because the nation was its own creditor; and he paraded his crotchet with all the earnestness of 1780. But with the exception of his factory legislation, the most memorable episode of his later parliamentary career was his opposition to the famous corn bill of 1815, brought in when free intercourse with the Continent was being renewed, and low prices of corn were once more alarming the agricultural mind. The ministerial Sir Robert Peel threw himself heart and soul into opposition, and advocated the policy to which, after long resistance, his son was thirty or so years later to give effect. In the discussion in the House of Commons, be it noted, the younger Peel mildly and briefly supported the new corn bill, on the same ground which made Grattan support it lengthily and ardently—because imports of foreign corn might injure Ireland. Not so Peel the father.

"He said that it was an error to suppose that the interests of the landholder and of the manufacture were conflicting and incompatible. They were, in the view of enlightened policy, the same; and the success or ruin of the one was the success or ruin of the other, inasmuch as the country generally had been enriched by the sale of our manufactures, the landholders had received their share of the wealth and advantages. It had been the wise policy of former Governments to keep the price of the chief article of subsistence as low as possible; upon this principle Mr. Pitt had acted with success, but the system

was now about to be changed. It was undoubtedly true that the rent of land would be diminished by the unlimited importation of corn—a general impression then as thirty years afterwards; “but if the resolutions upon the table passed in their present shape, the manufactures of the towns would be destroyed, and the land must consequently be depreciated; corn might be grown, but paupers would be the only customers for it”—a statement which, if made from the platform thirty years later, would have produced “Tremendous cheers.” “It was, in truth, impossible to separate the two interests. The value of land, within memory, had in some places increased threefold. The owners had derived their benefit from the political state of things, and now they must suffer the depreciation produced by an alteration of that political state. With respect to our manufactures, it was allowed that during the war our triumphant situation on the sea had enabled us to force a trade without rivals; but now we were open to competition, it would be nonsense in us to throw fresh obstacles in the way of those who had so many to contend against. In his opinion, it might be fairly argued that the manufacturer had been the great benefactor of the landed interest. He did not say that his design was to serve the landowner. That had been the result of the flourishing state of our manufactures; and in the difficulties now to be encountered the landowner ought to participate. By the measures now upon the table, the wise system pursued for years was about to be subverted, and the labourers prevented from putting the real wealth of the country into that marketable shape.”

Again :—

“At a subsequent stage of the bill, he declared that a bounty on the importation of corn when the price was high would be by far a more preferable measure than the one embraced by Mr. Robinson's bill. On the presentation of a petition from Manchester, he returned to the subject, and said that the petition showed the unanimous opinion entertained of this bill in our largest manufacturing town. He begged the House also to observe that the petition was not urged by any want of attachment to the Government, for during the most pressing periods of the war the people of Manchester had abstained from all complaints, because they had hoped that the return of peace, whenever it might arrive, would cause a cessation of their burdens. He had witnessed their feelings on former occasions with great uneasiness, as they arose from a want of bread; but when they were told that it would be ungenerous to publish their complaints, they submitted to their hard condition with the most praiseworthy silence. He considered the present

bill as the most injurious and unprecedented measure which had occurred in his time, as it went to affect an immensely numerous and loyal body of people, who had supported Government by their labour and the advantages derived from its exercise. Was it then to be endured that Ministers should lend themselves to such a measure? He would tell them that they had but one interest to consult, and that was to support the labourer in manufacturing industry. Was it intended that we should for the future live only on the produce of our land? If so, what would become of the resources from our manufactures when our machinery should be lost? He was persuaded our manufacturers would not sit still and see their trade frittered away and destroyed; they would go abroad, and exert themselves where their labour would be properly appreciated and enable them to procure the necessaries of life. He, however, yet hoped that as the injurious tendency of the measure must now be evident, it would not be suffered to proceed, but that Ministers would convince the anxious multitude that they were alive to their real and vital interests. The fact was, that the more the measure became known, the more generally it was execrated and condemned. The people were not to be cajoled by such arguments as that the bill would give them cheap bread"—by "steadying the price," as had been gravely contended; "they knew better—they knew the theory was impossible—and, considering the inevitable consequences of the measure, he hoped that the House would not suffer it to proceed further."¹

This was the stand made by the old Tory and Church-and-State Peel against the corn bill of 1815. In spite, however, of his unadorned eloquence, the House did allow the bill to "proceed further," and passed it was amid angry protests throughout the country; excited multitudes raging against it at the very doors of Parliament, which had to call in the military to protect its august deliberations from violence. To the large majorities by which the measure was carried Saint William Wilberforce, sworn friend of the black, contributed a not silent vote. Until the average price of wheat rose to 8s., the ports were to be closed against foreign corn—so Parliament in its wisdom decided. As it happened, moreover, neither the hopes of those who supported the bill nor the fears of those who opposed it were

¹ Cooke Taylor, i. 21-3.

realised. The price of corn was not kept up to the wished-for standard, neither did the British manufacturer migrate with his capital and machinery to foreign lands.

When the victory of Waterloo restored peace to Europe, Sir Robert Peel was a man of sixty-five. He had ceased to live in Lancashire, Drayton being his customary country residence, but he seems to have still superintended his wide-spread concerns. At any rate, he continued to take a lively interest in the state and prospects of manufacturing industry, as has been shown by his anti-corn-law speeches; and a sudden and unexpected appeal now summoned him to renew his old legislative efforts on behalf of the children employed in it,—for the sake of humanity alone, not for his own sake or for that of his order in the least. The summons came this time primarily from Scotland, though not from a Scotchman, but from a Welshman—the Robert Owen who migrated from Lancashire to Lanarkshire, and, marrying the daughter of David Dale of Glasgow, became manager and part proprietor of the famous cotton-mills within earshot of the rushing and falling Clyde, where Richard Arkwright saw the germ of a Scottish Manchester. Though the application of steam to cotton-spinning, by substituting another motive power for that of water, falsified Arkwright's prediction, Dale's cotton-mills, which had been constructed on Arkwright's plans, and in which, indeed, Arkwright was for a short time a partner, throve in the hands of the capable and experienced Robert Owen until he became a dreamer of dreams. He made the New Lanark Mills, as has been already said, one of the "industrial showplaces of Europe."¹ The internal arrangements of these mills were the best that could be contrived. The workers were provided with good houses, and stores

¹ For a sketch of David Dale's biography, and of the early history of the New Lanark Mills, see *First Series*, pp. 449-54.

were established to supply them cheaply with the best articles of food and clothing. Schools were built for the children, who were not allowed to work until they were ten, and whose labour was strictly limited to ten hours a day. The Scotch partners, Dale's successors—hard-headed and not very soft-hearted capitalists and men of business—disapproved of Owen's ways and views, and seceded, but he managed to get at last other and more congenial in their place—philanthropic Englishmen, Quakers some of them, and, most notable of all of them, Jeremy Bentham, the sage himself. As Owen's arrangements for the health, comfort, and happiness of his workers perfected themselves, visitors from all parts of the kingdom, and even of the Continent, came to study the realised cotton-idyl of the New Lanark Mills, which, moreover, were successful financially. If Owen had but gone on as he began, who knows what good influences his model mills might not have diffused, and what beneficent effects they might not have produced on the organisation of British industry elsewhere? But soon, too soon, he was merging the practical in the speculative, running-a-muck against "Theology" among other venerable or venerated things. He printed "Essays on the Formation of Character" (to be manufactured, like cotton goods, by machinery), and the rank of some of the persons with whom these productions brought him into correspondence and connection made him restless and ambitious, not to speak of the vanity developed in him by the praises of admiring visitors. The left hand began to be too familiar with what the right hand was doing, and at last he fancied that his true mission was to regenerate the whole human race and to re-organise civilised society—on the pattern of his New Lanark Mills, but under conditions wholly different from those which made him there monarch of all he surveyed. One of the first steps taken by Owen

after the formation of his partnership (in 1814) with the English philanthropists and philosopher, was, however, both legitimate and laudable ; though ultimately, alas ! it led him, or contributed to lead him, away and astray from home and its work. Before the war with revolutionary France broke out, cotton-wool had been imported duty free, but in the course of the costly contest, pressing ever more and more on the national finances, a heavy duty came to be levied on its import. The well-meaning Owen knew that a proposal to protest against the obnoxious impost would collect an eager throng of fellow-manufacturers, mute to any appeal of mere philanthropy. If, he seems to have thought, he could bring them together on this ground, he would have a chance of persuading them to listen to his denunciations of evils—such, for instance, as the premature and protracted employment of children—which he himself had abolished in his own mills, but which remained flagrant and pernicious in those of many other employers. But let Owen tell his own story :—

“In 1814 I had formed a new partnership with men pledged to assist my views for the reformation of society in my way in practice. I therefore commenced measures accordingly. My first step was to call a meeting of the manufacturers of Scotland in 1815, to be held in the Tontine, Glasgow, to consider the necessity and policy of asking the Government, then under Lord Liverpool’s administration, to remit the heavy duty then paid on the importation of cotton, and to consider measures to improve the condition of the young children and others employed in the various textile manufactures now so rapidly extending over the kingdom. The meeting was presided over by the Lord Provost of Glasgow, and was very numerously attended by the leading manufacturers of that town. I stated to the meeting my object in calling it, and first proposed that an application should be made to Government to remit the tax upon the raw material of the cotton manufacture. This was carried unanimously by acclamation,”—for it came home to the pockets of the men of Glasgow. Very different was the reception given to Owen’s next and philanthropic overture. “I then proposed a string of resolutions to give relief to the children and

others employed in cotton, wool, flax, and silk mills. They contained the same conditions which I afterwards embodied in a bill which I induced the first Sir Robert Peel to propose for *me* to the House of Commons." Owen's egotism, when he wrote this, was fully developed.

"The propositions were read by me to the meeting; but although all were enthusiastically in favour of asking for the remission of the tax, not one,"—not even one among so many!—"would second my motion for the relief of those whom they employed. I then declined to proceed with them in the business of the meeting"—if they would not swallow the black draught, they should not have the barley-sugar,—“and it therefore came to nothing. But I told them I should take my own course in both measures, independently of them.”

"New Lanark was now becoming the most celebrated establishment of the kind at home or abroad, and was visited by strangers from all parts of the world, averaging yearly, from that period until I left it to go to the United States,"—on a bootless errand,—“ten years later, not less than two thousand.” The inference is that the manager of an establishment so well known and so visited could do something in the world without the aid of the men of Glasgow.

"On returning from the Glasgow meeting to this establishment, I immediately sent to the Lord Provost of Glasgow, as chairman of the meeting, a copy of the address which I had read, and sent copies of it also to the Government, and to every member of both Houses of Parliament. I also had it published in the London and provincial press.

"This address made me yet better known to the Government, and was afterwards a passport for me to all" (?) "the members of both Houses of Parliament, and it created a considerable sensation among the upper classes and the manufacturing interest over the kingdom.

"As soon as I had made this address thus public, I proceeded to London to communicate with the Government, and to learn what it would do on both subjects. I was referred to Mr. Nicholas Vansittart, afterwards Lord Bexley,"—then Chancellor of the Exchequer,—“respecting the remission of the tax. I was well received by him, and in our conversation he asked me some questions, which I cannot now remember; but my prompt, decided reply made him blush like a sensitive maiden on account of his previous want of knowledge on the subject,”—for Vansittart was not “a second Pitt.” “The tax was fourpence per pound, and he said he would remit the whole, except to the amount of a small portion of a penny, which he said would be retained for some Government object or arrangement.” The tax, according to Baines, was more like 2d. per pound—10s. 11d. per 100 lbs.—which,

according to the same authority, was reduced in the year of Owen's visit to Vansittart to about 1d. per pound—8s. 7d. per 100 lbs.

“The Government was also favourable to my views for the relief of the children and others employed in the growing manufactures of the kingdom, if I could induce the members of both Houses to pass a bill for the purpose. This was a formidable task to attempt to effect, for by this time the manufacturing interest had become strong in the House of Commons, and yet stronger in its out-of-door influence with the members, whose election was much under its control. But I made up my mind to try what truth and perseverance could effect.

“I waited personally on the leading members of both Houses, and explained to them my object, which was to give some relief to a most deserving, yet much oppressed part of our population. I was in general well received, and had much promise of support, especially from the leaders of the various sections into which parties were then divided. Lord Lascelles, member for Yorkshire, afterwards Earl of Harewood, and at that period the most influential” (?) “member of the House of Commons, offered me his full assistance, and requested me to use his name with mine in calling meetings of the members of both Houses to promote my proposed bill when introduced into Parliament. When by these means the leading members of both Houses had become interested, and were desirous the bill which I had prepared should be introduced, a final meeting was conjointly called by Lord Lascelles and myself of the members of both Houses who had taken with us the greatest interest at former meetings to forward the measure, now to consider, as I was not a member, who should be requested to take charge of the bill, and to introduce it into the House of Commons. The first Sir Robert Peel was now a member of the House of Commons, was an extensive manufacturer, and stood well with the Government and the House generally. But I had never applied to him or to any other manufacturer in the House, and it was not known to the meeting how he might view my proposals. The members present at the meeting (which with the previous one was held in the King's Arms Hotel, New Palace Yard, Westminster, and was numerously attended) suggested that if Sir Robert Peel would introduce the bill, he would be a very fit person to carry it through the House of Commons. The meeting wished to know whether I had any objections to Sir Robert Peel's taking charge of the bill, if he would undertake it. He had never been present at any of our meetings, and I did not know how as a manufacturer he was inclined to act, and I believed that so far he was altogether unacquainted with our proceedings. But I could have no objection to him if he was willing to accept the charge. The

meeting asked me if I would endeavour to ascertain his views upon the subject, and I consented to do so. My calling upon him for this purpose was the first intimation that Sir Robert Peel had of these proceedings.

“When I informed him of the support which I was offered from the leading members in both Houses, he very willingly accepted the offer, and agreed to attend the next meeting of the favouring members, that he might learn their wishes as to the best mode of proceeding. He did so; and at that meeting all the arrangements were concluded for introducing the bill into the House of Commons with all the clauses as I had prepared them.”¹

Thus, according to Owen’s account, it was he, the philanthropist-manufacturer of the New Lanark Mills, who originated the second distinctly recorded attempt at factory legislation, and the bill introduced by Sir Robert Peel into the House of Commons in 1815 was framed by him and by no one else. Owen’s account is corroborated, though with some little modification, by Sir Robert Peel’s statement to the House of Commons’ committee of 1816. He then sketched thus the history of the bill which he had introduced the year before. “A worthy man,” he said, “produced a plan to me, which I am not ashamed to own, and I conceived that the intention of that gentleman was so good, and his wishes so earnest, that I did not lend an unwilling ear to him.” But though “far from adopting his plan of improvement to the extent he went, I still deemed an alteration necessary,” in the present arrangements of the cotton manufacture, “and that gave birth to the bill of last year, which bill, in its progress, was attended by many honourable members of this House, and met with great approbation.” Robert Owen, there cannot be the slightest doubt, was the “worthy man” here referred to by Sir Robert, who, at the same time, hints that the ardent Welshman went too far for him. To conciliate his fellow manufacturers, Peel lessened the stringency of the bill as

¹ Robert Owen, *Life by Himself*, i. 113-16.

framed by Owen ; and before all was done, it underwent, for the same reason, further and further modifications, until its first parent could scarcely recognise, and was almost disposed to disown, his offspring.

“Had Sir Robert Peel,” Owen grumbled some forty years afterwards, “been so inclined, he might have speedily carried this bill as it was through the House of Commons during the first session, in time for it to have passed triumphantly through the Lords. But it appeared afterwards that he was too much under the influence of his brother manufacturers ; and he allowed this bill, of so much importance to the country, the master manufacturers, and the working classes, to be dragged through the House of Commons for four sessions before it was passed, and when passed, it had been so mutilated in all its valuable clauses that it became valueless for the objects I had intended.

“At the commencement of these proceedings I was an utter novice in the manner of conducting the business of the country in Parliament. But my intimate acquaintance with the proceedings for the four years during which this bill was under the consideration of both Houses, opened my eyes to the conduct of public men, and to the ignorant, vulgar self-interest, regardless of means to accomplish their object, of trading and mercantile men even of high standing in the commercial world. No means were left unturned by these men to defeat the object of the bill in the first session of its introduction, and through four years in which, under one futile pretence and another, it was kept in the House of Commons.”¹

Even so ; but Sir Robert Peel, who had been in the House of Commons for a quarter of a century, knew from the first the potency of the opposition, which forty years afterwards Owen fancied, or fancied that he fancied, might have been averted by an attempt to hurry the bill through Parliament in a single session. When, in 1802, thirteen years before, Peel proposed the Factory Apprentices Bill, what would otherwise have been the opposition of the manufacturers was silent and inert because the measure was introduced by him. But now he found arrayed against him the whole, or almost the whole, strength of the interest, the

¹ Robert Owen, *Life by Himself*, i. 116.

clamour of which, in its comparative infancy thirty years before, had daunted Pitt, and been eagerly taken, for party purposes, into alliance by Fox. The manufacturers of cotton alone were now a most powerful body, out of the House even more than in it; and in opposition to further, or to stringent, factory legislation, were doubtless ranged all the other manufacturers of woollen, of flax, of silk, who, by adapting to their operations the machinery of the great inventors of the cotton industry, found their interests so far the same as those of the cotton manufacturers, and themselves threatened with the same restrictions. "Children at this time," says Owen with natural indignation, "were admitted into the cotton, wool, flax, and silk mills at six, and sometimes even at five years of age. The time of working, winter and summer, was unlimited by law, but usually it was fourteen hours per day, in some fifteen, and even, by the most inhuman and avaricious, sixteen hours; and in many cases the mills were artificially heated to a high state most unfavourable to health."¹ Too true! The Apprentices Act of 1802, which sought to abolish these evils, had become either obsolete or ineffective. When the workhouses first emptied their little inmates on the cotton districts, and parish apprentices were eagerly sought for by employers, many if not most of the mills lay away from towns, on the banks of streams available for water-power. But with the application of the steam-engine as a motor of machinery, water-power dwindled in value. Mills were built in towns, and population adjusting itself to the demand for juvenile labour, the employer was no longer left dependent on the workhouse, and gave up the apprenticeship system altogether. The mass of the children now employed, not being apprentices, were not subject to the provisions of Sir Robert Peel's Act of 1802, which had

¹ Robert Owen, *Life by Himself*, i. 116.

thus in most places become a dead letter. Even in districts where the apprenticeship system lingered, employers could carry out its provisions or not pretty much as they chose. There existed no officers or salaried inspectors whose business it was to watch for and to punish infractions of the law. Arkwright's son, Richard the second, was questioned on this point during his examination before the House of Commons' committee of 1816. "That Act," he said, speaking of Sir Robert Peel's measure of 1802, "has not been followed up with respect to the visiting of magistrates these thirteen years"—that is, in fact, almost ever since it was passed. "I think," he added, "they visited my mills at Cromford twice." But even had inspection been effective, the Act was evaded by the employment of children who were not apprentices, and who were supplied in tolerably ample numbers by the growth of population in towns, stimulated as it was by the vast expansion of the cotton trade. Their labour was cheap, but the machinery of the cotton-mill became ever more and more costly and complicated with the progress of the manufacture; and when Peel brought in his second bill, the employers fancied that they would be losers if the Legislature diminished the time during which the cheap labour of the children brought them a profit by its application to the expensive machinery of the mills. Not only so; the general use of the steam-engine in cotton-mills, the enlargement and elaboration of their machinery, the growth of fine spinning through the invention and development of Crompton's mule, brought adult labour more and more into play. The children who had once performed the principal part in the cotton manufacture became in many operations the mere though indispensable adjuncts and assistants of the adult, who often directly employed his juvenile subordinate. Any measure, therefore, that restricted the hours of the labour

of the children, inevitably though indirectly shortened those of the adult operative, to whom this human machinery was as necessary as the wood and iron of his mules, his spindles, and his carding-machines. "You are now," the manufacturers of 1815 said to Sir Robert Peel, "no longer, as in 1802, interfering merely with the labour of children—and it was an interference which we could avoid and evade—but you are virtually dictating to adults the hours during which they shall work, and are laying the axe at the root of our whole system of manufactures."

What, actual and potential, was the strength of the Parliamentary opposition to new factory legislation for the protection of children under these new circumstances, Sir Robert Peel knew better than Owen could know or than we can know. He received encouragement, no doubt, from philanthropic members on both sides of the House, and from individual members of the Administration, but the Government did not, as a Government, support him, and he found in 1815 a state of feeling, in Parliament and out of it, very different from that of 1802. He was growing old too, and was himself a manufacturer, belonging to a class, the interests of which had just then been unfairly dealt with, he thought, by the passing of the Corn Bill ; and which, after this punishment for their sacrifices during the war, complained that now when peace had come, their industry was threatened with destructive or damaging legislation. Little wonder if the practical man, thus situated, did not share Owen's hope of getting the bill through Parliament in a single session, and if he endeavoured to disarm opposition by avoiding anything like precipitancy. It was on the 6th of June, 1815 (twelve days before the Battle of Waterloo), that Peel introduced his second Factory Bill. Instead of attempting to hurry it through Parliament, as Owen urged, he proposed that it should be read a first time and then

printed, to be circulated during the recess through the country, "and receive the proper amendments." In his apparently brief speech when introducing the measure he did little more than explain its chief provisions, which were "that no children should be employed under the age of ten years, either as apprentices or otherwise, and the duration of their labour should be limited to twelve hours and a half *per diem*, including the time for education and meals, which would leave ten hours for laborious employment." In the bill printed "as amended" a week afterwards, the ten hours' limit, always contended for by Owen, was modified in some cases. No one under eighteen was to be employed more than ten and a half hours for any day, but it was only for those children receiving instruction that ten hours was to be the limit. During the first four years after admission to the mill, the child was to be instructed one half-hour every working-day in reading, writing, and arithmetic, either by "some discreet and proper person" to be provided by the mill-owner, or in some public school near at hand. The half-hour so spent was added to the meal time, and the child or young person receiving such instruction could be worked only ten hours a day, but in other cases work for ten and a half hours was permissible. No child was to be employed under ten years of age. The inspection of mills was entrusted to the Clerk of the Peace or to a visitor or visitors appointed by the Justices, who might remunerate them, and a report was to be made once a year. The penalty for the infraction of these regulations was to be not more than £10 or less than £5, one-half to be paid to the informer.

Such were the main provisions of the bill of 1815, and during the recess it was no doubt very extensively circulated among all whom it concerned. Great appears to have been the opposition to it from manufacturers, English and Scotch, who had known nothing of legislative

restrictions since the Act of 1802, and its restrictions had long ceased to be effective. When Parliament again met, Sir Robert, it would seem, found the advice of friends and the clamour of foes urging him in one and the same direction—to ask for a Parliamentary enquiry before proceeding further with the bill. Here is all that is reported of his speech on the occasion (April 3, 1816)—perhaps it was all that he said:—

“ Sir Robert Peel rose, in pursuance of a previous notice, to submit a motion to the House respecting the state of children employed in cotton manufactories. The object of his motion was altogether national, as it affected the health and morals of the rising generation, and went to determine whether the introduction of machinery into our manufactories was really a benefit. The principal business in our cotton manufactories was now performed by machinery, and of course interrupted the division of work suitable to the respective ages, which formerly was practised in private houses. The consequence was that little children, of very tender age, were employed with grown persons at the machinery; and those poor little creatures, torn from their beds, were compelled to work, even at the age of six years, from early morn to late at night, a period of perhaps fifteen or sixteen hours! He allowed that many masters had humanely turned their attention to the regulation of this practice; but too frequently the love of gain predominated, inducing them to employ all their hands to the greatest possible advantage. Some time ago he had introduced a bill into the House for regulating the work of apprentices, which was attended with the happiest results, and their time was limited; but children were still subjected to all the hardships to which carelessness or cupidity might expose them. The House was well aware of the many evils that resulted from the want of education in the lower classes. One object of the present bill was to enable manufacturing children to devote some of their time to the acquirement of a little useful simple knowledge, such as plain reading and writing. He hoped those children would experience the protection of the House, for if it were not extended to them, all our excellent machinery would be productive of injury. It might, perhaps, be said that free labour should not be subjected to any control; but surely it could not be inconsistent with our constitution to protect the interests of those helpless children. The honourable Baronet concluded with moving that a committee be appointed to take into consideration the state of the children employed

in the different manufactories of the United Kingdom, and to report the same, together with their observations thereupon, to the House."

There followed other speeches, from members manufacturing and non-manufacturing, speeches which showed what a storm of opposition would have been raised had Sir Robert proposed to legislate without preliminary enquiry. For instance, a Mr. Curwen looked upon the bill "as an insult to parents." "Parents," said this honourable gentleman, "must be best aware of the quantity of work their children were able to bear, and must undoubtedly feel most for their distress. Such a proceeding," as this proposal of legislative interference, "was a libel on the humanity of parents." However, even he "had no objection to a committee," which was appointed and sat, taking evidence from the 25th of April to the 28th of June, 1816.

All sorts and conditions of men, from the second Richard Arkwright, then on his way to become the wealthiest Commoner in England, and from "Astley Cooper, Esq.," the great surgeon that was, and Sir Astley Cooper that was to be, down to humble operatives, were examined on the theory and practice of child labour in factories. The evidence, as usual in these cases, was emphatic on both sides, and as conflicting as it was emphatic. Manufacturers testified that their mills were salubrious, that the children in them were not over-worked, and that the juvenile mortality was slight. Medical men, practising in the manufacturing districts, had, on the other hand, from their own personal experience, come to exactly the opposite conclusion. It was proved that in some cases children of five were employed in mills, and that sometimes children of other ages were worked fifteen hours a day. These, no doubt, were exceptional cases, but there was nothing in the law to prevent the exception from becoming the rule, since it was admitted

on all hands that the Parish Apprentices Act of 1802 had become a dead letter, and no appointment of visitors by the magistrates, which the Act enjoined, had been made anywhere in the Hundred of Salford. The second Richard Arkwright deposed that no children were admitted into the Cromford Mills under the age of ten, or until they had learned to read. The hours of attendance were thirteen, from which was to be deducted one hour for dinner, and from fifteen to twenty-eight minutes for breakfast; so that, in those earliest of cotton-mills, children of ten must have worked eleven and a half hours out of the twenty-four. It was this son, heir and successor of the founder of the factory system, one learns with pleasure from his own evidence, who invented the fan in the scutching-room, a simple and effective contrivance for ventilating it. But if the children in the mills of the second Richard Arkwright, who seems to have been a humane and careful employer, were worked eleven and a half hours at the lowest, how many more may not have been the number of hours during which they were worked here and there by greedy and callous employers, restrained by no law; to say nothing of what could be done, as Sir Robert Peel had discovered in his own mills, by unscrupulous overseers acting in flat transgression of the orders of humane employers? Owen and Peel were both of them examined, and Owen testified to the good effects produced in his own mills through the limitation, voluntarily imposed by himself, of children's labour to ten hours a day. Peel's evidence, and the long, the creditably-emphatic written statement which he handed in to the committee, have been already quoted from. Apart, it may be added, from evidence as to matters of fact, some of the manufacturers opposed to legislation laid great stress on fears often expressed since, and generally found chimerical; but which may have made a greater than their due impres-

sion then, when a long war was being followed by peace, and the competition of Continental manufacturers with those of England was beginning or reviving. Foreign countries, where no such restrictions existed, would, the committee were told, gain an advantage over us, and English capital and workmen, already overweighted by taxation, would seek refuge in those happy lands where the law did not prevent a child of five from doing what he liked with its own labour. Such vehement assertions have all sunk into silence now, but they may have seemed potent then, not only to manufacturers, but to the legislative country gentlemen, who in their fear of foreign competition, had enacted a Corn Law the year before. All this and a great deal more evidence was presented to the House in a Blue Book, but without any report or recommendations from the committee itself, perhaps because its members could come to no agreement on the points in dispute.

During the following year, 1817, nothing parliamentary appears to have been said or done in the matter of new factory legislation. Sir Robert Peel seems to have been absent from the House of Commons, in all likelihood through illness or from ill health. A new campaign was opened, however, in the February of 1818, when Sir Robert introduced another Factory Regulation Bill, the provisions of which showed that he and the friends of the cause thought it advisable to make considerable concessions to the enemy. The former bill embraced all factories, woollen, silk, or flax, as well as cotton; the new bill lessened the area of opposition by restricting its scope, not merely to cotton factories, but to cotton-spinning mills alone. It was to be operative only in "cotton mills, manufactories, or buildings in which cotton-yarn is made." The age at which children might begin to work was lowered from ten to nine. The hours during which they might work were extended to eleven,—

twelve and a half hours of attendance at the mill, with half an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner. The provision of the old bill prescribing instruction was dropped in the new one. That respecting the Justices and the appointment of Inspectors was retained, and the penalties for infraction were to be from £10 to £20. After the usual fight, in which the old Sir Robert had this time the assistance of his son—who did not, however, in later years, remain very faithful to the cause thus espoused in his youth,—the bill was carried through the Commons on the 27th of April 1818, by a majority of 65, in a small house of 117 members. But the battle was not yet over. On the arrival of the bill in the Peers, where it was taken in hand by Lord Kenyon, it had to run the gauntlet of considerable opposition, at the head of which was a Scotch peer, the Earl of Lauderdale—Byron's "Lauderdale, shrill, Scotch, and acute." The Prime Minister, Lord Liverpool, spoke strongly in its behalf, declaring that "if all the medical staff of Manchester were brought to the bar of the House to prove that children worked more than fifteen hours a day without being thereby injured, he would not believe them." But the manufacturers had asked to be heard by counsel against the bill, and after this hearing, Lord Kenyon withdrew it until the ensuing session. In the February of 1819, the subject was brought again before the House of Peers, and on the motion of Lord Kenyon, a select committee was appointed to inquire into the question of the labour of children in factories. The evidence given in favour of restriction was even stronger than that received by the House of Commons' Committee of 1816. A bill being now passed in the Peers, it was accepted by the Commons, and became during the same session the law of the land. This is the Act 59 George III., cap. 66; a brief enactment, and not containing those provisions of the former

bills, which alone could have made it effective. Its scope was restricted to factories where cotton and cotton only was spun. No child younger than nine was to be employed, and no person under sixteen was to be actually worked in them more than ten and a half hours on any one day, the whole permitted number of hours of attendance being twelve, with an hour and a half for meals. Nothing was said concerning the instruction of the children; and, above all, nothing of the appointment of visitors or inspectors. But penalties of from £10 to £20 for infraction were retained, and a sanitary provision was added; ordinary "ceilings and interior walls to be washed with quicklime and water twice a year."

This was not much to have gained, after so many sessions of parliamentary campaigning and battling. The first Sir Robert Peel's Apprentices Bill of 1802, passed seventeen years before, regulated woollen and other as well as cotton-mills, but here it was only cotton-spinning mills that were brought, or retained, within the purview of the State's parental authority and supervision. The Act of 1802 directed that both secular and religious instruction should be furnished to the young people for whom it legislated. Here any and every provision of the kind was omitted. The Act of 1802, moreover, enjoined the appointment of inspectors or visitors, who were to report on the execution of its directions, and though this injunction proved to be inoperative, it signified at least a desire on the part of the Legislature to enforce the fulfilment of its enactments. There was no provision of the kind in the Act of 1819, and everything was left to "the informer," not a person likely to abound in the manufacturing districts of that, or of any time. The Act of 1819 turned out, moreover, to have been so negligently drawn that its operation was grievously obstructed by a difficulty in the summoning and examination of witnesses,

even when the "informer," professional or philanthropic, did choose to exert himself. Hence the law was constantly evaded, and its execution had broken down, when Byron's friend, the then advanced Liberal member for Westminster, Sir John Cam Hobhouse, took up the grievance in the House of Commons. He was the author, six years afterwards, of the Act (6 George IV., cap. 23) amending that of 1819, and which for young persons under sixteen, made ten and a half hours the maximum period of daily labour permissible. This new Act contained satisfactory provisions for summoning witnesses, and for compelling them when summoned to give evidence; provisions, the absence of which, had rendered ineffective Sir Robert Peel's measure of 1819. But the Act of 1825, too, was made of no avail by the ingenuity of the lawyers; and in 1829, Sir John Cam Hobhouse, still taking the lead, procured the passing of another, the 10 George IV., cap. 31, which deprived of validity technical objections, previously and successfully taken when the name and designation of every partner in the firm prosecuted had not been stated in the summons. The last of Sir John Cam Hobhouse's well-meant legislative efforts of this kind, issued in the 1 & 2 William IV., cap. 39, another ten and a half hours' bill, and including, unlike most of its predecessors, weaving as well as spinning-mills. Yet whether they were weaving or spinning-mills, it was those of the cotton manufacture alone that were legislated for by any of these enactments, with the exception of Sir Robert Peel's Apprentices Bill of 1802, which did include woollen-mills, but that measure had long, as has been seen, become obsolete through the abandonment of the apprenticeship system and from other causes. With 1831, and the last of Sir John Cam Hobhouse's Bills, regulating juvenile employment in the cotton manufacture alone, the Reform Bill was approaching, and there had already come an awakening of public feeling in Yorkshire, a county

the seat of an extensive woollen manufacture, all the conditions and operations of which remained untouched, and unregulated by any law. Fiery Oastlers and vehement Sadlers were beginning to incite the men of Yorkshire, in the great centres of the woollen manufacture, to demand a ten hours' bill. Yorkshire, which had been left out of the scope and operation of all these recent short-time enactments, passed for the cotton trade alone, responded to the call, and the Lancashire operatives found themselves enlisting under the banner of a Ten Hours' Bill, unfurled by the leaders of the woollen operatives of Yorkshire. Noblemen and gentlemen, and influential sections of political parties, engaged actively in the new movement. With varying fortunes, under successive leaders, the agitation proceeded, until at last the victory was won; and since then the manufacturers themselves have learned to be grateful for the Factory Acts, which, if stringent in their provisions and operations, at least impose the same equal restrictions upon all, and no longer allow the greedy and unscrupulous a commercial advantage over their more humane or less grasping competitors. Effective factory legislation dates from 1833, and the 3 & 4 William IV., cap. 103, which flowed from a Royal Commission of Inquiry, appointed as a result of the agitation in and out of parliament, begun by such men as the fiery Oastler and the vehement Sadler. That Act appointed paid inspectors, the one thing most needed, and from then till now, the principles embodied in Sir Robert Peel's first measure of 1802 have gone on slowly but steadily triumphing, until at the time of this present writing¹ we seem to be on the verge of legislation which will prohibit the employment of any child of tender years in any kind of hard labour, and make the reception of some modicum of instruction a condition precedent to,

¹ A.D. 1875.

and an accompaniment of, the remunerative employment of any British child in town or country, in field and factory, in mine and workshop. An effective check will everywhere be placed on the negligence of employers, and on the carelessness or greed of parents, and all this beneficent legislation traces its origin to the first Sir Robert Peel's modest measure of 1802.

The year 1819, which witnessed the aid given by the young Peel, then out of office and biding his time, to his old father in the discussion on the Factory Bill, was also that of their disagreement on the currency question. It was the first of the younger Peel's changes of opinion, the prelude, though a distant one, to others of more importance. Old Sir Robert loved inconvertible paper-money, not wisely but too well, and when just entering on official life, in wartime, moreover, the docile young Robert, as well as his obstinate old father, had opposed the resumption of cash-payments proposed by the Whig, Francis Horner. But with the peace, with a temporary release from official trammels, and with the leisurely study of a question, the settlement of which one way or another did not affect "the Constitution," the younger Peel came round to Horner's view, which has since become that of almost all the world. He was made (for the Government kept its eye on him) Chairman of the Select Committee appointed in the February of 1819 to inquire into the resumption of cash-payments, and on the 24th of May he was to propose a measure enjoining that resumption. Before his son began his statement, old Sir Robert rose to present a petition in favour of the existing system, and in the course of a speech supporting its prayer, he warned the House against the resolutions which the son was about to propose. "He really thought the resolutions were of a very extraordinary character. It was true that he should have to oppose a very near and dear

relation ; but while it was his own sentiment that he had a duty to perform, he respected those who did theirs, and who considered them to be paramount." Then followed the touching passage, already quoted,¹ recording his early wish, when that near and dear relative was young, one day to present the child to his country, to follow in the path of "Mr. Pitt." "It was very natural," he added, "that such should be his wishes, although those who did their duty might be at once contented with their conduct. He was well satisfied that the head and heart of that relation were in the right place, and that though he had deviated a little from the path of propriety in this instance, he would soon be restored to it." The younger Peel, in his elaborate statement, thus referred to the mild paternal protest :— "Many other difficulties," he said, "presented themselves to him in discussing this question ; among them was one which it pained him to observe, and that was the necessity he felt of opposing himself to an authority to which he had always bowed, and, he hoped, should always bow with deference. But here he had a great public duty imposed on him, and from that duty he would not shrink, whatever might be his private feelings." Whereupon the old gentleman resigned himself to his fate, and cash-payments were resumed at the instance of his erring but still dearly-beloved son.

The speech on the resumption of cash-payments seems to have been old Sir Robert's last in the House of Commons. He was verging on the seventies, and the little disagreement with his son perhaps contributed, as well as advancing years, to his withdrawal from the House of Commons. Long before he had relinquished to sons the management of the business, and at the general election in 1820 he retired from parliamentary into private life—one of his sons succeeding him as Member for Tamworth, which

¹ *Ante*, p. 132.

he had represented for thirty years. He spent the remaining decade of his life in opulent privacy at Drayton Manor; and if there be truth in the description given of his tastes and intellectual habits by his contemporary biographer of 1803-4, his enjoyment of "retired leisure" was not marred by *ennui*. "After describing him as in person tall, manly, and well-proportioned,"—"his eye," it is added, "when he speaks, lights up his countenance with peculiar animation;" "his address is affable, unembarrassed, and very engaging,"—this grandiose biographer proceeds thus:—

"In conversation he is very attentive and communicative, relishing extremely sallies of wit in others, and is not unfrequently very happy himself in repartee. Although he has greatly improved his intellectual faculties by an extensive acquaintance with books, particularly on the subject of the history, commerce, and constitution of his native country, yet it is evident that his mind has derived its chief advantages from an attentive observation of men and manners, which probably has not a little contributed to give novelty and originality to his ideas. Being much conversant with the world, and having had transactions with every class of society, he has acquired a very quick perception of human character, without imbibing the narrow prejudices and suspicious circumspection usually attendant on such various intercourse. Colloquial discussions"—these are certainly most unexpected traits—"on the phenomena of nature constitute his chief delight; and to an early habit of abstracting and generalising his ideas, he unites the curiosity of a naturalist and the eye of an acute observer."¹

It may be as well to add from the same sketch, published when he was a man of fifty-three or so, some more traits and anecdotes; perhaps, as formerly hinted, communicated by friends, and, whatever their origin, made the most of by the high-flown biographer, whose record requires to be considerably condensed:—

"As the merit by which he acquired made him worthy of his fortune, so the use which he makes of it in communicating the means

¹ *Public Characters of 1803-4*, p. 35.

of comfort to all around him endears him to a very extensive circle, &c. Although he has long ceased to regard the accumulation of wealth as productive of happiness, &c., &c., yet he has not lost the habit of minute attention to his finances. His mansion is the residence of hospitality, but unencumbered with any ostentatious display of retinue. He never retires into the impenetrable recesses of his house, inaccessible to the modest petitioner, &c., but his ear is at all times open to the suit of the meanest, &c., &c., &c."

And now to go into detail:—

"All public institutions of extensive utility find in Sir Robert Peel an active and powerful patron. Among others we distinguish the following:—Christ's Hospital, of which he is a governor; the Literary Fund, of which he is Vice-President; and the Society for bettering the Condition of the Poor, the fund of which he augmented in the year 1801 by a donation of a *thousand pounds*. He has been lately chosen, in the most flattering manner, President of the House of Recovery in Manchester"—presumably what would now be called a "Convalescent Hospital"—"and he makes annual donations of large sums to the poor of Tamworth in Staffordshire, as well as to those of Bury in Lancashire"—the claims of the old home not being forgotten, though the new was a grander one.

"Among innumerable acts of benevolence," &c., &c., here are a few:—"A rectory in his estate having become vacant, he solicited the Chancellor, with every prospect of success, to bestow it on the Rev. James Hargreaves, M.A., a gentleman every way worthy, &c., &c. The seals, however, having been suddenly entrusted into the hands of commissioners, the desired appointment did not take place; but to alleviate the mortification of disappointment, Sir Robert Peel purchased for, and presented to, his friend a living of equal value."

More striking is what follows:—

"Three years have not elapsed since a house of the first consequence in the cotton trade, by imprudently extending its speculations beyond its capital, was, from some unforeseen circumstances, on the eve of bankruptcy. Informed of their pressing exigency, and convinced of the honour and integrity of the parties, Sir Robert Peel rescued them from their impending calamity by an immediate loan of £14,000. Reluctant favours are ungracious, &c., &c. This house had been long an obstinate rival to his own, and an opportunity now offered of witnessing its fall and of rising in its ruins. But Sir Robert Peel,

rather than elevate himself by the misfortunes of others, generously extended the hand of friendship, and nobly supported his competitor."

In conclusion :—

"Very few (not four) years since, a family, consisting of two sons and three daughters, all whose property, which was very considerable, had been embarked in trade, was reduced, by adverse and unforeseen circumstances, to a complete wreck; the daughters having entrusted their property, which was not less than £5000 each, to their brothers, participated in their misfortunes. Sir Robert Peel, with his characteristic liberality, respecting 'the Corinthian pillar of polished society even in the dust,' obtained an honourable and lucrative appointment for each of the sons, and presented £1000 to each of the daughters! These are plain unvarnished facts, which panegyric cannot embellish, nor malice attribute to unworthy motives."¹

True, but none the less is it a relief to turn from this to a portraiture by a very different biographical artist, although, unfortunately, he does not, like the other, go into detail. Says Sir Lawrence Peel of his father's brother :—

"He was an ambitious man. He loved money, but he loved it principally as an instrument of power. He was the very reverse of a selfish man. He possessed a genial, generous nature; he loved young people, and loved to see all about him happy. He was eager to diffuse happiness. He was at all times bountiful, and often munificent in his gifts. As his possessions were great, it was his duty to give largely; but still, even so viewed, his was a bountiful hand. He dealt with money as one who, if he knew its value, with how much toil and anxiety it had been won by him, felt also that God has impressed wealth with a trust, and that the trustee must pass his accounts. He gave much, and by preference he gave in secret. He gave also with delicacy of manner, and the nice feelings of a gentleman. His was no narrow nor one-sided beneficence. He knew no distinction of politics or creed where a man needed help. He was grave in exterior, yet a humorous man, with a quiet relish of fun. He had small respect for a man of idle life, for any one in short who was not useful, and neither fashion nor rank, without good service of some sort, won any allegiance from him. He was a moral and religious

¹ *Public Characters of 1803-4*, p. 39-42.

man. I am aware that some who attach a literal meaning to figurative expressions will doubt the religious mind of a millionaire. But when will men of religious earnestness learn the truth, that true religion has many sides and many coverings? The temptations of riches are so truly and constantly insisted upon in Holy Writ, that we are apt to forget the scriptural instances of men rewarded with riches for their trust in God, &c., &c.”¹

Soon after receiving his baronetcy, Sir Robert had lost his wife, the first love of his youth—the faithful partner of his maturer years. Chronicling her marriage some twenty years before, his biographer of 1803-4 discourses in this wise:—“Although his table has been already surrounded with olive-branches nearly as numerous as years have since elapsed, so profuse has nature been of her endowments, that, notwithstanding the amiable female has been the mother as well as the nurse of eleven very fine children, she yet appears but the eldest sister of the family.” Alas! a year or so after this was written came the death of the graceful and beautiful lady, who when a child had sat upon the knee of her father’s lodger, little anticipating the destiny in store for them. “It is said that London fashionable life—so unlike what she had been accustomed to at home—proved injurious to her health; and old Mr. Yates used to say, ‘If Robert hadn’t made our Nelly a Lady, she might have been living yet’”²—though, as the reader has seen, the biographer of 1803-4 found nothing amiss, but the contrary, with the looks of the baronet’s wife. Not long after her death, Sir Robert Peel married again (October 18, 1805), choosing in his old Bury circle a second wife, of whom little more is recorded than that she was “Miss Susanna Clarke, a sister of the rector of his parish at Bury, the late Rev. Sir William Henry Clarke, Bart. This lady died September 19, 1824, in her seventy-second year, leaving no issue.” The year before Sir Robert retired into private life, his second son,

¹ *Sketch*, p. 36.

² *Self-Il-lu-str.*, p. 71.

William Yates Peel, Byron's Harrow friend, had become the husband of an earl's (the Earl of Mountcashell's) sister. The year afterwards, 1820, Robert, the nascent statesman, wedded the daughter of a general, and so the Bury calico-printer's children went on marrying into the aristocracy—one of them, Laurence, in 1822, even winning the hand of a sister of the Duke of Richmond of the day.

"He," the first Sir Robert, "did not live to see his son Prime Minister, but he lived long enough for the gratification of a not immoderate ambition. His son had gradually risen, had done his work well, and had advanced in the world's esteem, performing as the chief minister of the Crown in the House of Commons, in a time of unexampled bitterness, a painful task, with full command over himself, and with great ability. He had risen, but not yet had he risen to the height of his full stature—the greatest was yet behind. If he could have looked into the womb of time, the old man would have seen amongst his descendants new honours crowning that descent. I cannot call to mind any instance in any one prosperous family of an industrious career longer pursued. Three of his sons rose to be privy counsellors, of whom one was Prime Minister and declined a peerage, another was a Cabinet Minister, and a third Under-Secretary of State. In the next generation one grandson has been Under-Secretary of State, and another earned honour, rank, and an undying fame in the naval service of his country; so that, counting from Sir William Peel to his great-grandfather," our Founder of the Peel Family, "there have been in this family four generations of hard-working men, each of whom had his appointed aim, worked hard to reach, and reached it."¹

Yes, returning to office as Home Secretary in 1822, under his old patron, the Earl of Liverpool, and after the death of Canning, so prominent that the Government, formed and headed by *the* Duke in 1828, was called the Wellington-Peel Ministry, old Sir Robert's son and heir became in his father's lifetime, "Chief Minister of the Crown in the House of Commons." The year 1829 saw the steadfast opponent of the Catholic claims astonish his father and his friends by proposing Catholic Emancipation, which must, one would

¹ *Sketch*, p. 55.

think, have been a greater blow to the old gentleman of seventy-nine than the change of opinion, ten years before, on the currency question. But no :—

“I have read that the late Sir Robert Peel remained unforgiven by his father for his conduct on the Catholic question ! It was not, however, in his father's heart to doubt his son. The relation of father and son grew in a manner to be reversed—the father revered where he had at first only loved. He retained his own opinion on this solemn question, and he gave to his son the credit of purity and disinterestedness. Implacability was not in the father's nature, and he died at peace with all mankind. He had nothing to forgive in his son, and extended no forgiveness where there had been no offence.”

It was in 1829 that Catholic Emancipation was consummated, and the previous year had witnessed an interesting event at Drayton Manor. In patriarchal fashion the old gentleman gathered round him on his seventy-eighth birthday his children and grand-children, to the number of fifty, as if he had a presentiment that his latter end was approaching, and he gave each of them a silver medal struck in honour of the grave occasion. The end was not for some two years more, the 3rd of May 1830. It was preceded by a characteristic incident and remark, which “his nephew, Mr. Willock, who was present on the occasion,” remembered and reported. “A few days before his death, the first Sir Robert Peel, feeling himself more than usually alert, invited three of his nephews to dine with him. At dinner he asked if the champagne was good, and being told that it was, he drank a glass of it. The wine raised his spirits, and he conversed with much animation about past times. After dinner they played at whist, and after a rubber or two, Mr. Willock, perceiving that his uncle's hand shook a little as he dealt the cards, offered to deal for him. ‘No, no, Robert,’ he said, ‘if I cannot deal my own cards it is time to give up the game,’ and with this characteristic speech he broke up the game. He survived but a few

days." Though he had given much during his lifetime, settling £9000 a year on his eldest son when entering the House of Commons, the wealth which he left behind him was enormous. Says another of his biographers :—

"We shall insert an abstract of the will of Sir Robert Peel, not to gratify idle curiosity, but to illustrate the great value of the cotton manufacture, and to show how great are the prizes to be gained by energy, enterprise, and intelligence in a free and commercial country. After entailing Drayton Park and the other large estates in Staffordshire and Warwickshire, it proceeds to recite sums, to the amount of nearly a quarter of a million, previously advanced to or settled upon his several children (not including £9000 per annum settled upon his eldest son), and then bequeathes above £600,000 more, making the portions of his five younger sons £106,000 each, and those of his daughters £53,000 each. He leaves to a chapel erected by him at Fazely, in Staffordshire, £1000 (afterwards revoked, because he had endowed it with lands), and £6000 to a school established by him in the said village; to the Infirmary and Lunatic Asylum in Manchester, and the Lying-in-Hospital in Salford, £100 each.

"The will is dated July 27, 1820. By a codicil, of February 11, 1825, the portions of his younger sons were increased to £135,000; and of the residue, which is said to have exceeded half-a-million, four-ninths are bequeathed to the present Baronet,"—the second Sir Robert, the statesman,—“and one-ninth to each of his five younger sons. The personal property was sworn at what is technically called ‘upper value,’ which means that it exceeded £900,000, and was the first instance of the scale of duties extending to such a sum. The probate-stamp was fifteen thousand pounds, and the legacy duties amounted to about ten thousand pounds more.”¹

These are dazzling figures, but they have since been surpassed, and, in any case, they testify little or nothing to the genuine worth of the man of whose wealth they are representative. It is not as a millionaire that the first Sir Robert Peel claims a prominent place among modern Lancashire Worthies. He was only one of many successful industrialists whose energy, skill, and luck evolved large fortunes out of the cotton manufacture suddenly

¹ Cooke Taylor, i. 35.

developed by Hargreaves, by Arkwright, and by Crompton. Other wealthy Lancashire manufacturers of the first Sir Robert Peel's day and generation rose from small beginnings to purchase landed estates, to found families, and to be members of parliament. But of none of them is there any such record as that which makes the first Sir Robert Peel estimable and admirable for his patriotism and beneficence. His loyalty to Pitt, his dedication of his eldest son to the service of his country, his protest against the Corn Bill, his factory legislation, raise him far above the vulgar crowd of pushing and successful money-makers. He combined, in a remarkable degree, warm-heartedness with long-headedness, and private with public munificence. Were it only that he, an opulent manufacturer, was the first to prepare and to carry a measure of any kind for the protection of the young employed in factories, his memory would deserve to be held in honour. What he did to make a statesman of his eldest son has been seen ; and quite as much as the second Pitt, though in a different way, was the second Sir Robert Peel indebted for his success in public life to the proverbial fact that he "had a father before him."

IV.

THOMAS PERCIVAL.*

READERS of De Quincey's early autobiography may remember a mention there of Dr. Thomas Percival, the founder of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, now in the ninety-fifth year of its age. At the time to which he refers, the English Opium-eater was a little boy, living with his widowed mother at Greenheys, whence he had nothing, he says, but "a solitary road to traverse" all the way to "Princess Street, then the termination, on that side, of Manchester"! Speaking of a story which made a deep impression on the juvenile minds of himself and his sister, De Quincey thus rambles on in his own peculiar and discursive fashion. "From what quarter the story comes originally was unknown to us at the time, and I have never met it since; so that, possibly, it may be new to the reader. We found it in a book, written for the use of his own children by Dr. Percival, the physician who

* *The Works, Literary, Moral, and Philosophical, of Thomas Percival, M.D.* To which are prefixed Memoirs (by his Son) of his Life and Writings, and a Selection from his Literary Correspondence. A New Edition. 2 Vols. (London, 1807). Benjamin Franklin, *Works*, by Jared Sparks (Boston, 1840). Thomas De Quincey *Autobiographic Sketches* (Edinburgh, 1863). Halley's *Lancashire, its Puritanism and Nonconformity*, &c., &c.

attended at Greenhay," which, according to De Quincey, was the name of his mother's mansion, built not long before as a country-house by his father, and from which, he avers, the Manchester suburb of Greenheys derived its name. "Dr. P.," continues De Quincey, diverging into episodical reminiscence, "was a literary man, of elegant tastes and philosophic habits. Some of his papers may be found in the *Manchester Philosophic Transactions*, and these I have heard mentioned with respect, though, for myself, I have no personal knowledge of them. Some presumption meantime arises in their favour, from the fact that he had been a favoured correspondent of the most eminent Frenchmen at that time who cultivated literature jointly with philosophy. Voltaire, Diderot, Maupertuis, Condorcet, and D'Alembert had all treated him with distinction; and I have heard my mother say, that in days before I or my sister could have known him, he attempted vainly to interest her in these French luminaries by reading extracts from their frequent letters; which, however, so far from reconciling her to the letters, or to the writers of the letters, had the unhappy effect of riveting the dislike (previously budding) to the doctor as their receiver, and the *proneur* of their authors. The tone of the letters—hollow, insincere, and full of courtly civilities to Dr. P. as a known friend of 'the tolerance' (meaning, of course, of toleration)—certainly was not adapted to the English taste, and in this respect was specially offensive to my mother, as always assuming of the doctor, that by mere necessity, as being a philosopher, he must be an infidel. Dr. P. left that question, I believe, *in medio*, neither assenting nor denying; and undoubtedly there was no particular call upon him to publish his Confession of Faith before one who, in the midst of her rigorous politeness, suffered it to be too transparent that she did not like him. It is always a pity to see anything lost and wasted, especially love; and

therefore it was no subject for lamentation that too probably the philosophic doctor did not enthusiastically like *her*. But if really so, that made no difference in his feelings towards my sister and myself. Us he *did* like ; and as one proof of his regard, he presented us jointly with such of his works as could be supposed interesting to two young literati, whose combined ages made no more at this period than a baker's dozen. These presentation copies amounted to two at the least, both octavos, and one of them, entitled *The Father's*—something or other ; what was it? *Assistant* perhaps.”¹

No, the book which Dr. Percival gave some ninety years ago to the little De Quinceys must have been his once well-known work, *A Father's Instructions*, partly original, partly selected. And in it, certainly, is the story (from Rollin) of “A Generous Return for an Injury,”—“A Noble Revenge” (De Quincey calls it),—the English Opium-eater's imaginative rendering of which, in old age, is rather curiously characteristic of his autobiographic ways, and will be worth further notice when we come to that Lancashire Worthy. But there is not in Percival's works and correspondence, or anywhere else, so far as one has been able to ascertain, the slightest trace of the “infidelity” imputed to him by De Quincey's mother, or of the epistolary communication which, according to De Quincey himself, he kept up with the leading French sceptics of his time, or of any sympathy with their heterodox speculations. Percival, it is true, was a Unitarian, but the distance between Unitarianism and “infidelity” was considerable in those days, even more than in these ; and, indeed, the tone of his writings is decidedly anti-sceptical. He was a man, too, of a very practical turn of mind ; and though, of course, an opponent of the Test and Corporation Acts, he took much greater interest in

¹ *Autobiographic Sketches*, p. 123-4.

sanitary reform, and in what is now called "secondary education," and so forth, than in the revolt of the French Free-thinkers against continental priestcraft. The account of Dr. Percival, said to have been given by De Quincey's mother, was probably the more or less unconscious product of her son's imagination, dealing with some fragments of hazy reminiscence. In the present day, to designate this Lancashire worthy, as he was sometimes designated in his own, "the illustrious Percival," would be exaggeration. Yet his worth and his merit, his services to Manchester, were by no means small, and he ought not to be remembered only by the indifferent likeness of him, as of a tedious and conceited free-thinking bore, preserved in De Quincey's autobiography.

Thomas Percival was born at Warrington in 1740. He came of a Cheshire stock, and his ancestors long cultivated in that county what his son grandly calls "the patrimonial estate," though, on further definition, this turns out to have been nothing more than "a farm of moderate extent." His grandfather Peter (a younger son) was the first of the family to quit the Cheshire homestead, and he fixed his residence at Warrington, where he practised physic. Peter's eldest son, Thomas, followed his father's profession in his father's adopted town (he had been a pupil of Boerhaave), but a love of learned ease contracted the sphere of his professional exertions. The father of our Percival was a third son of Peter's, and seems in character to have resembled his brother the physician. "His native disposition was averse," we are told, "from the pursuit of fame and fortune, and he appears to have sought his happiness in the tranquil enjoyment of an easy and respectable station." It is one of the misfortunes of this grandiloquent school of biography that it rarely condescends to humble matters of fact. We want to know what Thomas Percival's father was, and we are

tendered the vague information : " At different periods he engaged in various branches of commerce, and transmitted to his posterity, in the example of upright and benevolent conduct, the fairest portion of his inheritance," from which it may be surmised that he left his children rather badly off. Thomas, the youngest and only surviving son, lost both father and mother before he was three, and his upbringing devolved on an elder sister, a superior and affectionate woman. She had him properly grounded, and then sent to the Free Grammar School of Warrington, where he distinguished himself by his ability and industry. When he was ten an uncle died, leaving the clever little boy a small competency wherewith to obtain a liberal education, and to follow any profession for which he had a fancy. The fame of his physician-uncle was cherished in the family, and the studious nephew seems soon to have resolved to become a medical man.

Percival was seventeen, and had learned all that could be learned in the Free Grammar School of his native town, just about the time of the establishment of the once celebrated Warrington Academy, still faintly remembered as having had Priestley and Gilbert Wakefield among its teachers. It was founded partly to give a solid and useful education to the youth of the Northern Counties, but above all, to furnish candidates for the Dissenting ministry with the freer theological instruction thought needful at a time when English Presbyterianism was being gradually transformed into Unitarianism. Percival's family had ere this left the Church, and he is said to have been the first student enrolled by the Warrington Academy when it opened its doors in 1757. The teaching of the Academy was not of a kind to lead the inquiring youth of seventeen back to the Anglican Church. He had cherished a desire to complete his studies at the University of Oxford, but before he could

enter it a theological subscription was necessary. Percival looked into the matter with diligence and earnestness, and found that he could not conscientiously sign the Thirty-nine Articles. When this conclusion was deliberately arrived at, he gave up his Oxford aspirations, and proceeded to the University of Edinburgh, there to study medicine. At Edinburgh he resided in the house of a sister of Robertson the historian, a Mrs. Syme (her daughter became the mother of Henry Brougham), who, in point of fact, did neither more nor less than take boarders. In her house and otherwise, he was thrown among the best literary and scientific society of the Scottish capital; Robertson and David Hume were among his intimate acquaintances. His relations with Robertson survived his departure from the Modern Athens. Years afterwards it was from Robertson, as Principal of Edinburgh University, that the friendly intervention of Percival obtained their Doctor's degrees for Priestley, Aikin, Enfield (of *The Speaker*), and other tutors of the Warrington Academy.

In the midst of his Edinburgh studies, Percival stole a year's holiday, which he spent in London and the scientific circles of the great metropolis. There and then he was elected a fellow of the Royal Society, through the influence of its Vice-President, Hugh, Lord Willoughby, of Parham, the representative of a peerage now extinct,¹ a promoter (in fact he was its first president) of the Warrington Academy, who was not ashamed to remain a "Protestant Dissenter," as his fathers had been, though in the days, indeed, before English Presbyterianism began to develop into Arianism. After finally leaving Edinburgh, Percival made a tour on the Continent, and having completed his medical studies at

¹ Concerning what is alleged to have been his "supposititious" peerage (though he was Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords), see a note in Halley's *Lancashire Puritanism*, ii. 397.

Leyden, he took his degree there in 1765. Returning to Warrington, he married, and remained in his native town for a couple of years, contributing medical and scientific papers to the *Philosophical Transactions*, and to suitable periodicals. Learned in all the medical lore of his time, Percival now looked forward to establishing himself in London as a physician. He thought, however, that before taking this step it was desirable to acquire some preliminary experience and reputation. In 1767, accordingly, he went to Manchester, and he never left it.

With such professional knowledge and skill, such culture and manners as his, Percival soon took the highest position among the physicians of Manchester, and abandoned his intention of settling in London. Beyond the limits of Lancashire, too, his name was made known to the profession and to the general scientific world by three volumes of *Essays Medical and Experimental* (partly a reproduction of contributions to the *Philosophical Transactions*), the first of which was issued in 1767, the last in 1776. The year before the issue of the final instalment of the *Essays* there appeared ("dedicated to the Countess of Stamford") the first of three parts (the concluding one was not published until 1800) of *A Father's Instructions*, the book which De Quincey has referred to, and which testified to the fact that a young family was growing up about him. But it is less by his literature, medical or parental, than by the zeal with which he devoted himself to promoting in every way the improvement of the town of his adoption that Percival deserves to be held in remembrance. Another man might have been content to enjoy professional success and social eminence, restricting his philanthropy to the relief of individual cases of disease and distress in humble life; but Percival was fortunately animated by a rare and disinterested zeal for the welfare of the poor, and may claim to be re-

garded as a founder of that admirable school of physicians of whom, in more recent days, the late Dr. Alison of Edinburgh was a prominent type—men who, while reaping wealth by caring for the ailments of the rich, explore, without encouragement from Governments, central or local, the dark abysses where poverty welters in the company of disease, and who bring their personal and social influence, and their scientific knowledge, to bear on the improvement of the sanitary condition of the neglected poor. Without fee or reward, without hope of or wish for either, and long before the bare idea of the existence of such a functionary was dreamt of, Percival constituted himself Medical Officer of Health for Manchester. He settled there, moreover, just when the presence of a philanthropic and public spirited physician could be most useful,—in 1767, as already said, by which time Hargreaves had perfected his spinning-jenny; and thus on the eve of that expansion of the cotton manufacture which has converted what was then a second-rate country town into one of the great cities of the empire. Seven years later Percival was able to note “the rapid growth of Manchester and Salford,” the population of which had increased from some 20,000 in 1757 to some 27,000 in 1773, and in those quiet old days this was considered, and rightly considered, a wonderful phenomenon. Even with this trifling increase new sanitary needs had arisen, and Percival set to work to investigate the vital statistics of the place, and to compare them with those of the scantily-populated Manchester of the past, as of other towns and of non-manufacturing districts. In the very year, as it happened, of Percival’s arrival in Manchester, appeared a work which directed public attention to the importance of vital statistics, and which founded on them as a sure basis the modern scientific system of life assurance. This was the “*Treatise on Reversionary Payments*”

of Dr. Price, the dissenting minister, whose sympathy with the first French Revolution became one of the texts of Burke's "Reflections," and who aided Pitt to institute, with the best intentions, what proved to be a futile sinking fund. Price's book was studied by Percival, and no doubt partly stimulated him to write his "Proposals for Establishing more Accurate and Comprehensive Bills of Mortality in Manchester." In this tractate he suggested that detailed lists of christenings, marriages, and burials, with a register of the causes of death, &c., &c., should be kept in every church and chapel; and having been delivered at stated times to the clerk of each parish church, should be formed into one general table to be published periodically. Specimen tables were appended, intelligible to the meanest capacity. Percival's modest "Proposals" may raise a smile in these days of general figuring, when, not to speak of Registrars-General and decennial censuses, of deputy-registrars spread all over the land, and of a universal and compulsory system of registration of births and deaths, Manchester has a Statistical Society all to itself; but they were then as novel as they proved to be useful. His plan, we are told, "was approved by able judges, and was in great measure adopted by the superintending officers of the police of Manchester," and by other towns both in Lancashire and Cheshire.

It was about the time of the issue of these "Proposals" that Percival drew up his "Observations on the State of Population in Manchester and other adjacent places," which appeared in the *Philosophical Transactions* for 1774-5. He sent a copy to Benjamin Franklin, then (*etat.* 67) Agent in England for the colonies, destined three years afterwards to become the United States of America. Franklin received the tractate in the September of 1773, in the December of which year "Boston harbour was black with unexpected tea," and the revolt of the American colonies was about to

begin. He passed its summer and early autumn at Lord De Spencer's seat of High Wycombe, philosophising, experimenting, and even, strange occupation for that American sage, "abridging some parts of the Book of Common Prayer." There the congenial communication of his Manchester correspondent was promptly acknowledged in a note beginning, "Dear Sir, I have received here your favour of the 18th, enclosing your very valuable paper of the enumeration of Manchester. Such enquiries may be as useful as they are curious, and, if once made general, would greatly assist in the prudent government of a state." Then follow some remarks on the odd plan of census-taking adopted in China, and the penalty exacted there for false returns. "Perhaps," he adds, "such a regulation is scarcely practicable with us"—"us," he writes, since Franklin was still a British subject. "But," this is Percival's comment on the American sage's remark and remarks—"an enumeration of the people of England, similar to that lately executed at Manchester, could not be so difficult an undertaking as may at the first view be imagined. And if accurate and comprehensive Bills of Mortality were universally established, they would admirably coincide with the views of such enquiries, and give precision and certainty to the conclusions deduced from them." All of which, since Percival's time, has been and is being done.

This "enumeration" of the Manchester of 1773 was made, one little doubts, at the instance of Percival himself; though in the "Observations," which are partly based on it, he does not claim to have originated it. These first "Observations" of 1773 were followed by "Further Observations" of not much later date, and along with the facts given incidentally in the "Proposals," they constitute Percival's chief contributions to the vital statistics of the Manchester of his day and generation. They are valuable not only for their

facts, but for the judgment with which these are surveyed, and inferences drawn from them. Percival, indeed, not only led the way for the more accurate statistics of later days, but in his disquisitions he supplied a philosophy of statistics, without which the most accurate figures may mislead instead of instructing. Thus he pointed out that a low death-rate is not necessarily an indication of the general good health of the locality in which it occurs. For instance, he found by an interesting enquiry that the death-rate of the Manchester Quakers, an eminently temperate and well-conditioned body, was actually somewhat higher than that of the rest of the community, and he attributed the apparent anomaly to the circumstance that a constant influx of adult health and strength from the country districts into Manchester supplied the waste caused by town and manufacturing life, while the Quaker body was mainly recruited from its own births. With the increase of the population consequent on the development of the manufacturing industry of Manchester and Salford, from some 20,000, as already stated, in 1757, to some 27,000 in 1773, the average annual mortality had fallen from 1 in 25·7 to 1 in 28·4. This decrease, however, of the death-rate was not altogether, Percival concluded, to be ascribed to an improvement in the health and sanitary condition of the inhabitants of the two towns, but mainly to the influx from the rural districts.¹ "Half of all that are born in this town,"

¹ Referring to the number of public-houses in Manchester, Percival cites the opinion of a still remembered ecclesiastical economist on the effect of this influx in the case of a great West of England mart and haven:—"The Rev. Dr. Tucker, the Dean of Gloucester, informs me that were it not for the daily arrival of recruits from the country, his parish (St. Stephen's in Bristol), and indeed Bristol in general, would be left in a century without an inhabitant, unless the people should betake themselves to better courses than that of drunkenness."—Percival's *Works*, ii. 355, note.

—Manchester—Percival said in his “Proposals,” “die under five years old.” Nevertheless, the duration of life and the death-rate in Manchester, when Percival wrote, contrast favourably with those in London, Liverpool, and Edinburgh, if unfavourably with those in agricultural countries abroad and counties at home. “In the Pays de Vaud,” says Percival in the “Proposals,” “the proportion of inhabitants who attain the age of 80 is 1 in $21\frac{1}{2}$; in Brandenburg, 1 in $22\frac{1}{2}$; in Norwich, 1 in 27; in Manchester, 1 in 30; in London, 1 in 40; and in Edinburgh, 1 in 42.” Again, if when Percival wrote the annual average mortality of Stoke Damarel in Devonshire was only 1 in 54, while in Manchester it was 1 in 28, it was higher in Liverpool, being 1 in 27, and in London, where it was 1 in 21. Moreover, though ascribing the decrease of the death-rate in expanding Manchester between 1757 and 1773 mainly to the influx from the rural districts, Percival admitted that with the development of its manufactures there had been a coincident improvement in its general health. “However,” he says in the Observations, “exclusive of this consideration”—the influx from the country—“there is good reason to believe that Manchester is more healthy now than formerly. The new streets are wide and spacious; the poor have larger and more commodious dwellings, and the increase of trade affords them better clothing and diet than they before enjoyed. I may add, too, that the late improvements in medicine have been highly favourable to the preservation of life. The cool regimen in fevers and in the small-pox, the free admission of air, attention to cleanliness, and the general use of antiseptic remedies and diet, have certainly mitigated the mortality of some of the most dangerous and malignant distempers to which mankind are incident.”¹ In 1873, a hundred years after these lines were written, and

¹ *Works*, ii. 323.

with an increase of the population of Manchester and Salford during the intervening century from some 27,000 to some 460,000, the death-rate of Manchester was 1 in 33 instead of 1 in 28 as in 1773. It may be hoped and believed that this decrease in the death-rate has been produced, not merely by an influx of adults from elsewhere, but by causes akin to those to which Percival ascribed a part at least of the diminution of mortality in Manchester between 1756 and 1773.

In 1768, the year, as it chanced, after Percival's settlement in Manchester, and some time before the rise of the factory system, Arthur Young visited Manchester. It was an incidental visit paid during the course of his "Six Months' Tour in the Northern Counties" to investigate the state of their agriculture and agricultural population. Arthur turned aside to Manchester episodically, partly from a curiosity to see something of what was even then considered a very rising and notable manufacturing town, partly that he might inspect the Duke of Bridgewater's much-talked-of canal operations at Worsley. Speaking of Manchester, Arthur says, "I enquired the effects of high or low prices of provisions, and found that in the former the manufacturers"—by whom he means what we should now call operatives—"were industrious, and their families easy and happy, but that in times of low prices the latter starved, for half of the time of the father was spent at the ale-house,"—a statement which suggests another striking contrast between the Manchester of then and of now. Five or six years later Percival noted that among the church and chapel goers of the country districts round Manchester, with the same climate and the same manufactures, the death-rate was exactly one-half of that of Manchester itself,—a difference which he attributed to the "luxury, irregularity, and intemperance of large towns." In the parish of Manchester

of that day, he counted "193 licensed houses for retailing spirituous and other liquors, and 64 in the other townships of the parish." In 1788, it appears that the population of Manchester and Salford was a mere 50,000. Eight years afterwards, however, when the inventions which made modern cotton-spinning what it is, when Hargreaves' spinning-jenny, Crompton's mule, and Arkwright's water-frame had fairly developed their productiveness, Manchester was, for those days, a great manufacturing town. The unregulated apprenticeship system was in full vigour of action, and Percival, who had long filled a principal position in the Manchester Infirmary, had ere this been summoned to report on the outbreak of fever among the apprentices at the first Sir Robert Peel's Radcliffe mill,—the event which, as has been already shown, primarily and ultimately produced the earliest of all factory bills, the Apprentices Act of 1802, a measure, it may be added, regarded by Percival as far from sufficiently stringent. In Manchester itself, with an expanding population, came overcrowding, while higher wages produced dissolute living among an uneducated population, which spent its earnings in ways not conducive to well-being and to health. The constant supply of labour from the country-districts concealed the ravages caused by avoidable disease, but at last contagious maladies broke out, which spared the rich as little as the poor, and then, indeed, the instinct of self-preservation roused the upper classes of Manchester from lethargy to exertion. Public meetings were held; a local committee was appointed to institute enquiries, to suggest remedies, and to enforce them in conjunction with the authorities. This committee became in reality, as in name, a Board of Health, chiefly through the strenuous appeal made to it by Percival. In a document which is still extant, he called on the board and the authorities to

compel ventilation and cleanliness in the dwellings of the poor; to cleanse streets and remove nuisances; to establish both special fever-wards and a house of recovery (our modern "convalescent hospital"); to have the cotton-factories inspected, and to procure returns of the condition, ages, hours of work, and so forth, of those employed in them, more particularly of the parish apprentices; to limit the number and to regulate the internal economy of common lodging-houses; to establish what he called "caravanseries" for the reception of those who came to Manchester, unknown and unrecommended, in quest of employment; and last, not least, he insisted on the establishment of public baths. The most important of our modern sanitary, and some of the most important of our modern social, reforms were anticipated in the statement of the measures with which Percival energetically and not unsuccessfully urged the Manchester of 1796 to repress the diseases ravaging its population. Indeed, Percival may be regarded as one of the parents of factory legislation. In another document, also still extant, dated 25th January 1796 (six years before the first Sir Robert Peel introduced his Apprentices Bill), and addressed to the Manchester Committee, or Board of Health, then just formed, Percival drew up a series of resolutions on certain evils which had been developed by the growth of the factory system. These resolutions affirmed the disposition of children and others to catch and propagate contagious diseases, the injury to their health from long and close confinement,—especially the bad effects of the then general system of working through the night,—and the ignorance of every kind in which they were growing up. The last resolution went the length—a great one in those days—of recommending legislative interference with the conditions of factory labour. "From the excellent regulations," thus it ran, "which subsist in several cotton factories, it ap-

pears that many of these evils may, in a considerable degree, be obviated ; and we are therefore warranted by experience, and are assured that we shall have the support of the liberal proprietors of these factories, in proposing an application for Parliamentary aid (if other methods appear not likely to effect the purpose), to establish a general system of laws for the wise, humane, and equal government of all such works." ¹

Here, so far as one has been able to ascertain, is the first discoverable germ of modern factory legislation, and had Percival done nothing more than write those lines, his memory would deserve to be honoured in Lancashire and out of it. Be it noticed, moreover, that all these efforts and exertions of Percival seem to have sprung from a sense of duty, which warmed a man otherwise of serene, not to say cold, disposition, into something of a fervid energy. Percival's was not one of the ardent temperaments which impel many men, with time hanging heavy on their hands, to careers of public usefulness. He appears to have been a somewhat stately physician of the old school, who would have been perfectly happy practising his profession among the wealthier classes, experimenting, philosophising, and compiling and writing rather vapid books for young people. His public spirit seems really to have been developed out of a strong sense of duty. His son expresses a feeling of the kind when, referring to Percival's philanthropic schemes, the filial biographer says, in his own peculiar style : " His perseverance in accomplishing designs of this nature was prompted by a spirit of zeal and resolution which other occasions rarely excited, while the interest he continued to feel for their prosperity was more lively than a sentiment of benevolence usually betrays in the most sanguine character." ²

¹ *History of the Factory Movement*, p. 29.

² Two names deserve mention as those of zealous fellow-workers

For his efforts to forward the culture of Manchester, as well as to improve the physical and sanitary condition of its working population, a debt of gratitude is also due to Percival. He was in the habit of holding at his house weekly meetings for conversation on any topic which was not frivolous. These were attended by his own friends, in whom the principal inhabitants in the town were included, and by occasional strangers. Singular as it may seem, Manchester in those days had visitors, who came not only to inspect the manufacturing marvels of the place, but for purposes of classical study. One educational establishment with Percival in the establishment of the Manchester Board of Health. Dr. John Ferriar, who, like Percival, was one of the physicians of Manchester Infirmary, is otherwise remembered as the author of the "Illustrations of Sterne," a book full of the results of curious reading, and written to prove that the author of Tristram Shandy sedulously acted on Molière's maxim, *Je prends mon bien où je le trouve*. Dr. Ferriar was one of the founders of the Manchester Board of Health, —indeed, in his "Medical Histories," he claims to have been the first to recommend the establishment of an institution of the kind, and certainly he contributed greatly to its success, and laid down for its guidance, and for that of the Manchester police authorities, a useful code of sanitary reform and precaution. Another coadjutor of Percival meriting mention, was Thomas Butterworth Bayley, an affectionate memoir of whom he contributed to the *Transactions* of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society. This forgotten worthy was a country gentleman, of great public spirit and energy, who became chairman of the Lancashire Quarter Sessions. He zealously co-operated in the establishment of the Manchester Board of Health, and laboured for the improvement of the workhouses of the county. He also devoted much attention to the improvement of prisons and prison discipline. After meeting with considerable opposition, he procured the erection, in 1787, of what in those days was considered a "very commodious and well-ventilated prison" for Manchester and Salford, the arrangements of which were praised by the philanthropic Howard. "By the unanimous vote of the magistrates" it was called after him the New Bayley, though careless or ignorant topographers spell it "New Barley," and thus, instead of commemorating the name of its founder, it has been supposed to have been so designated in antithesis to the London *Old* Bailey.

of the kind (that of the Rev. Ralph Harrison) was so famous that for its sake the first Marquis of Waterford, as he became (then, however, merely Earl of Tyrone), sent to Manchester his eldest son, Lord De La Poer, accompanied by a tutor, Charles De Polier, a cultivated Swiss, of whom there is an affectionate record from Percival's pen in an early volume of the *Transactions* of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society. It was from the weekly meetings at Percival's house that this society took its rise. As the gatherings became larger and more interesting, the place of meeting was removed to a tavern; a few rules were drawn up; and at last, in 1781, the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester was formally instituted, with a local habitation of its own. Among the first of its members were Dr. Darwin, Priestley, Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, Josiah Wedgwood, and two famous foreigners, "Monsieur Lavoisier," the Newton of modern chemistry, and "Mr. Alexander Volta, professor of experimental philosophy at Como" (as he is styled in the original list), the inventor of the Voltaic pile. Percival was one of the first two joint-presidents, and on the death of his colleague he became sole president of the society, which, in the days of Joule and Angus Smith, worthily preserves the European reputation which it gained in those of Dalton and of Henry. When the first publication of its memoirs was made, Percival wrote to Pitt, as Prime Minister, to ask leave to dedicate them to George III., and in 1785 they appeared with a dedication, of which the opening words were, "To the King"—an exordium more impressive then than now.

In his attempts to establish in Manchester two other institutions, Percival was not so successful, though at least one of them deserves grateful recognition, while the other contributed to the means of subsistence of a memorable and struggling cultivator of science. In 1785, Percival's

alma mater as it were, the Warrington Academy, was clearly, and for various easily understood causes, on its last legs. In combination with "Protestant Dissenters" in Lancashire and elsewhere, Percival contrived to found an institution of the same kind in Manchester, which will always be remembered from the circumstance that during six years John Dalton was its "tutor in mathematics and natural philosophy." Like its Warrington predecessor, however, it did not permanently flourish. By 1802 it had fallen into a deep decline, for which change of air was prescribed, and it migrated to York. The second institution which Percival and his friends also managed to found in Manchester, but which enjoyed only a very brief existence, was a College of Arts and Sciences, intended for young men who, having finished their ordinary education, were about to "go into business." They were to attend lectures on mathematics, chemistry, the fine arts, and so forth, but above all on commerce and manufactures, their history, laws, and even ethics, at home and abroad. "After two winters, however, of unfavourable trial, the undertaking was found to decline, and was at length reluctantly abandoned." The voluntary principle proved to be insufficient. The munificence of an Owens was needed to establish a suitable Manchester University. Percival's scheme, we are told, was "so approved by Dr. Franklin," that his friend, the American sage, is said "to have left a considerable sum of money for the establishment of a similar institution in America;" but there is no trace of any such bequest in Franklin's published will.

With the promotion of enterprises like these to fill up the intervals of his professional life, Percival's days flowed on equably, pleasantly, and profitably. The fame of his usefulness and abilities had been diffused far beyond the sphere in which they were immediately conspicuous. Many of the wise and distinguished in his own profession

and out of it were among his correspondents: Lettsom and Heberden, Beattie and Parr; Howard, the philanthropist, and Hannah More; Robertson the historian, and Madame Necker; Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, and Paley, to the last of whom Mrs. De Quincey's "infidel" referred his son when beset by the doubts which had prevented the father from going to Oxford; but which did not prevent the younger Percival from becoming a clergyman of the Church of England.¹ The chief drawback to his happiness in

¹ In one of his letters to this son, Percival says in language which amply refutes the Opium Eater's insinuations:—"Your attachment to Butler's Analogy is very satisfactory to me. To no book am I under so great obligations, for by the attentive perusal of it my full conviction of the truth of Christianity was restored." Percival's letter to Paley (dated Manchester, January 20, 1788), on his son's doubts or dubitations may be worth giving, as characteristic of the time, and exhibiting the position then occupied by that now slighted and neglected Archdeacon of Carlisle. After apologies for troubling the great man, Percival proceeds:—"My eldest son, whom I intended for the profession of physic, by his residence at St. John's College, Cambridge, and connections in Cambridge, has had his views changed, and is now strongly inclined to go into the Church. But previous to his final decision he wishes to settle his mind on several important topics comprehended in the articles of faith. The chapter on Religious Establishments in your excellent system of Moral and Political Philosophy has had great weight with him, and he has this morning expressed to me an earnest desire to have the benefit of your personal instructions, on points so interesting to his future peace, prosperity, and usefulness. Is it possible for him to enjoy this singular privilege for the space of a few weeks? I shall cordially acquiesce in any terms that you may prescribe, and with a grateful sense of obligation to you"—which is rather delicately put. "I am a Dissenter," Percival adds, "but actuated by the same spirit of Catholicism which you possess. An establishment I approve, the Church of England in many respects I honour; and should think it my duty to enter instantly into her communion, were the plan which you have proposed in your tenth chapter carried into execution." This is the chapter on Church Establishments, in which Paley recommends that the yoke and burden of tests and subscriptions should be made as easy and light as possible, and "adapted

later years arose from defective eye-sight, caused, it is said, by his habit of constant reading in his carriage when driving about on his professional visits. The young men, however, who were admitted as pupils to be inmates of his house, and whose studies he directed, read to him and acted as his amanuenses—one of them, Dr. Henry, the father of the well-known chemist, with him in this way for five years, has left on record his keen sense of Percival's amiability and kindness.

Thomas Percival died at Manchester on the 30th of August 1804, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. A Latin epitaph by the mighty Dr. Parr is inscribed in the church at Warrington, his native place, where he was buried; and over the president's chair in the hall of the Manchester Philosophical and Literary Society, a mural tablet was erected to his memory. A glowing panegyric on him was contributed a few weeks after his death to the pages of *Sylvanus Urban*, by Magee (already of the Atonement, but not yet Archbishop of Dublin), who had married a niece of Percival's, and knowing him well, admired him much. Percival is certainly a man who ought to figure prominently

to the varying sentiments and circumstances of the Church," &c., &c. Mr. Archdeacon responded graciously to Percival's epistle, but "the state of his engagements" did not permit him to accept the offered visit. However, for the young gentleman's sake, and for the honour done him by the young gentleman's father, he favoured them with an expansion of his short chapter on "Subscription," and did his best to smooth the way for the anxious enquirer's entry into the ministry of the Church of England. You must look to the intentions of the authorities when subscription was imposed. They were not to exclude from communion with the Church persons either of Percival senior's or of Percival junior's mode of thinking, which had not come into vogue in those days. No, the articles were aimed at Popery, the tenets of the Continental Anabaptists, and so forth. Paley's reasoning proved effective. Percival junior took orders, and was appointed Chaplain of the British Factory at St. Petersburg.

in that competent account of English Medical Biography, the continued absence of which from our literature is far from creditable to the profession. Even as things are, he has not been consigned to total professional oblivion. So late as 1849, his little work on "Medical Ethics," intended to be a sort of *vade mecum* for the conscientious physician (it first appeared in 1803), was re-published and re-edited by the well known Dr. Greenhill of Oxford, who in his preface declared it to be "commonly quoted as a work of authority not only in this country but also in America." But it is as a public-spirited denizen of the town of his adoption, always foremost in promoting its varied social interests, that Percival chiefly claims remembrance. His services to Manchester, and thus indirectly to his country, were, it will have been seen, neither few nor inconsiderable.

V.

CAPTAIN JAMES KING.*

COMPANION of Captain Cook in the third and last of his voyages, and part-historiographer of that famous expedition, James King was born at Clitheroe, in 1750. He came of a Yorkshire stock—a “respectable and ancient family, long resident at Skellands, in the Deanery of Craven.” His father, curate of Clitheroe at the time of his birth, rose afterwards to be Chaplain to the House of Commons, and Dean of Raphoe in Ireland. His mother was “Anne, daughter and co-heiress of John Walker, of Hungrill, in the parish of Bolton;” and he was the second of five sons. Thomas, the eldest, and Walker, the third brother, entered the Church. Thomas became a Prebendary of Canterbury; Walker was one of the intimate friends and executors of Edmund

* *Memoir of King* in Baines's *History of the County Palatine of Lancaster* (first edition), iii. 218, &c. (where it is said to have been “compiled chiefly from materials supplied to Mr. Whatton by Dr. Walker King, elder brother of the Captain, and late Bishop of Rochester”). Alice King (a kinswoman of the navigator), *A Cluster of Lives* (London 1874). § Captain Cook's Companion. *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean performed under the direction of Captains Cook, Clerke, and Gore, in 1776-80*, in vols. 15-17 of Robert Kerr's *General History and Collection of Voyages and Travels*, (Edinburgh, 1824). Madame D'Arblay's *Diary and Letters* (London, 1842), &c., &c.

Burke, and died Bishop of Rochester. The fourth son, Edward, lived to be Vice-Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. The youngest, John, went to the bar, which he quitted in 1789 for an official career. He was successively Under-Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, and Comptroller of Army Accounts. Thus the curate of Clitheroe and his sons made, all of them, more or less, some figure or reached some altitude in the world.

Of King the father, one, and that a characteristic, anecdote has been preserved. As he rode soberly on his wedding-day to the church where his bride was to await his coming, the hunt swept past. He could not resist the temptation of joining it (in those days the clerical Nimrod was a familiar figure in the hunting field), and he was soon foremost in the chase. He pulled up, however, in time to be at the altar by the appointed hour;¹ otherwise this memoir might have remained unwritten. When promoted from the Clitheroe curacy to the Raphoe Deanery, he took his family to Ireland, but the boys were sent to school in England, and as they visited home regularly with their holidays, James had to cross the sea several times a year, and he seems to have taken a liking for it. As a proof of his early fondness for the water and interest in things nautical, it is recorded that once when the brothers had made the passage to Dublin instead of, as was usual, to Belfast, James was sometime after the landing nowhere to be found. Search having been made for the truant by the servant who had the boys in charge, Master James was at last descried in the twilight aboard a boat mid-way in the Liffey. When he landed his little money was gone; he had spent it to enjoy—for nearly a whole day—the pleasure of crossing and re-crossing the river with the ferryman,

¹ Alice King, p. 139.

from whom he had learned the name and destination of every vessel in the harbour.¹ No wonder that he is next heard of as asking to be sent to sea, and to sea he went. At the age of twelve he entered the navy as a midshipman, "under the patronage of his near relative, Captain Norton, a brother of the first Lord Grantley." It was about the time when, with the seven years' war coming to a close, the world was to enjoy a little peace, so that there were no laurels to be gained by the British midshipman just then. "During the peace," says King's brother and biographer, "which followed the accession of George III. to the throne, he served successively under the command of Lord Rodney, Sir Hugh Palliser, and the Earl of St. Vincent. By those distinguished officers he was patronised and highly esteemed, and by the last he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant." After twelve years of it the young lieutenant seems to have grown tired of a life on ship-board in time of peace, and he was of a studious and inquiring turn. In 1774 he left active, or inactive, service, and proceeded to Paris, to learn French and improve himself in science. His younger brother, Walker, was then a member of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, and by his influence the studious young lieutenant of four or five and twenty was permitted, after the sojourn in France, to reside in that college, and there still further repair the deficiencies of his early-arrested education. He was poor, and his fare at Oxford was not sumptuous. "His scout is said every evening to have called out for his supper from the college buttery in these words: 'A farthing bread, a farthing cheese, and a farthing small, Mr. King!'"² But he studied hard, all the harder perhaps because his rations were scanty. His mathematical enthusiasm and proficiency attracted the attention of the University Professor of

¹ Alice King, p. 143.

² *Ib.*, p. 146.

Astronomy, Dr. Hornsby; and it was not long before King unexpectedly reaped some acceptable fruit from his meritorious application and zeal for self-improvement.

Two years after King's migration from Paris to Oxford, it was resolved by the Admiralty to fit out an expedition for the discovery of the North-west (or of a North-east) passage. Like a Sindbad of real life, Captain Cook (*ætat.* 48) was then resting on his laurels in a snug berth, with which he had been rewarded in Greenwich Hospital, for the toils endured and the discoveries made in his famous voyages of 1767-71, and 1772-74. The promoters of the expedition could not bring themselves, much as they wished for his services, to invite him to leave his well-earned haven of repose, and face the perils of Arctic voyaging. But to consult him concerning the project and the agent fittest to undertake it was another matter, and he formed one of a dinner-party given by the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Sandwich (Wilkes's friend—and foe—a free-living and free-thinking but capable man), to discuss the objects and prospects of the expedition. As the talk went on, and the promise and magnitude of the scheme unfolded themselves, the heart of the stout navigator began to burn within him like that of the Tennysonian Ulysses, and starting to his feet he vowed that he would command the expedition. The offer was joyfully accepted, and forthwith all the needful arrangements were gone into. Among them was the nomination of a person qualified to make the observations, nautical and astronomical, indispensable to the programme of such an expedition. Captain Cook, and Maskelyne, the Astronomer Royal, the former a self-taught scientific observer, the latter one of the creators of modern nautical astronomy (and then just on the point of starting the *Nautical Almanack*), were commissioned, in conjunction with the Board of Longitude, to

choose the man for the job. The young lieutenant's hour was come. The Professor of Astronomy at Oxford was consulted, and he recommended the accomplished mathematician, the naval inmate of Corpus Christi. King eagerly closed with the offer, which was all the more readily made to him that he was a naval officer; the British tar having been found on former voyages handier in scientific work when ordered about by a naval man than by a land-lubber, pure and simple, and however versed in nautical astronomy. On the 11th of July 1776, the *Resolution* (of only 460 tons burden) sailed from Plymouth,¹ with King on board as second lieutenant, and commanded by Captain Cook, who was destined never to return. The companion-vessel, the *Discovery*, followed on the arrival of its commander, Captain Clerke, whose last (and uncompleted) voyage this was also to be.

At the beginning of 1777, the *Discovery* and *Resolution*, in pursuance of instructions, were skirting the southern shores of Van Dieman's Land, our Tasmania. Tasmania is now a pleasant English colony, in a state of arrested development, but none the less pleasant, perhaps, on that account; and not long since there appeared a little volume, "The Last of the Tasmanians," chronicling the extinction

¹ A week after the American Declaration of Independence. "It could not but occur to us as a singular and affecting circumstance," writes Cook in the journal of his stay at Plymouth, "that at the very instant of our departure upon a voyage, the object of which was to benefit Europe by making fresh discoveries in North America, there should be the unhappy necessity of employing others of His Majesty's ships, and of conveying numerous bodies of land forces to secure the obedience of those parts of that continent which had been discovered and settled by our countrymen in the last century. On the 6th his Majesty's ships *Diamond*, *Ambuscade*, and *Union*, with a fleet of transports, consisting of sixty-two sail, bound to America, with the last division of the Hessian troops, and some horse, were forced into the Sound by a strong N.W. wind."

of its aboriginal population. A hundred years have passed since this visit of Cook's to it, and then he did not know it to be an island, but fancied it to be the southern extremity of Australia, his New Holland. Not a European was settled in it, and the naked blacks who peopled it, in the lowest stage of savagery, a very little higher than the brutes, were objects of great astonishment to King and his fellow-officers, when they landed occasionally in quest of wood or water. From Van Dieman's Land to New Zealand, the voyagers sailed next, and convinced themselves of the cannibalism of the New Zealanders, progenitors of the troublesome Maories of to-day. Away, then, northwards, the little barks careered, cruising about among "summer isles of Eden lying in dark purple spheres of sea," until sailing towards the Tropic of Cancer, a new archipelago was discovered by the delighted Cook, and the grateful commander christened it, as a memorial of the First Lord of the Admiralty at home, the Sandwich Islands. Away again, far northwards went the *Resolution* and *Discovery*, through Behring's Straits to Cape North. The ice barred their further progress, and they had to return,—Cook gladly availing himself of this compulsion to revisit his new discovery, the Sandwich Islands. When they arrived in Karakakooa Bay, off Owhyee, the modern Hawaii, a thousand canoes were paddled round the ships, "most of them crowded with people, and well-laden with hogs and other productions of the island." "I had nowhere," says Cook, "in the course of my voyage, seen so numerous a body of people assembled at one place. For, besides those who had come off to us in canoes, all the shore of the bay was crowded with spectators, and many hundreds were swimming round the ships like shoals of fish. We could not but be struck with the singularity of this scene; and perhaps there were few on board who now

lamented our having failed in finding a northern passage homeward last spring. To this disappointment we owed our having it in our power to revisit the Sandwich Islands, and to enrich our voyage with a discovery which, though the last, seemed in many respects to be the most important that had hitherto been made by Europeans throughout the extent of the Pacific Ocean."

Curiously enough, these are the final words in Cook's journal of his proceedings. The remainder of the classic record which chronicles his voyages is from the pen of his then second lieutenant, who all the time since the *Resolution* weighed anchor in Plymouth Sound had been busy, scientifically and practically, determining the longitude "by the watch" and lunar observations, recording the dip of the magnetic needle, the variations of the compass, and all the rest of it, in the intervals of a lieutenant's ordinary business aboard ship and on shore; trafficking with the natives for provisions, and superintending detachments of men sent from the ship to hew wood and draw water. King's disposition was mild and amiable, as his commander's was stern and rather harsh. Cook's sternness had worked wonders with the natives of Oceania, but he exhibited it once too often. After a few weeks of feasting and kindly intercourse with the Sandwich Islanders, the ships took leave, as they thought, of the bay, looking up to a rising ground of cultivated fields and groves of coconut, near which King had erected his astronomical observatory. The natives were not sorry to get rid of the visitors, whose consumption of pork and sweet potatoes had been large; and to such guests nothing could be refused. After they had left, however, a gale came on, which damaged the masting and rigging of the *Resolution*, and it was found necessary to run in somewhere and refit. In an unlucky hour Cook determined to return to

Karakakooa Bay, and when the ship arrived there, all was changed. No longer were there swarms of canoes and swimmers to greet the white man, but silence and solitude ; and, on inquiry, it was found that the chiefs and priests had placed the bay under *taboo*, the one word with which the dialect of the Sandwich Islands has enriched our noble English tongue. Then began pilfering by the natives and retaliation by the crews—stone-throwing of the dusky islanders, answered by musketry-shot from the white strangers. The seizure of the *Discovery's* cutter brought Cook himself into action, and he landed, clumsily supported by the boats behind, to be murdered by the crowd of savages on shore, whom the death of one of their chiefs, from a stray musket shot, had exasperated into madness. King was standing, with half a dozen marines, in guard of the observatory, which he had anew erected, a short mile from the scene of the catastrophe, and saw distinctly the “immense crowd collected on the spot where Captain Cook had just before landed.” “We heard,” he says, “the firing of the musketry, and could perceive some extraordinary bustle and agitation in the multitude. We afterwards saw the natives flying, the boats retire from the shore, and passing and repassing in great stillness between the ships. I must confess that my heart soon misgave me ;” and with reason, for Cook was being butchered. The tragedy which closed the life of the great navigator was enacted on the 2d of July 1778. Again, a hundred years have elapsed since the Sandwich Islands were first visited by Europeans, and already Cook's prediction is fulfilled. Honolulu is becoming a great oceanic entrepôt, and a Queen from the Sandwich Islands—Christianised, civilised, and constitutionalised after a fashion—was not so very long ago one of the lions or lionesses of a London season.

King himself escaped from *terra firma* to ship-board not without difficulty and danger, and became first lieutenant of the *Resolution* by the removal of his senior to the command of the *Discovery*, vacated by Captain Clerke, who was now at the head of the expedition. Once more they steered to the north, and once more passed through Behring's Straits, only to be driven back a second time by continents of floating ice. Returning by the coast of Kamtschatka, Captain Clerke died of a lingering consumption, and first-lieutenant King, of the *Resolution*, became commander of the *Discovery*. Clerke's death befell in the August of 1779. Towards the end of September they reached Macao, and heard for the first time, from the Portuguese governor, of the War of American Independence, of war between Great Britain and France; and the gallant King describes the feeling of "poignant regret" which filled the English hearts of officers and crews "at finding ourselves cut off, at such a distance, from the scene, where, we imagined, the fate of fleets and armies was everywhere deciding." Unmolested and unmolesting—for the French Government had given orders that the vessels of the great Captain Cook's expedition should be allowed to pass everywhere, without let or hindrance—they steered for home. On the 4th of October 1780, the *Resolution* and *Discovery* once more floated in British waters, and dropped anchor at the Nore, after an absence of rather more than four years.

The officers of the expedition, with the sketches and curiosities which they brought back, were, of course, objects of interest in London. Fanny Burney's was an older and a stronger interest than most people's, since the first-lieutenant of the *Discovery*, when it sailed, was her brother "Jem"—the Admiral Burney of later days, and of Charles Lamb's varied and pleasant circle. Fanny has

chronicled in her diary her inspection of the drawings (for an artist—a Mr. Webber—had accompanied the expedition), an episode in a day's visit to Sir Joshua, who was "fat and well." Fanny was at an age and in the mood to be pleased with an agreeable and intelligent young naval officer, and thus she records the impression made on her by the lieutenant and the collection: "We then went to Mr. Webber's to see the South Sea drawings. Here we met Captain King, who chiefly did the honours in showing the curiosities and explaining them. He is one of the most natural, gay, honest, and pleasant characters I ever met with. We spent all the rest of the morning here much to my satisfaction. The drawings are extremely well worth seeing; they consist of views of the country of Otaheite, New Zealand, New Amsterdam, Kamskatchka, and parts of China, and portraits of the inhabitants done from the life."¹ About the same time Fanny records that her own and Dr. Johnson's dear friend, Mrs. Thrale, went to Court in a dress "woven at Spitalfields from a pattern of Owhyee manufacture," brought thence by Captain Burney.

The patriotic aspirations which had fired Captain King at Macao were gratified not long after he returned home, crowned with a mild glory of his own, which might have been more brilliant but for the general excitement caused by a war with the American colonies, with France, and with Spain. His claims were not to be gainsayed, and he was appointed to the command of the *Crocodile* sloop of war, and afterwards to that of the *Resistance*, a 46-gun frigate. Of his very first cruise in the *Resistance* a most striking episode is thus chronicled on unexceptionable authority:—

"In the former vessel"—the *Crocodile*—"he was employed during the war in the Channel service, and during the command of the latter"

¹ *Diary of Madame D'Arblay*, ii. 13.

the *Resistance*—"a singular opportunity was afforded him of demonstrating the immense importance of scientific nautical knowledge;" and those who in our own day sneer at it, may take note of its use to King.

"He received orders from the Board of Admiralty to convoy a large fleet of merchantmen, consisting of nearly 500 vessels, from the Channel to the West Indies, accompanied by a sloop of war and a smaller armed vessel. It was known that a small French squadron had sailed from Brest a short time before, with a design, as was supposed, of intercepting this fleet.

"During his course towards Jamaica, which island he was directed first to make, he received frequent intelligence of the squadron, greatly superior to his, having been seen steering the same course. He had the good fortune, however, not to fall in with the enemy; but when he had arrived, as was concluded, within about one hundred and fifty leagues from the island, he learned that the French fleet had been seen the day before, nearly at the same place where he then was with his convoy. He directed his course, however, during the remainder of the day towards the island, and at dusk believed himself to be, according to his own reckoning, within about fifty leagues from the coast, the wind blowing a fresh gale. He then made signals for the masters of all the merchant vessels to repair on board the *Resistance* with their respective reckonings. Upon the examination of these, he found that his distance from the coast was in many of them made to be not more than twelve leagues, and in none more than twenty. The question now was whether to make for the island, or to lay-to till break of day. The commanders of the merchantmen strongly insisted upon the danger of approaching a lee shore during the night, with a strong wind and so heavy a sea. On the other hand, the capture of the fleet, if it did not soon reach the harbour, was scarcely doubtful.

"The responsibility thus imposed upon Captain King, in either alternative, was awful and peculiarly distressing. If he had given way to the pressing remonstrances of the commanders of the merchantmen, though the commerce of the country might have received a violent shock, and though its marine would have lost the service, at an important crisis, of so large a body of seamen, and its government have been condemned for committing the safety of so valuable a fleet to a convoy so inadequate to its protection: yet, the concurring result of the log-books of the ships would, in the eyes of the world, have been a sufficient justification of his conduct; but the Captain would hardly have escaped the reproaches of his own conscience for having, through want of firmness, brought so disastrous a calamity upon his country. Again, if he had been, in fact, so near the coast as, by the

reckoning of the merchantmen, he was supposed to be, his perseverance in the resolution which he had formed would most probably have been attended with the shipwreck of the convoy, and with the loss, perhaps, of every man of their crews. The disaster would have been attributed to his obstinacy, his vanity, and his presumption; and what to a noble mind would have been more painful, together with himself would have perished all possible means of rescuing his character from reproach, by a reference to the observations and calculations upon which his opinions might have been excusably, though erroneously, founded.

“In these straits he adopted a measure which, however hazardous it might be to his personal safety, afforded, perhaps, the best possible chance of saving the fleet. After notifying to his own officers and to the commanders of the merchantmen his intention of going on board the small armed vessel, and keeping so far ahead of the fleet that her lights might be seen, or at least her signal guns heard, he left orders that, upon observing any fixed signals of distress, they should immediately disperse and endeavour to save themselves with such assistance as the King’s ships might have any opportunity of affording them.

“Relying, therefore, with a confidence justified by a long course of the most satisfactory experience, upon the accuracy of his own astronomical observations and reckoning, Captain King directed the fleet, in opposition to the strong and reiterated remonstrances of all the masters of the vessels, to follow him and hold on the same course during the night, assuring them that at daybreak they would see the coast, many leagues to leeward, ahead of them.

“The event verified the accuracy of his reckoning, and the next morning the fleet had no sooner got safe within the harbour of Kingston than the enemy’s squadron was seen not many leagues to windward, and succeeded in capturing several of the merchantmen, who had, through a confidence in their own reckoning, ventured to disobey Captain King’s orders. Thus was this valuable fleet saved from almost certain destruction.

“A singular circumstance has been related to me,” Whatton, writer of the biographies in Baines’s *Lancashire*, “by a near relative of Captain King”—Dr. Walker King, no doubt:—“Upon his return to England, it was remarked by his family that the hair of his head, which had been brown, had become very grey; one of the officers of his ship assured them that this change had been observed a few days after the arrival of the *Resistance* at Kingston, and had been attributed to his extreme anxiety during the night in which his ship and convoy had been making for the harbour.”

A most gallant feat; all the more interesting that it exhibits the noble courage of the British naval commander guided by scientific knowledge, and quite as notable as many a more famous achievement in the way of boarding and cutting out. The biographer in *Baines* had the story, of course, from Walker King, the brother of its hero, who doubtless heard it from King's own lips. The histories of the British navy and of Jamaica have been searched for a confirmation of the narrative, but there is no mention of King's convoying expedition to be found in them. The following is the only record preserved anywhere of his West Indian career in the *Resistance*, and though not very significant, it may be worth giving in the dearth of information concerning the naval doings of this Lancashire Worthy. Sark's Island is one of the most easterly of the Bahama group, and the date of King's exploit is two or three weeks before Rodney's famous victory over De Grasse, whose nephew had thus a foretaste of his uncle's coming discomfiture:—

“The 2d of March” 1782 “His Majesty's ship *Resistance*, of 44 guns, commanded by Captain King, coming through Sark's Island passage in company with the *Du Guay Trouin* sloop, discovered two ships at anchor, which, on seeing them, cut their cables, got under weigh, and stood to the southward. The *Resistance* immediately gave chase to the sternmost, a 20-gun ship, which, by carrying a press of sail, soon lost her maintop-mast, and then hauled her wind. She”—the *Resistance*—“quietly came up with her”—the anonymous 20-gun ship—“and on firing a few shots at her, she struck. Leaving her to be picked up by the sloop, Captain King pushed on after the headmost of the enemy's ships, which soon began to fire her stern-chase guns, and continued to do so for a quarter of an hour, when, ranging up alongside of her to leeward, she struck her white flag, after discharging her broadside. Possession was then taken of *La Coquette*, a royal French frigate of 28 guns, but mounting only 23, her other 5 guns having been landed on Sark's Island. She had 200 men, and was commanded by the Marquis de Grasse, nephew to the Admiral Comte

de Grasse. The *Resistance* fired only a few guns, and had two of her officers wounded by the enemy's fire."¹

King returned to England at the close of the war in 1782, with his health much impaired by the hardships of six years of such voyaging and such cruising. Symptoms of consumption displayed themselves, and he lived only a year or two after his return. He left, however, ready for publication, the narrative of the last voyage of the *Resolution* and *Discovery*, of which he wrote (at Woodstock) the continuation from the point where the hand of Captain Cook had paused for ever. The two journals were published in 1784. The style of his instalment, though grave and precise, is easier and pleasanter than that of his great commander and predecessor, with whom to be thus associated in the authorship of so enduring a record of famous voyaging secures permanence for King's modest reputation.

As already mentioned, his younger brother, Walker, was a friend of Edmund Burke, and was indeed for a season private secretary to that statesman's political patron, Lord Rockingham. Burke seems to have extended to the older the friendship which he undoubtedly felt for the younger brother, and it is said that from the time when the symptoms of the consumption of which he died were first conspicuous, James King "was an almost constant inmate in the house of Mr. Burke." Dr. Walker King contributed to the first edition of Baines's *History of Lancashire* materials for the brief memoir of James King, published in that work in its original form, and in it the following passage is given as a quotation from a letter of Burke's. Due search has been made in Burke's published correspondence, but neither these nor any other traces of the statesman's friend-

¹ Beatson's *Naval and Military Memoirs of Great Britain* from 1727 to 1783 (London, 1804), v. 534.

ship for the voyager are to be found in it, though it contains ample indications of his intimacy with Walker King. "In truth," Burke is described as writing to a common friend soon after the death of the navigator, "in truth, James King was made and singularly framed to inspire confidence and attachment. His temper was admirable. He reconciled to him the people wherever he went. There was hardly an island visited by Cook in which the natives did not press him to remain with them. At the Cape of Good Hope he made an excursion deep into the country. There, too, he made his way, as he did everywhere, without design or effort. He became intimately acquainted with the principal planter of the country, who, observing to him that his constitution seemed weak, and that their country made people healthy and robust, advised him to take up his residence there. For the purpose of inducing him to stay, this respectable gentleman offered him a considerable plantation as a settlement, and one of his daughters in marriage." After his last return home, according to the latest of his biographers, "he wooed and won the Lady Anne O'Brien, the daughter of the Marquis of Inchiquin,"¹ but his illness and death prevented the marriage. Says Edmund Burke again in the letter already quoted from: "He was nursed in the declining state of his health by my wife with more assiduity than success. Her task was at last taken up by Trevanion and Young, who accompanied him to Nice, to which place he removed by the advice of his medical friends in the autumn of 1783. These two gentleman, of whom the former had accompanied him in his voyage round the world, and the latter been his frequent messmate during the early period of his naval service, continued to attend him with an affection rarely to be found in friendships connected by the common occurrences of

¹ Alice King, p. 158.

life. They left all their own pursuits, pleasures, and consolations, and cherished him to the moment of his death, and did not leave Nice till they had done the last duties to the memory of their friend, and engraved their testimony on his tomb." At the early age of thirty-two, in the October of 1784, James King died and was buried at Nice. In Clitheroe Church, the parish church of his native town, and in which, too, his father had ministered, a tablet, with a suitable inscription, briefly commemorates the merits of this Lancashire Worthy, cut off prematurely in his prime.

VI.

GEORGE ROMNEY.*

TO strangers the mention of Lancashire suggests for the most part a region of dismal uniformity, devoid of natural beauty, and shrouded in perpetual smoke. The district of Furness, however, teems with wild grandeur and romantic loveliness, though it has been from of old the seat of an iron mining and manufacturing industry, now become very considerable. This Calabria of England, as it has been called, gave birth to George Romney, whom Flaxman pronounced to be in poetic dignity of conception the greatest of all British painters.

He was born on the 15th of December 1734, and was thus some ten years younger than Sir Joshua Reynolds, of whom, as a portrait painter, he became the successful rival. His birth-place was Beckside, near Dalton, the ancient capital of Furness, and his father combined the trades of carpenter, joiner, and cabinetmaker with a success which rendered him, for that sphere of life, a comparatively wealthy man. After the fashion of the district, the eldest son received a superior education, to fit him for a profession; but

* Rev. John Romney (son of the painter), *Memoir of the Life and Works of George Romney* (London, 1830). William Hayley, *The Life of George Romney, Esq.* (Chichester, 1809). Allan Cunningham, *Lives of the most Eminent British Painters, &c.* (London, 1832), § Romney. Cowper's *Works* (by Southey). Cumberland's *Memoirs, &c., &c.*

George, displaying no great aptitude for learning, and a considerable turn for mechanics, was withdrawn from school in his eleventh year, and placed in his father's workshop. A genius above the ordinary operations of his handicraft soon displayed itself in the lad. He carved figures in wood, and constructed violins, on which a neighbour taught him to play. Born a painter, he drew his fellow-workmen in various attitudes, and his artistic tendencies were strengthened and developed by the early possession of an illustrated copy of Leonardo da Vinci's *Treatise on Painting*. His birth-place, with its picturesque environment and rustic denizens, was his drawing academy, and the instinct implanted in him by Nature kept him at work. "When Romney," says Flaxman, "first began to paint, he had seen no gallery of pictures, nor the fine productions of ancient sculpture; but then women and children were his statues, and all objects under the cope of heaven formed his school of painting. The rainbow, the purple distance, or the silver lake taught him colouring; the various actions and passions of the human figure, with the forms of clouds, woods, and mountains, or valleys, afforded him studies of composition. Indeed, his genius bore a strong resemblance to the scenes he was born in: like them it partook of the grand and beautiful; and, like them, also, the bright sunshine and enchanting prospect of his fancy were occasionally overspread with mist and gloom." The persons by whom he was surrounded were the ordinary inhabitants of an English village, but the scenery which met his eyes, from the time when they were first opened, was singularly and variedly picturesque. His father's house stood on a sort of terrace facing the west, and commanding an extensive view of the Irish Sea. From the hill behind, a noble panorama was unfolded. Northward was the estuary of the Duddon (afterwards Wordsworth's Duddon), which, with every tide,

showed like a fine lake, and was studded with sails. Behind the well-cultivated high grounds on the Cumberland side, and their white farm-houses, rose Black Comb with its mist-clad summit, and to the south-east of this region was the background of mountains which are the pride and glory of Furness. Few painters have grown up in a district more fitted to create and foster a love for the beautiful and sublime in Nature. Nevertheless, his first powerful impulse to painting what he saw around him was received not from the beautiful in Nature, but the odd in humanity. He himself used to relate that "one day in church he saw a man with a most singular face, from which he could never take his eye. He spoke of it when he went home, and his parents desired him to describe the man. He took a pencil, and from memory delineated the face so skilfully, and with such strength of resemblance, that they immediately named the person he meant; and the boy was so pleased with this that he began to draw with more serious application."

Many a deal-board in the paternal workshop had been covered with likenesses of its occupants by Romney's youthful hand, when a portrait-sketch which he made of a lady of some position attracted the attention, and procured him the encouragement, of a superior in station. His father was now induced to allow his son to follow painting as a profession, and an opening was not far to seek. There was then at Kendal a wild, dissipated, hair-brained, but clever artist of the name of Steele, whose finery and airy pretentiousness of demeanour had led the Westmoreland people to dub him Count Steele. The Count wanted a pupil, young Romney a master; and at nineteen he was indentured to this worthy for four years, on payment of a premium of twenty pounds, to learn "the art or science of painting, and to obey all lawful and reasonable commands." From the Count, Romney gained little more than

a certain proficiency in the art of colour-grinding, and out of the domain of art nothing that was good. Presently the teacher eloped to Gretna with an heiress ; and, smitten by the attractions of a respectable young woman in Kendal, Romney solaced himself in his master's absence by marrying off-hand Miss Jenny Abbott, of Kirkland. She had been well brought up and was well-conditioned and amiable, but the match was naturally disapproved of by his parents, and with it all chance of aid from his father seems to have ceased. Romney was soon thrown upon his own resources. The Count resolved to go with his bride to Ireland, and when his apprentice declined to follow him thither he accepted ten pounds in lieu of further service, and the indentures were cancelled. Meanwhile Romney had been working hard and forming a style of his own. He started, accordingly, as a portrait-painter, seemingly alternating between Lancashire and Kendal, and receiving a very fair amount of patronage, especially from the Westmoreland squires. He cultivated at the same time original composition, and exhibited a collection of his paintings in the Town Hall of Kendal, afterwards disposing of them by raffle, for which eighty tickets were taken at half-a-guinea apiece. The subjects of two of them were from *King Lear*—Lear Wakened by Cordelia, and Lear in the Storm tearing off his Robes—Mrs. Romney having sat as the model for Cordelia. Another was a Shandean piece, representing Dr. Slop, splashed with his journey, on his arrival in the parlour of Shandy Hall, where Mr. Shandy and Uncle Toby are discoursing on the nature of woman. As it happened, between Count Steele's return with his bride to work and his departure for Ireland, he spent a few months professionally in York, with Romney as his assistant. Sterne, who was then Rector of Sutton, an hour's ride from the ancient city, came to Steele's studio and had his portrait painted. Yorick's

latest biographer therefore fancies that as Romney was then in York, of which city the original of Dr. Slop was a well-known denizen, the figure of that obstetrical gentleman in the Shandean piece may have been a more or less faithful reproduction of the reality. It has been fondly fancied, too, that Sterne was struck with the young Romney, and was kind and friendly to him. Romney, however, told Hayley that he had received from Sterne nothing but the "usual civilities" which a reverend gentleman would show to the intelligent assistant and colour-grinder of the artist who was painting his portrait. Tristram Shandy was just then beginning its career, and from this piece and a subsequent one, *The Death of Le Fevre*, also painted by Romney, it is clear that the young artist knew and relished both the humour and the pathos of Sterne. Yorick's gospel of "sensibility" found, as will be seen hereafter, in the young colour-grinder of York, only too ardent a believer. But this is a digression. The exhibition of his pictures at Kendal shows Romney bent on acquiring a little distinction, —if only in that remote part of the country,—as something more than a mere portrait-painter. As his reputation increased, his thoughts turned London-wards, and after a few years of hard work, painting portraits in the North, he had scraped together a hundred pounds. Leaving seventy of them to his wife, he started in his twenty-eighth year for the great city with the remainder, and without a single letter of introduction.

According to their son (an infant when Romney went to London), it was with Mrs. Romney's full consent to the arrangement that her husband set forth alone to the metropolis. But, in any case, it is certain that after his arrival in London he passed himself off as an unmarried man, and never acknowledged that he had left behind him, at Kendal, a faithful and affectionate wife, the mother of his children,

of whom, by the way, only a son seems to have survived to maturity. An error committed at the beginning of his London career might be excused, but it was unpardonable in him to continue it when he rose to fame and fortune; and he displayed disgraceful moral cowardice in not avowing to his friends and to the world a connection of which he had no other reason to be ashamed than that he had once concealed it. Hayley, his friend and biographer, the friend and biographer, too, of Cowper, ascribes Romney's reticence and deception to an exquisite sensibility. Romney was undoubtedly sensitive, and he was also wayward, moody, suspicious of his friends, morbidly apprehensive of poverty, but his conduct to his wife was simply inexcusable. His exquisite sensibility too much resembled that of Jean Jacques Rousseau, with whom Hayley was fond of comparing him intellectually, and who huddled his infant offspring away among the *Enfants Trouvés* rather than be burdened with their upbringing. But, it must be added, however disgraceful his treatment to his wife, Romney provided suitably for the education of their son, who corresponded with him, sometimes visited him, and lived to write an admiring and affectionate biography of him, in which his treatment of his wife is extenuated as much as it could be. Romney was well punished for his misconduct, and much of his unhappiness may be traced to the folly and wickedness with which he deliberately and persistently deprived his wife of a husband and himself of a home.

Meanwhile his rise was rapid. He began in London at a time when there was a strong disposition to encourage native art, when Hogarth had secured fame, and Wilson and Gainsborough were appreciated, and Reynolds was reaping a golden harvest as a portrait painter. The Royal Academy did not yet exist, but the Society of Arts was then fulfilling the promise of its name, and giving considerable encourage-

ment to young painters, sculptors, and architects. Its second prize of fifty guineas was awarded to Romney in 1763 for his "Death of Wolfe;" and though the award was afterwards cancelled, it made his name known. On arriving in London he had pitched his tent near the Mansion House. Presently he migrated to Charing Cross, and raised his price for a portrait to five guineas. A little later he removed to Great Newport Street, a few doors from Sir Joshua himself. He ran over to Paris, and much improved his style by an inspection of the Rubenses in the Luxemburg Gallery. His imaginative pictures attracted attention enough to stimulate his friend Cumberland, the dramatist, to braise him in rhyme. When at the age of thirty-nine, with an income of twelve hundred a year, he paid the indispensable visit to Italy. He brought back with him new knowledge of his art, and a passionate admiration of "the Correggiosity of Correggio." Soon after his return he took a house in Cavendish Square, since tenanted by Sir Martin Archer Shee, and sitters flocked to him in the belief that successful as he had been before, his skill as a portrait painter was vastly enhanced by his Italian tour. Sir Joshua himself was doomed to see the favour of the town shared with him by Romney, and to hear that Lord Thurlow had said—"There are two factions in art, and I am of the Romney faction." Reynolds's latest biographer doubts the truth of the traditional report that he showed his dislike of his rival by speaking of him habitually as "the man in Cavendish Square." There is little reason, however, to doubt that Romney was not elected an Academician or even an Associate simply on account of Sir Joshua's dislike for him. Romney repaid the slight by never sending his pictures to the Academy, but it is creditable to him that he always did justice to Sir Joshua's genius. When some of his friends had been criticising the President's Infant Her-

cules, "Gentlemen," Romney struck in, "I have listened to all you have said; some observations are true, and some are nonsense, but no other man in Europe could paint such a picture." Again, on being told by Hayley that a whole length of Mrs. Siddons which he had begun was thought superior to Sir Joshua's picture of her as the Tragic Muse, he replied, "The people know nothing of the matter, for it is not."

Romney's and Hayley's was an early and a late friendship; perhaps on the whole it was injurious to the painter. The poet, too, was a man of feeling, who had separated from his wife when her society began to pain his exquisite sensibility, and from him Romney never heard the plain language of wholesome admonition. But the fantastic and flighty Hayley was withal a warm-hearted man. He loved Romney as well as admired his pictures, and for twenty-seven years the lonely artist recruited his health and spirits by passing a portion of the autumn with Hayley at Eartham in Sussex. It was at Eartham, beautiful Eartham, about mid-way between Chichester and Arundel—looking from the south downs over woodland and meadow to the sea—and at the home which Gibbon, who had been there as Hayley's guest, called a "little Paradise," that Romney executed his noticeable portrait of Cowper. The hypochondriacal poet and the hypochondriacal painter took to each other at Eartham; and when Cowper returned to Bucks and Weston, he rewarded the artist by sending him this graceful and doubly-grateful

"SONNET TO GEORGE ROMNEY, ESQ.

On his portrait of me, in crayons, drawn at Eartham, in the months
of August and September, 1792.

Romney! expert infallibly to trace
On chart or canvas, not the form alone
And semblance, but, however faintly shown,
The mind's impression, too, on every face,

With strokes that time ought never to erase :
 Thou hast so pencilled mine, that though I own
 The subject worthless, I have never known
 The artist shining with superior grace.
 But this I mark, that symptoms none of woe
 In thy incomparable work appear :
 Well ! I am satisfied, it should be so,
 Since on maturer thoughts the cause is clear ;
 For in my looks what sorrow could'st thou see,
 When I was Hayley's guest and sat to thee ?"¹

This was in 1792, a few months after the death of Sir Joshua. In 1785 Romney's earnings by portrait-painting amounted, for a single year, to a sum nearer four than three thousand pounds. All the great and notable people of the time were among his sitters, from Chatham and Burke—nothing need be said of peers and peeresses—to Paley and John Wesley, and he who had painted the portrait of Cowper was persuaded "by a believer from Manchester" to limn the features of Tom Paine.² In the meantime, Romney

¹ "It was likely enough," says Southey, commenting on the sonnet and on Hayley's prose-praises of the picture, "that Cowper would perceive no vestige of melancholy in this portrait, the expression being nothing more than what he was accustomed to see every morning when he looked in the glass ; but it seems strange that Hayley and Romney could mistake for the light of genius what Mr. Leigh Hunt has truly and forcibly described as 'a fire fiercer than that either of intellect or fancy, gleaming from the raised and protruded eye.' It was no ideal frenzy which had given it a character so decided and so strongly marked, that perhaps there is no other portrait, taken from a living subject, which is so painful to contemplate. And yet this renders it the more valuable, because it is a sure test of its truth."—Cowper's *Works*, (by Southey) iii. 87.

² "It is one of the finest heads," says the Rev. John Romney, "ever produced by pencil, both for professional skill and physiognomical expression. The character is simple, but vulgar ; shrewd, but devoid of feeling." "It is much more," Allan Cunningham adds, "it expresses deep and almost scowling malignity : did a painter desire to limn the looks of a fiend of the lowest order, he might adopt those of the arch-apostle of misrule."

was constantly projecting, and partly executing works in a higher department of art than what he called "this cursed portrait-painting." His affluence of conception was boundless, and his desire to be a great painter, not merely of portraits, was intense ; but he lacked perseverance and concentration, and only sometimes completed what he had begun. For Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery he was to have done great things ("Mr. Romney," said one day to him his truculent patron, Lord Thurlow, "before you paint Shakespeare, I would advise you to read him"), but he finished only two pictures for it. He worked hard—often thirteen hours a day, indeed—and about the only piece of good advice ever given him by Hayley was against his "intemperance of labour." Almost as soon as he began to be successful, melancholy seems to have marked him for her own, and he suffered much from hypochondria. Hard work aggravated this state of things ; he was rich and famous, but he was miserable. He tried to soothe his exquisite sensibility by indulging in raptures over the innocence and grace of other people's children, and in a sentimental worship of the lovely but shameless woman, who afterwards became famous and infamous as Nelson's Lady Hamilton, and whom Romney painted in every possible attitude, and in every possible character, from Circe to St. Cecilia. Far away, in the north, was his own wife, unacknowledged and neglected, who might have brought light and cheerfulness into the house in Cavendish Square, where the painter moaned and groaned over the state of his nerves, and could find no enjoyment in his wealth and fame. At last he fancied that matters would be mended if he migrated to the purer air of Hampstead. He built himself a mansion there with a studio and gallery, and before the walls were dry rushed from the house in Cavendish Square, which he had occupied for one-and-twenty years. He fondly hoped

that on the heights, which looked down on London over a sloping expanse of green and pleasant meadow-land, not, as now, annexed by the great Babylon, he would be enabled to execute the splendid pictorial projects of which his brain was full. But both mind and body were giving way, and in his sorrow over broken health and faltering hand, he bethought him of the wife of his youth. Without confiding his intention to any one, in the summer of 1799, he took coach for the North, and after a desertion of nearly thirty-seven years, rejoined, a broken-down old man of sixty-five, the wife whom, at eight-and-twenty, full of hope and strength, he had left behind in the Kendal where once more he sought her. With even greater than a woman's tenderness and capacity for forgiveness, she pardoned, welcomed, and nursed him. Feeble as he was in mind and in body, he understood the happiness within his reach, bought a house where he was, and ordered the sale of the Hampstead mansion.

At last Romney had a home. In his letters to Hayley he spoke of the attentions of his wife with affectionate gratitude. He was failing fast when his eldest brother, who had risen to be a colonel in the East India Company's army, returned to England and hastened to Kendal. Romney had looked forward with pleasure to the meeting, but his mind was setting even faster than his life. "Brother," said the soldier, "do you not know me?" Romney gazed at him, wept bitterly, and murmured some barely intelligible recognition, the last effort of his waning intellect. After a period of bodily torpor and mental imbecility, he died on the 15th of November 1802, and was buried where he had been born, at Dalton. In person he was tall and strongly made; his head was massive, his countenance manly in its expression; he was dark-complexioned, and his eyes were large and penetrating. His talk was vivid, and Cumber-

land, who did not flatter him after death as in life, says in an otherwise rather disparaging account of him socially and intellectually, "When in company with his intimates, he would give vent to the effusions of his fancy, and harangue in the most animated manner upon the subject of his art, with a sublimity of idea, and a peculiarity of expressive language that was entirely his own, and in which education or reading had no share. These sallies of natural genius, clothed in natural eloquence, were perfectly original, very highly edifying, and entertaining in the extreme. They were uttered in a hurried accent, an elevated tone, and very commonly accompanied by tears, to which he was by constitution prone,"—a trait which affords a key to much otherwise mysterious in Romney's character and career. In spite of his strange conduct to his wife, he seems to have been in the main of a kindly and generous disposition. Though he never belonged to, or exhibited in, the Academy, and does not appear to have associated much with his fellow artists, yet he was always ready to encourage and aid struggling merit: he was among the first to recognise the genius of Flaxman, and to procure for it the recognition of others.

Romney's reputation has sunk considerably since his own day; and so far as there is what can be called a general opinion on the merits of a painter whose works are rather scantily and imperfectly represented in the more accessible of our art-collections, it is expressed in Mr. Redgrave's pithy criticism, "Whatever he did, Reynolds did better." Yet the author of *A Century of Painters* admits that "there is a pleasing breadth, almost amounting to grandeur, in some of his works." A less recent, but, perhaps, more impartial because an unprofessional art-critic, the late Allan Cunningham, says of him:—"In his portraits, Romney missed certainly the grace and ease, and the fine flush of colouring which have brought lasting fame to Reynolds.

There appear, however, traces of great dignity and manliness in all his heads, and in some a certain touch of poetic loftiness of which Reynolds has hardly furnished an example." Respecting Romney's ideal and historical pieces, "honest Allan" opines that "some of them are equal in loftiness of thought and in simplicity of conception to any productions of their class in the British School." Mention has been already made of the verdict pronounced by the grateful Flaxman on our Lancashire Painter; and since, quite recently, Romney's pictures have emerged from private galleries, and in rather unusual numbers, to contribute to the attractions of the Royal Academy's annual Winter Exhibitions, for instance, there has been a certain reaction in his favour, with a wider and greater knowledge of his works. It seems now to be thought that, overpraised in his life-time, Romney has since his death been unduly depreciated and neglected.

VII.

HENRY CORT.*

THE county which has been so long the chief seat of the cotton manufacture, and which was the cradle of the canal system of the United Kingdom, can also boast of having produced the inventor through whose labours the British iron trade has attained its present enormous magnitude and importance. Henry Cort, too, was a Lancashire man, though his native county does not seem ever to have been the scene of the operations which made his name conspicuous in the history of the iron trade. It might be agreeable to believe that he inherited with his Lancashire blood the industrial ingenuity and energy which, exerted for centuries, have made his county what it is, and that to his early years having been spent in a part of England then and long before noted for its manufacturing successes, is to be ascribed his subsequent career as an inventor. Unfortunately, however, little is known of Henry Cort beyond his inventions and calamities ; the vast utility of the former, and the sorrowful severity of the latter, stamping him as the Crompton of the iron manufacture.

* *The Case of Henry Cort and his Inventions in the Manufacture of British Iron*, by Thomas Webster, M.A., F.R.S., &c., Barrister-at-Law (in *Mechanics' Magazine* for 1859). Percy's *Metallurgy: Iron and Steel* (London, 1864), § Puddling. Scriver's *History of the Iron Trade* (London, 1854), &c., &c., &c.

Concerning Cort's connection with his native county, nothing more has been discovered than that he was born in 1740, at Lancaster, and that there his father carried on the trade of a builder and brickmaker. The antecedents of his family, how long they had been settled in Lancaster, what were the upbringing, education, and the early character and pursuits of Henry Cort, are altogether unknown. His biography jumps at one bound from the meagre record of the date and place of his birth and of his father's trade, to his twenty-fifth year, when he is found in Surrey Street of the great metropolis, carrying on the business of a navy agent, in all probability one conducted then very much as it is now. Cort is understood to have been successful in this vocation, and in 1768 he married Elizabeth Heysham, "the daughter of a solicitor in Staffordshire, and steward of the Duke of Portland." During the first twenty years of their marriage she bore him no fewer than thirteen children, three of whom survived almost to our own day, having inherited little more than their father's name and the memory of his wrongs and calamities, while colossal fortunes were being accumulated out of the results of his skill and industry. Very possibly the pressure of a rapidly-increasing family led Henry Cort to think of some extraneous means of adding to his income as a navy agent, and the state of the British iron manufacture was then such as to appear to promise ample rewards to the ingenuity which could improve certain of its principal processes. In the decade between 1770 and 1780 the iron trade of Great Britain had begun to recover from the depression to which it sank in the middle of the eighteenth century. This recovery was mainly due to the success which had at last attended the endeavour to smelt iron ore by coal or coke, instead of by wood or charcoal. In these days we speak of the two great sources of our industrial prosperity, "coal and iron,"

as indissolubly connected ; but theirs was a long and fitful courtship, an engagement frequently broken off, and apparently destined to come to nothing, before they were joined at last in the bonds of permanent and productive wedlock. In the earlier period of the British iron manufacture, wood alone was employed to reduce and smelt the ore, and thus leafy and richly-timbered Sussex, from the amount of potential fuel which it offered in proximity to beds of iron, became in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries one of the chief seats of the English iron trade. It was early in the seventeenth century, and long before the removal of the general prejudice against the use of coal for domestic purposes, that ingenious men seem to have begun the attempt to smelt iron with coal instead of wood. The first success attained was that of the well-known Dud Dudley, one of the illegitimate children of the Lord Dudley of that day, and who was born in 1599. Lord Dudley was the owner of iron-works, and all about Dudley Castle there were iron-workers, whose business had begun to languish through the scarcity of fuel, produced by the voracious appetite of the furnaces for wood. Coal, however, abounded in the neighbourhood, and Dud Dudley, when quite a young man, set about attempting to make the mineral useful to the metal. For more than forty years he prosecuted his operations, through all sorts of interesting vicissitudes,—compromised by his loyalty during the great civil war, and after the Restoration harassed and persecuted by the charcoal iron-masters and their workmen, whose processes he threatened to revolutionise. He seems to have succeeded in turning out a marketable pig-iron with the aid of coal, but the quality at the best was indifferent, and the make was small. More powerful blowing furnaces than were known in his long day were needed, and the sulphur of the coal, brought in its crude state into contact with the metal, proved in-

jurious to the iron. There was nothing for it but the old process of smelting by charcoal, and as the demand for iron increased with the growth of industry and population, the supply of wood for fuel diminished with the destruction of our Sylva. The production of English iron continued steadily to decline. In 1720-30 there were only ten furnaces in blast in the whole Forest of Dean, where the iron smelters were satisfied to work up the cinders left by the Romans. A writer of the time states that we then bought between two and three hundred thousand pounds worth of foreign iron yearly, and that England was the best customer in Europe for Swedish and Russian iron. By the middle of the eighteenth century the home manufacture had so greatly fallen off, that the total production of Great Britain is supposed to have amounted to not more than 18,000 tons a year, four-fifths of the iron used in the country being imported from Sweden.

It seems to have been about 1757 that pit-coal was again employed successfully and on a large scale for smelting iron at the famous iron-works of Coalbrooke-dale, in Shropshire, among the spurs of the Wrekin. Abraham Darby, the Quaker, originally from the neighbourhood of Dudley, had settled in Coalbrooke-dale in 1709, and as the oak and hazel woods of the beautiful valley were devoured by their furnaces, he and his successors thought and worked out the problem of smelting iron with coal, or rather with its much purer form as coke. By 1760, probably, the operation was practised largely; and in that year, through the exertions of Dr. Roebuck (John Arthur's grandsire), the Carron Iron-works were established, and the improved machinery applied in them for blowing furnaces gave a great stimulus to the manufacture of iron by coal or coke. Eight years later, James Watt went over from Glasgow to Kinneil, and told his friend and coadjutor, Dr. Roebuck, the happy news

that their steam-engine was at last successful. In the following year, 1769, a memorable one in many ways, the specification of James Watt's steam engine was lodged, and Richard Arkwright took out a patent for his spinning-machine. With the steam-engine there came in turn new and vastly more powerful machinery for blowing the iron furnaces, and the British iron trade gained the start which it has never lost. Meanwhile, in 1765, with a sort of presentiment of what was coming, Mr. Anthony Bacon had taken, at what now seems an incredibly small rental,—£200 a year,—the lease of the forty square miles of country surrounding the then insignificant hamlet of Merthyr Tydvil. Seventeen years later he retired with a large fortune from the iron-works which he had erected, and sublet his realm of coal and iron to four men of enterprise. One of them was Richard Crawshay, of famous industrial memory,—he who became a millionaire, and was known as the “iron king,” thanks chiefly, perhaps, to poor Henry Cort.

In 1782 “the Cyfartha flich of the great Bacon domain,” as it has been called, came into the hands of this Mr. Richard Crawshay, the son of a small Yorkshire farmer, and who began life as an errand-boy in an ironmonger's shop at the east end of London. In 1783, Henry Cort took out his first patent. Its object was to secure the benefit of a discovery for the conversion of pig or cast iron into what is variously termed wrought, malleable, and bar iron. This conversion was, at the time when Cort took out his first patent, one of the weakest points in the iron manufacture of Great Britain. Charcoal “fineries” had still to be employed, and the hammer was the chief machine used in effecting the conversion. In 1787, Richard Crawshay himself could with difficulty turn out ten tons of bar iron weekly; in 1812, through the application of Cort's inventions, his production of it was at the rate of ten thou-

sand tons a year. While the manufacture of pig or cast iron was progressing rapidly in Great Britain, for malleable iron we seem to have been almost entirely dependent on the foreigner and his furnaces fed by charcoal. At one time, war time, too, the Russian Government threatened to raise the price of its bar iron to an exorbitant height, believing that in this department of production we were completely at its mercy.

Possibly it was as a navy agent that Cort had his attention first drawn to the demand for malleable iron, to the insufficiency of its domestic supply, and to our dependence on the foreigner for a manufactured article, the raw material of which abounded in Great Britain. In 1775, moreover, began the revolt of the American Colonies, soon followed by a war between England and France, and supplies of iron for naval purposes were wanted more than ever. However this may have been, it is pretty certain that Cort's peculiar business brought him into contact and connection with one Adam Jellicoe, "chief clerk in the pay branch of the Treasurer of the Navy," the author, direct and indirect, of all his woes. To Jellicoe Cort seems to have confided his iron-secret, and by Jellicoe its value was appreciated, all the more that his own official position, in those days of general official jobbery and corruption, could enable him to turn it to account. An agreement was concluded between Cort and Jellicoe by which the latter was to advance £27,000 on a security of the assignment of the patent,—Jellicoe to receive one-half of the profits, and his son Samuel, a clerk in the Navy Pay-office, to be partner with Cort. The partnership seems to have been known to the Navy Board, and there is even reason to surmise that the advance of £27,000 to Cort was made by Jellicoe with its sanction. Cort removed to works which he had erected at Fontley, on the Titchin river, in the parish of Fareham,

near Portsmouth, and nearer Gosport. The supply of malleable iron for the construction of anchors and other naval purposes was one of his objects, and the advantage of proximity to a great naval arsenal was obvious. Henry Dundas, afterwards Viscount Melville, was appointed Treasurer of the Navy in 1782, and the American war came to a close in the year of Cort's first patent, dated the 17th January 1783. The gist of this first patent was, that the iron, in the final stage of manufacture, should be passed through grooved rollers instead of being hammered as formerly. In Cort's second patent, taken out in the year following, is described the famous operation of puddling, one which was now to precede the passing of the iron through the grooved rollers, the earlier of the two processes being the main subject of the later of the two patents. Originalities they could neither of them be strictly called; but Cort was the first to make them of permanent utility, and to unite them with other ingenious processes, old and new, so as to produce available bar iron, not once in a way, or experimentally and fitfully, but continuously, persistently, and profitably. By the puddling process, conducted in a reverberating furnace, the flame only of a coal-fed furnace melted the impure pig iron which did not come into contact with the fuel and receive new impurities from it. Puddling consists in the continued and skilful stirring of the molten mass, in which the iron particles are gradually dissociated from the impurities contained in the pig, and gathered together in balls by the puddler. These balls, after being subjected to other manipulations for the removal of any impurities adhering to them as they come from the furnace, are passed through the grooved rollers, an operation which completes, in a general way, the process of purification, and turns out the bar-iron of commerce. The importance of Cort's invention lay in the substitution of

ordinary coal for charcoal in the process of refining the pig and converting it into wrought, malleable, or bar iron. It rendered England, with her coal, able to compete with and to excel in the manufacture of iron, other countries possessing more abundant supplies of wood or charcoal. And it allowed, what might otherwise have been impossible, the successful and profitable working of such inferior ores as those of the Cleveland district of Yorkshire. It has indeed been doubted whether, even with an unlimited supply of charcoal, but without the puddling process, such ores could be sufficiently purified from their sulphur, and, above all, from their phosphorus. "Although these"—sulphur and phosphorus—says a recent and high authority on the subject, "are combustible substances, they are not fully removable from iron by merely burning out. Large quantities may be considerably reduced thereby, but the last residues of their impurities hold to the iron so firmly that we may burn all the iron itself into an oxide without removing them by the simple action of oxygen. Their removal is nevertheless quite necessary to the production of good iron, as sulphur renders iron 'red short,' *i.e.*, brittle when heated, and thus unfit for forging; and phosphorus makes it 'cold short,' that is brittle when cold. $\frac{1}{1000}$ of phosphorus renders steel quite unfit for tools with keen edges, and about double this quantity of sulphur is ruinous to iron that has to be forged to any considerable extent."¹

¹ *Lectures on Iron and Steel*, by W. Matthieu Williams (in *Journal of the Society of Arts*, 28th July 1876). The effect of the puddling process in eliminating the impurities of the iron is mechanical as well as chemical. It was long thought to be chemical merely, and the result of oxidation taking place through the exposure of the metal to the flame and air by the working of the rabble, or through the evolution of oxygen from the oxides of iron with which the furnace is "fettled." When Mr. Bessemer, however, on forcing atmospheric air through molten iron, found that though silicon and carbon might be completely removed, scarcely any of the sulphur and

There was thus a twofold benefit conferred by Cort's invention of puddling. It wedded the coal of England to her iron, so as to make them produce good bar-iron, and it facilitated the profitable manipulation of those ores from which, inferior and impure though they may be, our chief supplies of commercial iron are derived. When Cort took out his patents, England imported her best iron; ninety years afterwards her exports of manufactured iron amounted in value to nearly £38,000,000. The bulk of the malleable iron produced in this country is still (though of course with improvements in the construction of the furnaces and so forth) puddled and rolled by the processes described in Cort's two patents; and though various attempts have been made to supersede his hand-puddling by mechanical puddling, none of them seem to have been successful.¹

phosphorus escaped, that explanation was proved to be defective. The following is the theory of the authority (Mr. Matthieu Williams), already cited:—"1. Pure iron, itself practically infusible, becomes, when sufficiently heated, soluble in its own more fusible compounds, such as its silicides, carbides, phosphides, &c., and pig iron is mainly composed of such a solution. 2. The carbon and silicon are oxidised in the early stages of puddling, and thus the solvent is diminished, and the iron is precipitated as granules; but it is not yet pure, each granule being enveloped in fusible sulphide and phosphide, too small in quantity to effect solution of the iron, but adhering to it so firmly as to resist oxidation. 3. When the iron is 'coming to nature' the puddler washes this adhering film of sulphide and phosphide into the cinder, just as a laundress washes adhering greasy dirt from the solid fibres of linen, &c., into soapy or alkaline water, grease being diffusible in such water, as liquid sulphides and phosphides of iron are diffusible in the cinder. This diffusibility is proved by analysis of the cinder wherein the phosphides and sulphides are afterwards found, just as the dirt from the clothes is found in the soapy water that has been used by the laundress. The action of the squeezer, hammer, and rolls, in removing the still adhering portions of fusible cinder is thus strictly analogous to the 'wringing' of the laundress."

¹ Respecting Cort's other invention, or realisation of an invention, the grooved rollers, Mr. Scrivener says, in his *History of the Iron*

The Navy Office, of course, had its attention soon called to Cort's inventions, and its heads forthwith commissioned competent *employés* to report on their promise and utility. The specification of the first patent was enrolled in the May of 1783, and in the following month, some of the officials of the Portsmouth Dockyard visited the Fontley works; and saw fragments of old and drossy iron converted into good, strong, and available metal by being melted in an air furnace, and either welded by a hammer, or better still, passed between the patented rollers. After the addition of the preliminary puddling process, many experiments were made in our dockyards, and in 1787 the results of some of them were recorded in "A brief state of facts relative to the new method of making bar-iron with raw pit coal and grooved rollers, discovered and brought to perfection by Mr. Henry Cort." The anchors made by his process from old ballast iron were reported to be superior to those of the best Swedish iron, and the great Scotch chemist, Dr. Black, certified the correctness of these reports. Capitalists now began to be convinced of the value of the new processes. In this same year of 1787, Richard Crawshay, ever vigilant and alert, had found his way from Cyfartha to Fontley, and arranged with Cort for the use of the patents, in consideration of the payment of a royalty of 10s. a ton on all iron to be manufactured in accordance with them at his Glamorganshire works, a pretty

Trade (p. 121), "To give some idea of the importance of Mr. Cort's invention of the rollers, it may be as well here to mention that, previous to their introduction, the smallest size drawn under the hammer was three-quarters square, all below that size were cut in the splitting-mill; and it required the hammer to be kept constantly at work to draw 20 cwt. of average sizes in twelve hours, while, with the rollers, they can manufacture, in the same time, with one pair of rollers, about 15 tons, which, in a work in full operation, are kept constantly employed, day and night, during six days of the week."

sufficient recognition, by a most competent authority, both of the legal validity of the patents, and of the value of the processes described in them. At the same time friend Jellicoe pulled the wires skilfully at the Navy Pay-office. On the 16th of April 1789, a Government advertisement, inviting tenders of iron for the use of the navy, contained the intimation, which reads so strangely in our day :—" No tenders for iron will be regarded but from persons who prove that they make it agreeable to Cort and Jellicoe's patent." After years of anxious labour, and the expenditure of all the savings of his navy-agency, Cort seemed at last on the high road to fortune.

A few months more and he was a ruined man. On the 30th of August 1789, Adam Jellicoe died at Islington, "after a fortnight's illness," and it was discovered that he was a public defaulter to the amount of more than £39,000. The £27,500 advanced to the Cort partnership had been taken from the Government-monies in his hands, and to that extent Cort and his partner were considered, justly no doubt, debtors of the Crown. Then, however, comes the mystery—one which will probably never be unravelled. The works at Fontley were worth a considerable sum, and two years' yield of the patent dues from the contracting ironmasters would alone have more than repaid the £27,500 advanced by Adam Jellicoe to the Cort partnership. But no mercy was shown, no delay was granted, to the unfortunate inventor. The breath was scarcely out of Adam Jellicoe's body, when, on the 1st of September, an affidavit was made by Alexander Trotter, the paymaster of the Navy, afterwards famous for his connection with Lord Melville's alleged official misdoings, that it was a case of urgency, and that Cort was in distressed circumstances. "An extent" was issued against the property of the firm, the patent rights included. Everything

was seized by the Crown ; Cort found himself thrown upon the world penniless and resourceless, while, strangest incident of all, Adam Jellicoe's son, Samuel, was placed in possession of the works at Fontley, and remained there undisturbed for long years afterwards. No attempt was made to realise then or subsequently the patent dues from the ironmasters, which Cort could not now claim, and which the Crown allowed to lapse. Those, therefore, who take the darkest view of poor Cort's sad story may almost be excused if they hint a belief that somehow the great ironmasters contrived to bribe persons in authority, so that they might not be asked to pay the royalties legally due for their use of patented processes which were already helping to enrich them. The names both of Lord Melville and of Trotter have been mentioned in connection with these disreputable doings, but, in the absence of documentary evidence, it is impossible to pronounce a verdict, and all the records of their reciprocal transactions were destroyed by themselves about the time of Lord Melville's impeachment. The first re-appearance of Cort after his ruin is in 1791, when, in answer to an appeal from him, the Commissioners of the Navy instruct one of their subordinates coldly and almost ironically to inform him that "your inventions appear to them of that utility as to induce them to give encouragement to the manufacture of British iron performed according to the methods that have been practised by you." Three years later, we find eminent London merchants and others, in a memorial to the Government of the day, stating that they have entered into a subscription to provide for the temporary relief of Cort and his destitute family, a wife and twelve children—and praying that, as a permanent provision for him, he should receive "some situation in one of her Majesty's dockyards, the Customs, Excise, or any other office or place in which his talents and industry may

prove useful to the public and himself." This appeal procured him a pension of nominally £200 a year, but owing to reductions, the actual receipt was only £150.

Poor Cort did not long trespass on the munificent bounty of his country, dying wretched and obscure, in 1800, while the Crawshays and other great ironmasters were making colossal fortunes by the gratuitous use of his inventions. He was buried in Hampstead churchyard, where his grave, with an inscription, in comparatively recent years made legible again by one of his sons, may still be seen. The truth, the whole truth, of "the case of Henry Cort," will probably never be discovered in this world, but enough of it is known to give him a very prominent place among the martyrs of modern industrial discovery and invention.¹

¹ After Cort's death, his widow memorialised the Government on behalf of herself and her children. The Comptroller of the Navy reported in November 1801 that she and her family were genuine objects of national interest, and she received a pension of £125, which was reduced by official deductions to £120. Ten years afterwards, the great ironmasters, on an application from her, considered her case, and raised for her a subscription which came to £871. Of this sum thirty guineas were contributed by the Crawshays, from which firm alone, if Cort had not been cruelly wronged, he would have received under their contract with him £25,000. In the following year, 1812, a petition from Coningsby Cort, the inventor's second son, setting forth the claims of his mother and her ten children, was presented to the House of Commons by command of the Prince Regent, who recommended it to the consideration of the House. A Select Committee was appointed to enquire into the matter, but the official element was strong in it, and one of its members was a son of the inculpated Lord Melville, and himself First Lord of the Admiralty. In opposition to the favourable testimony of competent ironmasters, among them Mr. Benjamin Hall, father of the late Lord Llanover, one witness, a Mr. Samuel Homfray, gave evidence to the effect that Cort's inventions were known and in use before the patents of 1783-4. Homfray's assertions have since been proved by letters from his own firm, and from ironmasters

conversant with its history and operations, to be a tissue of falsehoods. With his evidence, however, the Committee seem to have suddenly closed the enquiry. They reported that they could not satisfy themselves that either of the two inventions, the puddling process or the grooved rollers, was "so novel in principle or application as fairly to entitle the petitioner to a parliamentary reward." They recommended, however, that he should be reimbursed the money which he had expended in prosecuting the petition. But an application made to the Treasury for a grant was refused, and the petitioner found himself mulcted in the sum of £250.

Some forty years afterwards, there survived of the numerous family of Cort only three of his children, his youngest son, Richard, and two daughters; their united ages amounting to nearly 290 years. Cort's widow had received her pension until her death in 1816, after which one of £25, 6s. was granted to each of her spinster daughters. In 1856, the inventor's sole surviving son, Richard, then an old man of seventy-two, who had for fifty years filled offices of trust in various mining companies, memorialised the Treasury on his own and his sisters' claims, and received a refusal of any further consideration of them. But influential men, though not in office, and both in and out of Parliament, were induced to look into the matter, and saw that grave injustice had been done. Richard Cort found friends and supporters, and leading newspapers pleaded his cause. A national subscription was opened, which amounted in 1858 to £500, and to which the Queen contributed. Lord Palmerston discovered that the Treasury had been too hasty, and having referred the case to Sir Roderick Murchison and Dr. Percy, he gave Richard Cort, in consequence of their report, a pension of £50. Finally, soon after the late Lord Derby's accession to the Premiership, a grant of £200 from the Royal Bounty Fund was made to the inventor's two surviving and aged daughters. In asserting, and not altogether unsuccessfully, his own and his sisters' claims, Richard Cort had the further satisfaction of making it clear to the public mind that his father had been shamefully treated, and that the report of the House of Commons' Committee of 1812 was based on gross misrepresentations and on a gross misunderstanding of the facts of the case.

VIII.

*THE TOWNELEYS OF TOWNELEY.**

THE Towneleys, of Towneley Hall, in the neighbourhood of Burnley, are well known to be old among the oldest of Lancashire families, and if certain fond genealogies could be believed, theirs would be an antiquity almost unexampled in England. To be able to boast of an ancestor who came over with the Conqueror satisfies the cravings of the most ambitious pretenders to length of lineage. But the Towneley pedigree, or rather one Towneley pedigree, taking us back to the time of King Alfred himself, finds

* Whitaker's *History of Whalley*, Third Edition (London, 1818). *The Visitation of Lancashire*, A.D. 1533. By special commission of Thomas Bennet, *Clarencieux*, edited by William Langton (being vol. xcvi. of the Chetham Society's publications). Ormerod's *Tracts Relating to Military Proceedings in Lancashire during the Great Civil War* (being vol. ii. of the Chetham Society's publications). *The Jacobite Trials in Manchester, 1694*, edited by William Beamont (being vol. xxviii. of the Chetham Society's publications). Hibbert-Ware's *Lancashire Memorials of the Rebellion, 1715* (being vol. v. of the Chetham Society's publications); and his *History of the Foundations in Manchester* (London and Manchester, 1834), vol. ii. *Collectanea Relating to Manchester and its Neighbourhood*, by John Harland (being vol. lxxviii. of the Chetham Society's publications). Nichols's *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1818), vol. iii., § Memoirs of Charles Towneley, Esq. Baines's *Lancashire*, vol. iii., &c., &c.

the founder of the family in a certain Spartlingus, a contemporary of that memorable monarch, and said to be the first of those singular personages, half-lay, half-clerical, the hereditary Deans of Whalley and lords of the manor thereof, transmitting from father to son both a spiritual and a temporal jurisdiction. However this may be, and whether his descent from Spartlingus is accepted or not, pretty certainly one of these Deans, "Geoffrey the elder," received "the vill of Tunleia" from his father-in-law, Roger de Lacy, "between the years 1193 and 1211." A female descendant of Geoffrey, "Cecilia de Thonley," married, "about 4 Edward III.," a Del Legh, and their posterity took her name, with the lands of which she had come to be the heiress. From this Dame Cecilia have sprung all the Lancashire Towneleys. The seat of the main branch of the family, Towneley Hall, is still in the domain which Roger de Lacy gave to Geoffrey the elder in the days of bad King John. It stands among noble woods of ancient oak, overlooking ample greensward, and itself overlooked by hills behind—a venerable pile, with many later additions and alterations—towered, buttressed, and showing on one side thick walls of rude masonry, indicating a great antiquity. It is just the place which Sir Walter Scott would have delighted to describe, discoursing the while on the fortunes of its successive owners, of whose portraits it contains an unbroken series from the time of good Queen Bess almost to our own.

The first Towneley mentioned in general or local history is Sir Richard, said to have been knighted by the Lord Stanley (the first Stanley, Earl of Derby, of a former series of *Lancashire Worthies*), on Hutton Field, "at a great review of the army returning from the campaign in Scotland, 22d August 1482."¹ Of him little else has been recorded.

¹ *Visitation of Lancashire*, p. 44.

Of his son, Sir John, however, who was "Sheriff of Lancashire from 23d to 32d Henry VIII.," some more or less curious and copious notices survive. An active, acquisitive, long-lived knight, he increased the family estates by purchase and otherwise. It was he who enclosed the park of Hapton, then the largest in Lancashire, Knowsley excepted, and who built the domestic chapel at Towneley. It is of him and one of his outlying manors that there is this brief record in Leland's Itinerary:—"Within a good mile or I came to Worksop, I rode through a parke of Mr. Townle's, a knyghte for ye most part abyding in Lancastershyre; and in this parke is a very praty little house," which no doubt owed much of its "pratyness" to Sir John. Eager in getting and improving, Sir John was otherwise a thrifty man, and cared little, it would seem, to spend money on that which did not profit him directly. In the course of a heraldic visitation of Lancashire, in 1533, a deputy of Clarendieux found his way to Towneley Hall, but was far from satisfied with his reception and treatment. "I made no great inquisition," quoth the worthy herald (with his spelling modernised) of Sir John, "for he would have no note taken of him, saying that there was no more gentlemen in Lancashire but my Lord of Derby and Monteagle." Evidently Sir John either had not heard of, or did not believe in, or did not care about, the descent from Spartlingus *temp.* Alfred the Great. "I sought him all day," says in continuation this deputy of Clarendieux, "riding in the wild country, and his reward was two shillings, which the guide had the most part, and I had as evil a journey as ever I had,"¹ in the pursuit of heraldic knowledge under diffi-

¹ *Visitation of Lancashire*, p. 43. "The disclaimer of gentility," says Mr. Langton (p. 46), "is amusing; for if ancient descent and hereditary possessions confer such distinction, of no family in Lancashire can it be more truly said, *nascuntur generosi*."

culties. It was the enclosing zeal of this practical and penurious Sir John which in all probability gave rise to the legend, long rife among the peasantry of the district, that the wraith of a Towneley of Towneley was doomed to wander over his old domains, exclaiming dolefully and remorsefully :

“ Lay out, lay out,
Horelaw and Hollinghey Clough !”¹

“ By ‘lay out,’ ” adds the historian of Whalley, “ is meant the reverse of *take in*, to throw open, that is, or disappropriate.” The sleek clerical gentleman speaks, too, of the legend as due to “ the malice ” as well as to “ the superstition ” of “ the common people.” But as, according to Whitaker’s own subsequent showing, the enclosure of Horelaw was clearly an illegal encroachment, Sir John got off very easily, with no other punishment than that inflicted by a posthumous legend. The reverend doctor, snug and cozy in his comfortable vicarage, could not of course understand the bitterness with which poor sixteenth century Lancashire peasants saw their old liberties of commonage and pasturage abridged by the high-handed and probably hard-hearted Knight of Towneley.

Sir John lived to see his grandson and heir, Sir Richard Towneley (knighted at the siege of Leith), wed the heiress of the Lincolnshire Wimbishes, one of the many marriages by which the Towneleys added to their possessions. He himself, after having two wives, took in his declining years a mistress, a certain Jennet Ingham, the sister, it is presumed, of the John Ingham whom he had presented to his chantry in Burnley Church as early as 15 Henry VII. ; “ so that,” says Doctor Whitaker, “ he seems by a very unhappy and preposterous arrangement to have chosen out of the same house the chaplain of his youth and the mistress

¹ Whitaker, ii. 342.

of his old age." Verging on seventy, Sir John died about 1541, some years after the suppression of the Pilgrimage of Grace, participation in which he had skilfully avoided, thus escaping the ruin in which that insurrectionary protest against the suppression of monasteries involved several of his friends. The Reformation had come or was coming. The Towneleys, of Towneley Hall, like many other old Lancashire families, clung to the ancient creed, and have remained Roman Catholics to this day. As a natural consequence they adhered, more or less conspicuously, to the House of Stuart—from the first assault on it by the Long Parliament, to the final extinction of its hopes on the field of Culloden. When simple recusancy was penal, the Towneleys did not flinch from the consequences or abandon their faith. The encloser of Horelaw left orders in his will for "one hundred masses of the five Wounds of our Lord to be said for his soul." The John who was Towneley of Towneley fifty years afterwards had to suffer severely for the assertion of his belief in the efficacy of masses. In Doctor Whitaker's day there hung in the library of Towneley Hall a portrait of this persevering and persecuted Papist, to which was affixed a contemporary inscription, containing a brief and pointed biography, if not autobiography, of the original. A curious memorial it is of an old and now scarcely conceivable past. "This John," so ran the record, written in the year of the insurrection and execution of Essex (and of which, too, the spelling is here modernised), "This John, about the sixth or seventh year of her Majesty that now is, for professing the Apostolic Catholic Roman faith, was imprisoned first in Chester Castle, then sent to Marshalsea, then to York Castle, then to the Blockhouses in Hull, then to the Gatehouse in Westminster, then to Manchester, then to Broughton in Oxfordshire, then twice to Ely in Cambridgeshire, and so now of seventy-three years old and

blind, is bound to appear and keep within five miles of Towneley his house, who hath since the statute of '23 paid into the Exchequer £20 the month, and doth still; [so] that there is paid already above £5,000. 1601." There is a certain pathos in these short and simple annals of the imprisonments of poor John Towneley, "old and blind." Yet, despite their unflinching adherence to dangerous and desperate causes, the Towneleys seem to have escaped all along anything like confiscation of their estates, in Lancashire at least. So far they have been more fortunate than several families of the same county and of the same tenacity of opinion. And even the persecuted John aforesaid, it may be added, found a good and influential friend in his uterine brother, a son, by her first marriage, of his father's second wife and his own mother. This was Alexander Nowell, a notable Lancashire worthy, who after having been persecuted in Mary's reign, became Dean of St. Paul's in Elizabeth's, and was not only the author of the first form of our Church Catechism, but discovered the merits of bottled ale to boot. In sundry letters from the Lords of the Council to the Earl of Derby and the Bishop of Chester of his day, Nowell figures as interceding on behalf of his "brother Towneley." On one occasion the object of his intercession is that John Towneley, then imprisoned at Manchester for recusancy, should be allowed to proceed to London, "he having fallen," say my Lords (from information furnished by Nowell), "into certain diseases, whereof he is desired to be cured here, where it is supposed that best advice and help may be had. We have been contented to yield some favour unto him in that behalf, and therefore pray your Lordships to give order that he may be sent up hither in the company of some trusty person whom you shall appoint, to the intent,"—on the understanding—"he be not suffered to go out of the way to any other house be-

sides the ordinary inns, but come directly hitherto in such sort as the state of his body may conveniently bear. And at his coming we mind to take further order what shall be done with him." Which letter the Bishop of Chester (Chadderton), smelling a rat, docketed thus: "For Mr. Towneley to be sent up by reason of a feigned information given by the Dean of Paul's of his sickness." On another occasion, and doubtless through the same friendly intervention, my Lords direct the Earl of Derby and the Bishop to allow John Towneley to leave prison for a time "upon his own bond in a good sum of money," on his plea that he has in hand "great causes and suits for land, a marriage to be made in Lincolnshire for his daughter." They are the more inclined to grant him this favour because they are "informed that the said Towneley (his religion excepted) doth carry himself dutifully and quietly." Finally (5th July 1584) they order his release because he has "paid the money appointed and limited by statute," and as justice ought to be done even to recusants, it is not fair to inflict a double punishment.¹

Charles and Christopher, two of the grandsons of this much-suffering John, became more or less distinguished, though in very different ways. The younger, Christopher, was the first of the family to achieve a certain reputation out of the sphere of mere Lancashire squirism, and irrespectively of loyalty to unsuccessful causes, religious and political. He was the friend and correspondent of Crabtree, who was the friend and correspondent of Jeremiah Horrocks, and he thus belonged to the remarkable little group of astronomical and scientific observers and students in the northern counties, the members of which were busy with their tranquil pursuits when our great civil war

¹ Peck's *Desiderata Curiosa*, p. 134, 147, &c.

of the seventeenth century began.¹ Christopher, too, devoted himself to antiquarianism even more than to science. He was the friend and coadjutor of Dr. Kuerden, whose MS. collections are so well known and so often referred to, and in conjunction with whom he planned a history of Lancashire—never completed. Some thirty volumes of Christopher's collections are now at Towneley; and they yielded a great deal of fruit to Dr. Whitaker when composing his history of Whalley; though, after the death of their original compiler, his worldly goods coming to be inventoried and appraised, they were put down as "several manuscripts, valued at 11s."—such being the slender estimate formed in 1674 of the value of poor Christopher's almost life-long labours towards a history of his native county! Christopher died quietly in his bed, years after the Restoration of his Majesty Charles II. The doom of his elder brother, the squire of Towneley, was a bloody one. When the civil war broke out, Charles Towneley was foremost among the loyalist Lancashire squires who joined the royal standard. He was with the Royalists who, under the seventh Stanley, Earl of Derby, made, in September 1642, the unsuccessful assault on Puritan and Parliamentary Manchester, chronicled in a former volume. In an official account of the storm of Preston by a Parliamentary force sent from and by Manchester, in the February of 1643, "Master Towneley of Towneley" is described as having narrowly escaped, and among the ladies who were then taken prisoners was his wife. He escaped from Preston only to find a soldier's death eighteen months later in the fiercely-contested battle of Marston Moor, where Lieutenant-General Cromwell put to flight Prince Rupert and the flower of the cavaliers.

¹ See *Lancashire Worthies*, First Series, p. 77, *Note*.

A generation passed away, and William the Dutchman occupied the throne of the Stuarts; but the Towneleys remained true to the cause of hereditary right. Twenty-seven years after the Charles Towneley, who fell on Marston Moor, narrowly escaped with his life from the storm of Preston, another Charles of Towneley Hall (presumably his grandson) had shown himself, with the Revolution of 1688, so devoted to the fallen James II., that, on the passing of the Indemnity Act of 1690, he was expressly excepted from its provisions. He participated, or was charged with participating, in the so-called "Lancashire Plot" of 1691, and in some of the informations taken by the authorities, he is represented as enlisting troops for King James, and employing carriers to convey from Barnet to his house in Lancashire boxes "full of swords, pistols, and carbines," nay, as purchasing "kettle-drums and jack-boots" to be helpful in a Jacobite insurrection which did not then come off. He was not, however, among the eight Lancashire gentlemen who were tried at Manchester in 1694 for alleged complicity in that alleged plot of 1691, and all of whom were acquitted.¹ Then again, twenty years after the Manchester trial, Charles's son and heir, Richard, the new squire of Towneley, fighting, or ready to fight for the Stuarts, was among the Jacobites beleaguered in Preston itself by the forces of his Majesty George the First. This was during the

¹ Beamont's *Jacobite Trials in Manchester*, 1694, p. 35, &c. This Towneley was probably the Charles (1658-1711) who succeeded Richard (1628-1706), the son and heir of the Towneley killed at Marston Moor. Richard had scientific tastes, and was a friend and correspondent of Thoresby, who in his Diary has given an account of a visit to him at Towneley Hall. Mr. Beamont (p. lxiv. of introduction) thinks that the Towneley of the plot of 1691, is the same person as the Richard Towneley whose story is about to be told. But if Whitaker's dates in his genealogical tree of the Towneleys are correct, such identity is impossible, since he represents the Towneley who was tried in 1716 as born in 1687, only four years before the alleged plot of 1691.

Derwentwater rising, sometimes dignified with the appellation of "the Rebellion of 1715." The movements of King George's troops were directed from a distance by the great Duke of Marlborough,¹ from whose eyes the tears of dotage had not yet begun to flow, and "proud" Preston, skilfully invested, was surrendered by the rebels. Richard Towneley of Towneley was one of the captured and the tried. It was proved that he had raised a body of men called Towneley's troop, quite a family affair, since the coachman, butler, and postillion of Towneley Hall were enrolled in it. But he was fortunate in being tried after Derwentwater and scores of other Jacobites had been condemned and executed. The London jury who dealt with him were tired of convicting and of hanging. They accepted his plea that he had been forced into the "rebellion," and acquitted him through sheer good-nature, a piece of lenity for which they were sternly rebuked by the presiding judge.

The Towneley who escaped the gallows after the Derwentwater rising of 1715 died in 1735, and his eldest son, the heir of Towneley, died in 1742, leaving in his turn an eldest son, a child of eight, to inherit the Towneley estates, and to become celebrated as the collector of the Towneley marbles. Thus when three years afterwards the rebellion of 1745 broke out, Towneley of Towneley Hall was a boy of eleven, for whom participation in the last of the Jacobite risings was impossible. But this boy's uncle, Francis, one of the younger sons of the Towneley who took part in the "rebellion" of 1715, was in 1745 a man of six-and-thirty, and, unfortunately for himself, he became a prominent champion of the Stuart cause in the rebellion of 1745.²

¹ Hibbert-Ware's *Lancashire Memorials of 1715*, p. 103 and 110.

² A good sketch of the career of Francis Towneley, and of that of his Manchester regiment, is given, rather unexpectedly, by Hibbert-

Born in 1709, Francis was a gallant young gentleman of nineteen when, in 1728, "by course of misfortunes in his family," he was led to make France his home, and "being a man of spirit," was taken notice of at the court of the young Louis Quinze. He received a commission in the French army, and fought at the siege of Philipsburg in 1734 under Marshal Berwick, when and where a cannonball killed that son of James II. by Marlborough's sister, Arabella Churchill, who had risen to eminence in the military service of France. We hear next of Francis Towneley living a retired life in Wales, until the Rebellion of 1745 was being planned. Then Towneley left his retirement and went to Manchester to consult and concert with the leading men of the party, in what was at that time a hotbed of Jacobitism. John Byrom was one of them, and it was during this visit of Towneley's to Manchester that his habit of profane swearing provoked the friendly and ardently Jacobitical, but religious and straight-laced, Byrom into this characteristic expostulation :—

" O that the Muse might call without offence
The gallant soldier back to his good sense!
His temporal field so cautious not to lose,
So careless quite of his eternal foes.
Soldier, so tender of thy prince's fame,
Why so profuse of a superior name?
For the king's sake the brunt of battles bear,
But—for the King of kings' sake—*do not swear!*"

The scene of their Jacobite conferences, at which Towneley's oaths so shocked the worthy Byrom, is said to have been "a small public-house near the village," as it was then, "of Didsbury, adjoining a well-known ferry named Jackson's Boat."

Ware in his *History of the Foundations of Manchester*, vol. ii. p. 97, &c. Much use has been made of it in the text.

In his southward march to "raise" England (which turned out to be quite an unsuccessful undertaking), after his victory of Prestonpans, Charles Edward entered Carlisle on the 17th of November 1745, where and when Towneley seems to have joined him. There are traces of Towneley's presence at Preston with the young Pretender's army about the 26th of November, and to this date belongs the incident recorded in the following rather curious narrative:—

"At this time," while at Preston for a day or two, "it is conjectured Colonel Towneley paid hasty visits to several of his old neighbours, the heads of the county families in the district, and amongst others there is a tradition that he visited Gawthorpe Hall, the seat of the Shuttleworths, between whom and the Towneleys of Towneley there had long existed much friendship and intimacy. What was his real errand there it is not difficult to conjecture. But if it were to incite the Shuttleworths of the day, with their tenants and dependants, to join in the rebellion, his arguments were unsuccessful, and he left the house without any succour, or the promise of future aid. But a few years ago, during an extensive repair and renovation of Gawthorpe Hall, the panelling of a window-sill in one of the chambers was removed, and then there was found beneath the sill a sum of money in gold, of which only a few were of English coinage, the others being chiefly Spanish pieces, and, it is said, none of later date than 1745. On examining the window-sill panelling, it was found that after the wood had been forced up, apparently with a dagger-blade, and the money hidden, the panel had been driven into its place again with the pommel of the dagger, which had left its dints in the wood. The reasonable and indeed the most probable conjecture is that Colonel Towneley, about to go southward on a perilous expedition, and perhaps apprehensive of robbery while travelling alone through a disturbed district, had concealed this sum, said to be about £150 or £160, in a place where he rightly deemed it would be secure and undiscovered; with the intention, when peaceful times returned, or when opportunity served during the struggle about to commence, to possess himself of it again, but that time never came."¹

The people of "Proud Preston" received Charles Edward and his little army with acclamations, the first that he and

¹ Harland, p. 227.

his adherents had heard since they crossed the Border. But no recruits would enlist, and the young Pretender was fain to assure his disappointed Scotch councillors and officers that his English friends would join him as soon as he reached Jacobite Manchester. It was probably the reputation of Manchester for its Jacobitism which led to the singular expedition of a sergeant in the regiment of the Chevalier Johnstone, who has thus recorded it:—

“One of my sergeants, named Dickson, whom I had enlisted from among the prisoners of war at Gladsmuir, a young Scotchman, as brave and intrepid as a lion, informed me on the 27th, at Preston, that he had been beating up for recruits all day without getting one. He had quitted Preston in the evening with his mistress and my drummer; and having marched all night, he arrived next morning at Manchester, and immediately began to beat up for recruits for ‘the yellow-haired laddie.’ The populace at first did not interrupt him, conceiving our army to be near the town; but as soon as they knew that it would not arrive until the evening, they surrounded him in a tumultuous manner, with the intention of taking him alive or dead. Dickson presented his blunderbuss, which was charged with slugs, threatening to blow out the brains of those who first dared to lay hands on himself or the two who accompanied him; and by turning round continually, facing in all directions, and behaving like a lion, he soon enlarged the circle, which a crowd of people had formed round him. Having continued for some time to manœuvre in this way, those of the inhabitants of Manchester who were attached to the house of Stuart took arms and flew to the assistance of Dickson, to rescue him from the fury of the mob, so that he had soon 500 or 600 to aid him, who dispersed the crowd in a very short time. Dickson now triumphed in his turn, and putting himself at the head of his followers, he proudly paraded undisturbed the whole day with his drummer, enlisting all who offered themselves. On presenting me with a list of 180 recruits, I was agreeably surprised to find that the whole amount of his expenses did not exceed three guineas. This adventure of Dickson gave rise to many a joke at the expense of the town of Manchester, from the singular circumstance of its having been taken by a sergeant, a drummer, and a girl.”¹

¹ The Chevalier Johnstone's *Memoirs*, p. 48-9 (quoted in Sir Walter Scott's *Tales of a Grandfather*, Third Series, chap. 79).

These 180 recruits, procured by the intrepid Dickson, became the nucleus of Towneley's famous Manchester regiment. On the 29th of November Charles Edward entered Manchester in triumph, and forthwith Towneley was invested with the command of the regiment raised, and to be raised, in the town—Dickson's recruits being handed over to him as its colonel. Charles Edward's secretary, Lord George Murray, issued commissions in Manchester, French commissions, like Towneley's own, so that if the worst happened, the officers who bore them might claim to be treated as prisoners of war in the service of the King of France, not as rebels to King George. The upper classes of Manchester, however strong their Jacobitism, and however fervent their joy over Charles Edward's advent, displayed considerable caution, and contributed to Towneley's regiment but very few officers, among them, by the way, "Jemmy" Dawson, the hero of Shenstone's ballad, a young gentleman of respectable family, and an alumnus of St. John's College, Cambridge. When all was said and done, the strength of the completed regiment amounted to only 300 rank and file, many of them, it seems, not Manchester men; and English friends, there or elsewhere, did not, as he had fondly hoped, flock in numbers to poor Charles Edward's standard. On Sunday, November the 30th, being St. Andrew's Day, the Scottish chiefs of his army had "prayers read to them, in their own way, in the Collegiate Church, at an unusual hour." The Manchester regiment was then mustered in the churchyard, and reviewed by the Prince himself. "On this occasion each officer appeared in a plaid-waistcoat, and with a white cockade, wearing also a sword by his side, with a brace of pistols attached to his girdle; while Colonel Towneley, as a badge of his superior authority, displayed in addition a Highland-plaid sash, lined with white silk. The flag of the regiment

had on one side of it 'Liberty and Property,' and on the other 'Church and Country.'"

Towneley and his newly-raised regiment set forth with the rest of the force at the beginning of December on the famous march to Derby. When the still more famous retreat from that town northwards began, the men of the Manchester regiment were found to be the only Englishmen who had openly declared in favour of Charles Edward. On their way back to Manchester officers and men were very dispirited, and desertions became frequent. On the 8th of December the retreating army re-entered Manchester, not at all in triumph, and were assaulted and pelted here and there by the mob. The town was punished by having to pay £2,500 (twice the sum first demanded), and the officers of the Manchester regiment had to assist in collecting it. The news of the approach of the Duke of Cumberland by forced marches hastened Charles Edward's departure, and Manchester was evacuated two days after it was re-entered. Carlisle, where Towneley had first joined the young Pretender, was reached on the 19th of December, by which time desertion had reduced the Manchester regiment to nearly a third of its original strength. It was decided that the Manchester men, who grumbled at the prospect of retreating into Scotland, should be left to garrison Carlisle with between 200 and 300 of the rest of the force. Towneley, with his men, was to command in the town; Colonel Hamilton, with some companies of the Duke of Perth's regiments, was to hold the castle; and Charles Edward took formal leave of them, with the assurance that he would come to their assistance in a few days. It was a final leave-taking. On the 21st the Duke of Cumberland appeared before Carlisle, and invested the town on all sides. The besieged kept up an ineffective fire on him for days, until a battery of six 18-pounders

was brought to bear on them. Then Hamilton was for surrender; Towneley for a gallant defence. "Better," he is reported to have said to his disheartened fellow-commander, "better to die by the sword than fall into the hands of these d—d Hanoverians." But Hamilton was resolved on submission, and Towneley had to yield. The only terms which the Duke of Cumberland would grant were that the garrison should not be put to the sword, but be reserved for his Majesty's pleasure. These hard terms were accepted, and so ended the military career of the Manchester regiment, which, when it surrendered, had dwindled to 93—officers and men.

The officers were conveyed in waggons to London, and lodged in Newgate. Colonel Towneley's was at the head of the list of names of those whom the French Government (France and England were at war) demanded by cartel. The demand was made in vain. In prison (where Jemmy Dawson was writing verses on his betrothed) "Colonel Towneley, for some reason or other, had no relish for the society of his late companions in the campaign, and showed much hauteur. He conversed with no one but Mr. Saunderson, his Roman Catholic priest and confessor." The trial of the officers of the Manchester regiment began on the 16th of July 1746, in the "Court-House at St. Margaret's Hill," Southwark, before a High Commission appointed for the purpose. Colonel Towneley was the first of the prisoners arraigned. His counsel pleaded that as he had been sixteen years in the service of France, and while with the rebels had held a French commission, he was entitled to the cartel. The Court, however, declared that this was an aggravation of his offence, "as no man who was by birth a liege-subject of His Majesty was justified in taking up arms and acting in the service of a prince at war with His Majesty." In ten minutes the jury found

him guilty. "The behaviour of Colonel Towneley during the trial was firm and undaunted, and when sentence of death was passed against him, he was not in the least discomposed, nor did his countenance undergo any change of colour." With Towneley, six captains (Jemmy Dawson among them), two lieutenants, and one ensign, all of the Manchester regiment, were condemned to die. The others were reprieved, to be imprisoned or transported. On the day of execution the condemned were conveyed on hurdles from "the new gaol at Southwark" to Kensington Common, where gallows had been erected, and a fire was lighted as a prelude to the barbarous operation of disembowelling. "At the end of five minutes after suspension had taken place, Colonel Towneley, even before signs of life had ceased to be extinct, was cut down and stripped. Being laid on the block, the hangman with a cleaver severed his head, and put it into a coffin; then taking out his bowels and heart, he threw them into the fire," and so with the others. "When the heart of the last was thrown into the fire, the executioner cried out: 'God save King George,' and was answered by the spectators with a loud shout." In his contemporary report, Sylvanus Urban tenders the information that "three of their heads are to be set up, viz., Morgan's upon Temple Bar, Towneley's at Carlisle, and Syddall's at Manchester;" and it is even sometimes said that Towneley's head was actually "set up" at Temple Bar. Not so. "At the intercession of friends, this part of the Colonel's sentence was remitted; an undertaker at Pancras being allowed to take charge of his corpse, and by him it was interred. Captain Fletcher's head alone was placed on Temple Bar."¹

¹ This Captain Fletcher (*ætat.* 28, when he enlisted at Manchester) was "a linen-draper living near Salford Bridge, and conducting the business for his mother, who on her knees entreated him

And so vanish from history and biography the Manchester regiment and its ill-fated Colonel.¹ The rebellion of 1745 was at an end, and with it the participation of the Towneleys in public affairs. The Stuart cause was lost for ever, and the Towneleys had to content themselves with cherishing the religious creed of King Alfred and Spartlingus.

not to connect himself with the insurgents. He paid £50 for his commission" (Hibbert-Ware, ii. 101).

¹ Towneley's fate, like Jemmy Dawson's, became the theme of a ballad, though one of which the style is very different from Shenstone's. Here it is, "William" being, of course, the Duke of Cumberland :—

TOWNELEY'S GHOST.

When Sol in shades of night was lost,
And all was fast asleep,
In glided Townley's murdered ghost,
And stood at William's feet.

"Infernal wretch! away!" he cried,
"And view the mangled shade,
Who in thy perjured faith relied,
And basely was betrayed.

"Embraced in bliss, embraced in ease,
Though now thou seem'st to lie,
My injured shade shall gail thy ease,
And make thee beg to die.

"Think on the hellish acts you've done,
The thousands you've betrayed:
Nero himself would blush to own
The slaughter thou hast made.

"Nor infants' shrieks, nor parents' tears,
Could stop thy bloody hand;
Not even ravished virgins' tears
Appease thy dire command.

"But oh! what pangs are set apart
In hell thou'lt shortly see;
When even all the damned will start,
To view a friend like thee."

With speed, affrighted William rose,
All trembling, wan, and pale,
And to his cruel sire he goes
And tells the dreadful tale.

"Cheer up, my dear, my darling son,"
The bold usurper said;
"Never repent of what you've done,
Nor be at all dismayed.

Two Towneleys now remain to be spoken of before our "abstract and brief chronicle" of the sayings and doings of this noticeable Lancashire family can be closed. John, an elder brother of Francis, the ill-fated Jacobite beheaded on Kensington Common, was born at Towneley in 1697. He is said "to have been originally intended for the bar, and to have been placed in the office of the famous Salkeld." Like his brother Francis, however, he settled early in France, but of his career there little is known. He became a Knight of St. Louis, and probably spent in Paris, and in the best society, most of his later life,—a long one, for he died at the ripe age of eighty-five.¹ The story runs, that being in

"If we on Stuart's throne can dwell,
And reign securely here ;
Thy uncle Satan's king of hell,
And he'll protect us there."

A more fervid than felicitous effusion of the Jacobite muse. "Who was the author of the lines may never be ascertained ; but it is not a little remarkable that they should have been deemed worthy of transcription by a lady, the wife of a clergyman of the Church of England. Yet I am assured that the MS. is in the handwriting of Mrs. Kenyon, wife of the clergyman of that name, resident a century ago in Salford, and incumbent of Trinity Chapel" (Harland, p. 234). The ballad seems to have been first printed in James Hogg's *Jacobite Relics of Scotland* (Edinburgh 1821), song xcvi., where it appears as "Towly's Ghost." In a note (p. 370) the Ettrick Shepherd says : "I copied this song from the Honourable Miss Rollo's papers, and though I got several other copies, yet the name in them all is 'Towly.' I, however, find no such name among those who followed Prince Charles. There was a Colonel Francis Towneley who led the 200 men that joined the Highland army at Manchester." An old MS. copy of the ballad, with the correct title, is among the family papers now at Towneley Hall, and has been described in the Report—for 1874—of the Historical Manuscripts Commission.

¹ Whitaker, confounding him with his brother Francis, goes on to say that he not only received a commission in the French army, but fought under Berwick at the siege of Philipsburg, &c., &c. These facts in the biography of Francis were adduced as evidence at his trial in 1746.

company with Voltaire, he heard the French wit declare it to be impossible to turn *Hudibras* into French so as to preserve in the translation the peculiar humour of the original. Thereupon, it is said, John Towneley tried his hand at a translation of detached passages, and with such satisfaction to himself that he completed a French version of the whole work. Except in this vague tradition, however, there is no mention anywhere of an acquaintance between Voltaire and Towneley. The probability is, that if an external hint did incite Towneley to his singular task, he found it in Voltaire's Letters on England, in which the famous Frenchman criticises *Hudibras* in his own fashion, pronouncing it to be neither translatable nor worth translating, but admitting its possession of *esprit*, and giving, in a French rhymed version of his own, the first four hundred lines of *Hudibras*, while considerably, as he deems Butler to be a tedious poet, condensing them into eighty. Whatever the origin of Towneley's rendering of *Hudibras* in a French metre, as nearly as may be resembling that of the original, executed it was, and published in 1757. It has always been deemed a marvel of translating skill. Indeed, when extracts from it were first printed in England, the reviewers of the day refused to believe in the existence of the version as a whole, and declared the announcement of its publication to be a hoax.¹

¹ "Hudibras ; poème écrit dans le temps des troubles d' Angleterre et traduit en vers français," is the title of the book, which has the imprint "Londres, 1757," but of course was published in Paris. The translator does not give his name, and says in a modest (French) preface, "What the English style 'humour' is very untranslatable, and as it is this which constitutes the principal beauty of the poem, it cannot be anticipated that those who read it in French will find in it as much *esprit* as Monsieur de Voltaire did." The English original is printed with the French translation, and an anonymous commentator has added a number of elucidatory notes. A reprint appeared in 1820,

Last in our catalogue of the Towneleys comes the originator of the sculpture-gallery which bears his name, and by which this will be preserved while the British Museum exists. Charles Towneley of Towneley, born there in 1737,

at Paris. The copy of the first edition, in the Library of the British Museum, was presented by Charles Towneley of the Marbles, with this inscription : *Musæo Britannico Carolus Towneley dicat hanc versionem avunculi sui.* It may be worth while to give as a specimen the opening lines of Towneley's version, with those of the original :—

“ When civil dudgeon first grew high,
And men fell out, they knew not why ;
When hard words, jealousies, and fears,
Set folks together by the ears,
And made them fight, like mad or drunk,
For Dame Religion as for punk,
Whose honesty they all durst swear for,
Though not a man of them knew wherefore ;—
When Gospel-trumpeter surrounded
With long-eared rout to battle sounded,
And pulpit drum-ecclesiastic,
Was heard with fist instead of a stick ;
Then did Sir Knight abandon dwelling,
And out he rode a-colonelling.

Which Towneley renders thus :—

“ Quand les hommes en désarroi
Se brouillaient sans savoir pourquoi,
Quand gros mots, craintes, jalousies,
Causaient partout des batteries,
Et les gens en dissension
Pour la Dame Religion
Se chamaillaient dans la dispute
Comme gens ivres font pour pûte,
Dont chacun disait tant de bien,
Sans que personne y connût rien ;
Quand la trompette d' Evangile
Sonnait la charge par la ville ;
Et pour tambour la chaire au loin
Retentissait à coups de poing :
Lors le Chevalier prit le large
Et de colonel fit la charge.

How conspicuously inferior is Voltaire's rendering (in the *Lettres sur les Anglais*) of the same lines, beginning thus :—

“ Quand les profanes et les saints
Dans l' Angleterre étaient aux prises :

was a grandson of the lucky Richard who escaped the gallows in 1716, and a nephew of the unlucky Francis who fell a victim to the rebellion of 1745. His mother was the daughter and heiress of Ralph Standish of Standish, the representative of another ancient Roman Catholic and Lancashire house. Inheriting the family creed with the family estates, Charles Towneley was educated at the famous Romish seminary of Douai, "where," we are told, "he was introduced to most of the young men of rank and property, the heirs of the Roman Catholic gentry in England." He went thence to Paris, and entered the best French society under the auspices of his uncle, the translator of *Hudibras*. Such was the effect of this long training in France, that late in life he felt it difficult, he used to avow, to express himself with as much ease in English as in French. During the course of a tour in Italy, Charles Towneley made the acquaintance of Sir William Hamilton, afterwards the husband of Nelson's Lady Hamilton, then English Minister at Naples, and in his and other similar society the Lancashire squire was smitten by a passion for the collection of antiques, in days, too, when there was still a rich and rare harvest of them to be reaped by exploration and excavation. Between 1768 and 1778, he had accumulated by real labour and enterprise, not merely by signing cheques, a great part of the noble collection now in the British Museum, and which, with others there and elsewhere, has done so much for art, and for our æsthetic appreciation of the antique world. Towneley was no mere collector. He enjoyed with the

Quand on se battait pour des églises
 Aussi fort que pour des catins ;
 Lorsqu' Anglicains et puritains
 Faisaient une si rude guerre
 Et qu' au sortir du cabaret,
 Les orateurs de Nazareth
 Allaient battre la caisse en chaire, &c., &c."

utmost zest the exquisite objects of which he became possessed ; and in his house in Park Street, Westminster, they were so arranged, and with such accompaniments, " that the interior of a Roman villa might be inspected in our own metropolis." While cultivating these exotic tastes, he did not neglect Towneley Hall, where he regularly spent some of the summer months of every year, embellishing its grounds and forwarding the interests of his tenantry. Though lavish in his expenditure on the beautiful and the useful, he was personally frugal, and is said never even to have kept a carriage. Dignified, amiable, cheerful, accomplished, uniting to a care for his tenantry and the poor of his estates a splendid cultivation of the beautiful, the figure of Charles Towneley appeals to the imagination as almost that of an ideal English gentleman of the eighteenth century. He died in 1805, and so left his collections that the marbles and terra-cottas, which formed a very precious part of them, were acquired by the nation for the comparatively trifling sum of £20,000. The contents of the Towneley Gallery are now amongst the most valuable and valued art-treasures of the British Museum. In a general way Lancashire is thought of chiefly as a county which has made important contributions to machinery and manufactures. It is pleasant to remember that for the enjoyment of such works of art as the Capitoline Venus and the other beautiful and noble sculptures which compose the Towneley Gallery, the thanks of the nation are due to the taste, energy, enterprise, and liberality of a Lancashire Worthy.

IX.

JOHN DALTON.*

BY birth, the originator of the Atomic theory belongs not to Lancashire, but to the neighbouring county of Cumberland. Dalton's scientific fame is, however, so intimately associated with the city of his adoption, that the omission of his name would leave an unseemly blank in any comprehensive catalogue of Lancashire Worthies. Fifty of the seventy-eight years of John Dalton's life were spent in Manchester. It was there that he made his great discovery, and it was first communicated to the world of science in the *Memoirs* of the Literary and Philosophical Society of Manchester. The city in which he had lived and died bestowed on him the rare honour of a public funeral. Statues of Dalton adorn its public spaces and institutions. One of its principal streets is called by his name. The local university of Manchester, Owens' College, has its Dalton scholarships and Dalton prizes. Though born and

* Dr. R. Angus Smith's *Memoir of John Dalton and History of the Atomic Theory up to his time* (Manchester, 1856). Dr. W. C. Henry's *Memoirs of Dalton*, in the Cavendish Society's publications (London, 1854). Dr. Henry Lonsdale, *The Worthies of Cumberland* (London, 1874), § *John Dalton*. Professor Roscoe, *John Dalton and his Atomic Theory*, being No. 2 of Sixth Series of *Science Lectures for the People* (Manchester, 1874), &c., &c.

bred elsewhere, John Dalton may be regarded as almost a "Manchester man," and by his contemporaries he was often spoken of as "The Manchester Philosopher."

The 6th of September 1766 was the day, and Eaglesfield, a hamlet some three miles south-west of Cocker-mouth, was the place of John Dalton's birth. He was thus by twenty-three years the junior of Lavoisier, and twelve years Humphrey Davy's senior, while by an interesting coincidence Dalton's birth-year was also that of Wollaston, the chief populariser of the atomic theory. Dalton's father came of a family of Cumberland yeomen, who in the preceding generation had joined the Society of Friends. At the time of John's birth he was a woollen weaver, earning by the produce of his hand-loom a scanty livelihood. The elder Dalton, according to the latest of his biographers—some of the earlier speak of him more favourably—was a man of no intelligence, and inert even in his trade, but his wife was active-minded and energetic. John and his elder brother Jonathan were sent to a Quaker school, kept in the meeting-house of the society at Eaglesfield by an excellent teacher. John's intelligence attracted betimes the attention of the chief man in Eaglesfield, a worthy and opulent Quaker of scientific tastes and pursuits, Elihu Robinson; and he invited the boy to share, among his books and apparatus, the evening studies of a youth in his service, whom he wished to improve. Dalton's progress was so great that at twelve he started a small school of his own, first in his father's cottage, and then in the Friends' Meeting House. The pupils were of all ages, and the older and stronger of them, it is said, sometimes challenged their boy-teacher to fight when he insisted on preserving order. After two years of this primitive pedagogy, he seems to have done occasional farm-work. Health of body, a rugged independence of character, the habit of solving difficult problems by

and for himself, along with the faculty of imparting what he knew to others, were the chief acquisitions of the little Cumberland boy among his native hills, and they served him in good stead during his subsequent career.

When nearly sixteen, Dalton joined his brother Jonathan as an assistant in a school, kept by one of their cousins at Kendal. The removal to that quaint old town proved of great importance to him, for there he made the friendship of a Mr. Gough, who, though blind from childhood, was a zealous and instructed cultivator of science, and possessed of means, apparatus, and leisure for scientific study and investigation. Of this Gough there is a sketch in the *Excursion*, and in humbler prose Wordsworth pronounced him to be "a most extraordinary person." From him Dalton learned to make meteorological observations, and a scientific library and apparatus were at the command of the student. Meanwhile their cousin gave up the school to the two brothers, and in 1785 they announced the fact to "their Friends and the Public in General." The proprietorship of the school did not place them in possession of an El Dorado. They had to try to add a few pounds to their income from it by collecting rents, searching registers, and even making wills. In an "N.B." added to the circular which they issued in the second year of their partnership, they took with considerable naïveté, the world of Westmoreland into their confidence:—"The Public may also be informed," said the brothers in all simplicity of heart, "that they could conveniently teach a considerable number more than at present." To say the truth, Dalton Brothers were exceedingly uncouth young men, and the elder one was dreadfully severe. John was milder than Jonathan; and, indeed, was often so occupied during school hours with his own mathematical studies as not to notice the shortcomings of his pupils. When flogging-time came

it was John's duty merely to hold the boys while his brother whipt them, and on one occasion the amount of punishment bestowed caused considerable local discussion. More congenial occupation, he solved mathematical and other problems for prizes in the *Gentlemen's and the Ladies' Diary*. He accumulated and philosophised on meteorological observations in that rainy district, and delivered subscription lectures at the school. He made barometers and thermometers of his own, experimented on hygrometers of whipcord; he botanised and collected butterflies. And something told the young schoolmaster that mere pedagogy could not be his be-all and his end-all. When he was twenty-four he even ventured to hint at his ambition to a Quaker-uncle, a Mr. Thomas Greenup, whose rebuke of his too aspiring nephew happens to have been preserved. John had hinted that he would like to study physic or law. Law and physic, Mr. Greenup rejoined, in a decidedly crusty letter, are "totally out of the reach of a person in thy circumstances. If thou art tired of being a teacher, and wishes to change it for some more lucrative or agreeable employment, and couldst be content, instead of becoming a physician or barrister, to move in the humbler sphere of apothecary or attorney, thou mightest perhaps be able, with a little capital and great industry, to establish thyself in one of these." But for neither apothecaryship nor attorneyship had young Dalton the slightest inclination.

A few years later and his modest ambition was suitably gratified. The Manchester New College, long ago removed elsewhere, was then a comparatively flourishing institution. As has been already chronicled,¹ it had grown out of the once famous Warrington Academy, where Priestley, Aikin, Enfield, and Gilbert Wakefield taught. His friend Gough, of Kendal, having been asked to recommend it a tutor in

¹ *Ante*, p. 190-91.

mathematics and natural philosophy, Dalton was named and appointed. With his acceptance of the post, in 1793, began his long residence in Manchester, terminating only at his death. He remained tutor in the college for six years, teaching mathematics, natural philosophy, and chemistry, and using for this last science, among other text books, the *Elements* of Lavoisier, who, after revolutionising chemistry, fell a victim to the French Revolution during the Reign of Terror. In the final year of his tutorship, Dalton had twenty-two students. "Although Manchester is now multiplied by four, it cannot show the same number, and I fear that the love of external things has overpowered the love of science." Such, in mentioning the fact, is the significant comment of Dr. Robert Angus Smith (writing, however, it must be added, more than twenty years ago), an eminent cultivator of Dalton's own science, who, like him, made Manchester the city of his adoption, and who has written an excellent memoir of Dalton.

After the close of his tutorship in the New College, Dalton supported himself chiefly by private teaching and by making analyses. He was, says Dr. Smith, "probably the earliest in the district, of that class of scientific men called 'professional chemists,' who have arisen as a necessity of the time, and, by private establishments, have made some compensation for the lack of public institutions and professorships." Dalton's gains could not have been great. "He gave lessons for very small fees, from 1s. 6d. to 2s. 6d. a lesson." His charge was half-a-guinea for an ordinary chemical analysis, which would now cost ten guineas. But his wants were few, his habits were frugal, and he always contrived to save something towards a provision for old age. Soon after arriving in Manchester, he published (in 1793) his first book, the *Meteorological Essays and Observations*, and in the following year he was elected a member of

the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society ; his proposers being Thomas Henry, Dr. Percival, and Robert Owen, not yet of New Lanark. His first paper was read to it in the month of his election, and was on colour-blindness, a peculiarity of vision observed in himself and others, which is sometimes called after him Daltonism. He became successively its secretary, vice-president, and president, and early in the course of his connection with it, a portion of its room was placed at his disposal as a laboratory, a courtesy which he repaid by making the Society his confidant throughout his scientific career, and its Memoirs the contemporaneous record of most of his researches and discoveries.

Dalton passed from mathematics through meteorology to chemistry, and his greatest achievements bear the impress of his earlier studies. His first papers, read from 1794 to 1803 before the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, include the results of enquiries into the dynamics of gases and elastic vapours, and especially the action of heat on them. Some of the discoveries communicated in these papers were of the most remarkable kind, and, through the publicity they received in the Memoirs of the Society, his name became familiar to the *savans* of Europe. The first hint of the Atomic theory was given in almost an appendix to a paper read before the Literary and Philosophical Society, on the 21st of October 1803, treating of "the absorption of gases by water, and other liquids." After maturing his hypothesis into a theory, Dalton communicated it in conversation to Dr. Thomson, by whom, and not by the originator, it was first published in its totality to the world. Intimations of the Atomic theory are to be found in the writings of predecessors, but to Dalton belongs the glory of having given it completeness of form and immutable stability. Dalton's great theory was elabo-

rated three years before Davy's brilliant discovery of the metallic basis of the alkalis, and on that as on all previous and subsequent chemical discoveries it bestows a value which would otherwise have been wanting. Dalton, it is now generally admitted, first made chemistry a science when he proved that the primary atoms of which the universe is hypothetically composed combine (1) in constant proportions; for instance, that water, wherever it is found, consists of exactly the same weight of oxygen in combination with the same weight of hydrogen; (2) in multiple proportions, that is, that when one body combines with another in several proportions, the higher ones are multiples of the first and lowest; and (3) in reciprocal proportions, so that if two bodies combine in certain proportions with a third, they combine in the very same proportions with each other. Speaking of the atomic theory and the "grand idea" given by it of the "law and order which prevail in Nature," that enthusiastic expositor of chemical science, the late Dr. George Wilson, exclaims:—"In the light of it there is nowhere any 'fortuitous concourse of atoms,' as the Roman poet proclaimed of old; no crash or collision, no strife or warfare, when they meet together, as Milton sang, in relation to the embryo atoms of his chaos. According to this view, the courses of the planets around the sun are not more surely ordered than the movements of these invisible spheres round the centres of force which they obey. Arcturus and Orion know not their places better than each tiny gold or hydrogen atom which adds its weight to swell the sum total of the universe. And if poets of old have sung of the music of the spheres which the telescope unfolds to us, poets, we doubt not, will yet be found to sing of the harmony, as true and as wonderful, which attends the movements of those which the finest microscope will never reveal."

Speaking in a lower key, Professor Roscoe says:—"Of the scientific importance of this discovery there can be no question; indeed, chemistry could hardly be said to exist as a science before the establishment of the laws of combination in multiple proportions, and the subsequent progress of chemical science materially depended upon the determination of these combined proportions or atomic weights of the elements first set up by Dalton. So that amongst the founders of our science, next to the name of the great French philosopher, Lavoisier, will stand in future ages the name of John Dalton, of Manchester. Even from a practical and business point of view the discovery of these combining proportions is of the greatest value. Thus, for instance, in the manufacture of oil of vitriol, a substance which is required in thousands and thousands of tons every year for different industrial purposes; before John Dalton had determined how much sulphur, and how much oxygen, and how much hydrogen combine together to form this sulphuric acid or oil of vitriol, no manufacturer could tell, except by rule of thumb, how much of each particular constituent had to be brought together. It was necessary, in order that the chemical manufacturer should be able to prepare this substance economically, that he should be able to ascertain, with the greatest precision, how much sulphur he must burn, how much air he must use, and how much water he must add in order with the greatest economy to produce this product for the market. It is the same with every chemical action that occurs, and it is to John Dalton—who made his living by giving private lessons at half-a-crown each—that we owe this knowledge which has made the fortunes of thousands, because he first told us the laws which govern these chemical actions."

While the atomic theory was slowly making way, Davy himself being at first among the sceptics, the man whose

name was soon to be recognised as one of the foremost in the history of science, was quietly plodding on in Manchester. He boarded in George Street with the Rev. W. Johns, formerly a colleague at the New College, and his choice of a residence was characteristic. "In the autumn of 1804, Miss Johns saw him casually pass, and asked him why he never came to see them. Dalton said, 'I do not know, but I will come and live with you if you will let me.' He did so, and took possession of the only bed-room at liberty, sitting with the family. In this family he lived for twenty-six years in the greatest amity, until Mr. Johns, giving up the school, sought a purer air in the suburbs of the town." Dalton's day went like clock-work. He rose early, proceeded from his lodging in George Street to the room provided for him by the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society. There he lighted his own fire, dusted the desks for his pupils, and then went home to breakfast. The stroke of nine found him ready for his pupils, whom he taught till twelve or one, mathematics, science, cyphering, anything and everything.¹ If he had an interval of leisure before his one o'clock dinner, he would read the newspapers at the Portico. After a hurried dinner, at which he drank only

¹ "Mons. Pelletan, of Paris, visited Manchester in 1820, for the sole purpose of paying his respects to the founder of the atomic theory. He fancied that Dalton would be occupying a professor's chair, surrounded by adepts in science and hundreds of ingenuous youths; residing in a handsome mansion in a handsome square in the city, or enjoying his *otium cum dignitate* in a suburban villa, with roses embellishing its porch; in short, the great representative man of Manchester, and well known and appreciated by every citizen. Judge of his surprise when *Monsieur Dalton le Philosophe* could only be found after much enquiry, and when found was engaged looking over the shoulders of a boy figuring numbers on a slate. The Frenchman, doubting his senses, asked the grey-headed gentleman if he really had the honour of addressing Monsieur Dalton. "Yes," replied Dalton; "will you sit down till I put this lad right about his arithmetic."—*Lonsdale*, p. 245.

water, he returned to his laboratory, then as always, if there were pupils in attendance, managing to pursue his own researches or meditations by giving them problems to solve. At five came a cup of tea, followed by a return to the laboratory, presumably pupilless, at six. When the labours of the day were over, a light supper at nine preceded a pipe, and at ten it was time to go to bed. This life was diversified by an afternoon game at bowls once a week, and an annual excursion in the summer to the hills of his native Cumberland. Dalton never married, though he seems to have been once in love, or very near it, with a fair Quakeress of Lancaster. But, as became a philosopher, he took the complaint in its mildest form, and does not appear to have suffered from it a second time.

He had delivered lectures at the London Royal Institution in 1803-4, in Edinburgh in 1807, and again in London in 1809, during which visit he writes to Mr. Johns, "Davy is coming very fast into my views on chemical subjects." But his greatest (in every sense) journey from home was that which he made to Paris in 1822. This was the year in which the Royal Society gave its first tardy recognition of his merits, by spontaneously electing him a member. Previously, the only notice taken of him in "high quarters" had been a sort of offer, made through Sir Humphrey Davy (in 1818), and declined by Dalton (who was now in the fifties), that he should undertake the scientific department of one of Sir John Franklin's Polar expeditions. Meanwhile, the French Academy of Science had elected him a corresponding member, and on his visit to Paris, of which he always spoke afterwards with delight, he received the most cordial welcome from the scientific celebrities of France, from Laplace and Cuvier, as from Arago and Biot. In 1826, the Royal Society made some amends by voting him the first of the gold medals, just then founded, as

annual scientific prizes, by George IV., and on this occasion Davy, who had become a convert, spoke of the atomic theory in language worthy of it and of himself. Four years later, the French Academy of Sciences elected him, in succession to Sir Humphrey, one of its eight foreign associates, an honour that speaks for itself; and at the second—the Oxford—meeting of the British Association, in 1832, even the ancient university by the Isis paid him the compliment of making him a D.C.L., along with Brewster, Faraday, and Robert Brown. These were distinctions, no doubt, but Dalton was sixty-six, and entirely dependent on his own resources. Accordingly influential men solicited a pension for him, and after the usual struggle, one of £150 a year was granted in 1833, increased to £300 a year in 1836. In the interval, friends and admirers in Manchester gained courage from the unmistakable recognition of Dalton's merit in the high places of the world, to promote, in 1834, a subscription for the statue by Chantrey which stands now in the entrance-hall of the Manchester Royal Institution. It was in the same year that he was presented at Court, wearing the scarlet robes of a Doctor of Laws over his Quaker dress. His part in the ceremony had been carefully rehearsed before he appeared at St. James's, and his successful performance of it was watched with great gusto by Mr. Babbage. "I heard," says the inventor of the calculating machine, "one officer say to another: 'who the d—l is that fellow whom the king keeps talking to so long?'" In the autumn of that year, too, Jonathan Dalton died, leaving his brother everything he possessed. With this inheritance, his savings, and his pension, he was now well off, and "considered himself rich enough to buy a full set of silver spoons for dinner, dessert, and tea service." His modest prosperity did not come much too soon, for in 1837 Dalton had an attack of

paralysis, and his strength gradually declined, so that when in 1842 the British Association held its meeting at Manchester, he was not in a state to discharge the duties of president, and the office was assigned to the Earl of Ellesmere. He died on the 24th of May 1844, and then, Dr. Angus Smith remarks, "as is usually the case on the death of an eminent man, the first proof was furnished to many persons that he was once alive." Although the Society of Friends protested against such pomps and vanities, the authorities of Manchester gave him a civic and a public funeral. His remains were placed in the Town Hall, and in one day more than 40,000 visitors defiled before them and the "beautiful mahogany coffin" in which they were enclosed. On the 12th of August they were removed to their final resting place in Ardwick Cemetery, followed by a funeral train a mile long, past crowds of lookers-on, and through streets in which all business was suspended. A bronze statue, copied from Chantrey's marble, shares with those of Peel, Wellington, and Watt, the distinction of a place in front of the Manchester Infirmary. Better still, a sum of upwards of £3,000 was raised, with which Dalton scholarships and Dalton prizes were founded in Owens' College, to encourage and reward original chemical research.

John Dalton was of the middle size, and, in his prime, athletic and muscular. His forehead and the upper part of his face bore a strong resemblance to Newton's, and the British Association, at its Cambridge meeting in 1833, is said to have been much impressed by his likeness to Roubilliac's statue of Sir Isaac in Trinity College Chapel. In demeanour he was calm and undemonstrative. His voice was gruff, and he was no great talker. Altogether he seems to have been a homely man of somewhat prosaic, as well as of pure, honourable, and independent character. His genius for discovery culminated in the atomic theory. He

did not advance with the progress of his science, and in his self-absorption and indifference to the achievements of his fellow-workers, as in his disinterested and unflagging devotion to one pursuit, Dalton, the chemist, resembled another famous Cumberland man, his contemporary, Wordsworth, the poet.

X.

WILLIAM ROSCOE.*

AFTER Roscoe worked his way to distinction, a friendly professional genealogist of eminence endeavoured to trace a pedigree for him, but without the slightest success. The zeal, industry, and best wishes of "Garter Principal King at Arms" himself could discover nothing to embellish the modest truth that "the family of Mr. Roscoe, for a considerable period before his birth, had been settled in the central part of Lancashire, where they lived in humble circumstances." His father kept a tavern—the "Bowling Green"—at Mount Pleasant, then on the outskirts of the Liverpool, which, when William Roscoe was born there in the March of 1753, did not contain 20,000 inhabitants! The "Bowling Green" was a favourite resort of the townspeople, and Roscoe's father added to the profits of his tavern by cultivating a large market-garden:—so lowly were the origin and earliest associations of the historian of Lorenzo, the magnificent Medici. The elder Roscoe was a man of great bodily strength, given to field-sports and athletics; it seems to have been from his mother, "a woman of superior mind and strong affections,"

* *The Life of William Roscoe*, by his son Henry Roscoe (London, 1838).
J. A. Picton, *Memorials of Liverpool, Historical and Topographical*.
Second Edition (London, 1875), &c., &c.

that William inherited his refinement and ardour of intelligence.

From a dame's school, he was sent, at the age of six, to a day-school, where he learned what little was taught in it. He was fond of books, however, and one of his teachers had a small library of the best English authors of the period, which he eagerly devoured. His mother, too, did her best to cultivate his taste for reading, and to make him a good little boy. In an autobiographical fragment, Roscoe has recorded, among his early peculiarities, "a decided aversion to compulsion and restraint." "According to my best recollection," he adds, "I was at this period of my life of a wild, rambling, and unsocial disposition, passing many of my hours in strolling along the shore of the river Mersey, or in fishing, or in taking long walks alone." At twelve he left school with a tolerable knowledge of the three R's, and this was all his education. Fortunately, he was not allowed, or asked, to have anything to do with the paternal hostelry. "Having quitted school," he says, "and committed my English Grammar to the flames, I now began to assist my father in his agricultural concerns, particularly in his business of cultivating potatoes for sale, of which he every year grew several acres, and which he sold, when produced early in the season, at very advanced prices. His mode of cultivation was entirely by the spade, and when raised early, they were considered in that part of Lancashire as a favourite esculent. When they had attained their proper growth, we were accustomed to carry them to the market on our heads, in large baskets, for sale, when I was generally entrusted with the disposal of them, and soon became a very useful assistant to my father. In this, and other laborious occupations, particularly in the care of a garden, in which I took great pleasure, I passed several years of my life, devoting my hours of relaxation to reading my books.

This mode of life gave health and vigour to my body, and amusement and instruction to my mind ; and to this day I well remember the delicious sleep which succeeded my labours, from which I was again called at an early hour. If I were now asked whom I consider to be the happiest of the human race, I should answer those who cultivate the earth by their own hands." Before this time, too, the happy boy had become "a tolerable joiner," and made himself a "book-case with folding-doors, which served me for many years, and which I filled with several volumes of Shakespeare, a great part of whose historical plays I committed to memory ; to these were added the *Spectator*, and other valuable works, which I perused with great pleasure." Close, moreover, to his father's "property,"—as with a touch of that pomposity which characterised him throughout life, he calls the market-garden,—there was a large manufactory of British china-ware, which gave occupation to "artistic talent." Among the people so employed in it was a "painter," one Hugh Mulligan, who was also a copper-plate engraver ; and in his society Roscoe learned to take an interest in pictures and engravings. In Roscoe's case, the seeds of literature and art were early scattered on a kindly, if uncultivated, soil, which contained in itself considerable fertilising powers, and did very fairly without artificial manure.

Several years of boyish life had thus passed happily and profitably, when it was decided that Roscoe should make choice of a profession. The reading boy thought that it would be very pleasant to be a bookseller, and he was accordingly placed in the shop of a respectable Liverpool bibliopole. A month, a little month, of practical experience sufficed to cure him of his fancy for "the trade," and at sixteen he was articled to an attorney. He worked hard at what was to him always an uncongenial profession, and was the more diligent in business, because, from some

unexplained circumstances, a father and a sister were to be dependent on the fruits of his exertions. Leisure, however, he had, or made, for reading and writing other print and manuscript than law-books and law-papers. Even in the Liverpool of those days there were clever and cultivated young men, with whom the studious and poetic lawyer's clerk could congenially associate. One of them directed his attention to Italian literature, and it harmonised completely with the rather stately mind which nature had implanted in the tavern-keeper's son; nay, during those early Italian studies the notion of one day writing a biography of Lorenzo de Medici already dawned on him. Before he completed his term of clerkship, he aided in founding a Society for the Encouragement of Art, in Liverpool; and, still greater achievement, he published a volume of poems, which, as Art was among their themes, he sent to Sir Joshua Reynolds, and they were praised by the great and kindly painter. Love was the only thing wanting to complete the circle of the young Roscoe's thoughts and feelings, and that, too, came when he was three or four and twenty. The favoured maiden was a Miss Jane Griffies, the daughter of "a respectable tradesman of Liverpool," and every way fitted for her future husband. Specimens of their correspondence are printed in Roscoe's biography, and if they raise an occasional smile, it is not of the kind which plays even about the lips of a judge when love-letters are read in court during an action for breach. These are the terms in which the excellent William moralises to the equally excellent Jane when suggesting to her that each should keep a journal and communicate its contents to the other:—"I cannot help pleasing myself with the reflection, what an infinite variety of subjects this intercourse would give rise to. Convinced of the perfect confidence which subsists between

us, how freely might our thoughts expand themselves! The desire of pleasing might cause some little attention to mode of expression, whilst the certainty of a natural indulgence would prevent us from being apprehensive about trivial inaccuracies. I own this scheme begins to grow a favourite with me, and I beg my dearest Jane will not overthrow my expectations." So Sir Charles Grandison might have written to his elegant Harriett, and, if ever addressed in the accents of earthly love, the saintly Hannah More might have listened with approval to such a suggestion. For a time marriage was not to be thought of, except as in the distance. The amiable William was a full-fledged attorney some time before he could support a wife, and even the thought that he had been able "so far to screen a helpless parent and a deserving sister from the hardships of an unfeeling world," did not always reconcile him to the continuance of a celibate existence. In moments of despondency he fears the very worst, and breaking into rhyme, attempts to counterfeit submission to the decrees of Providence, when

"Some happier youth
(Oh, may he equal me in truth!)
Born under favouring stars, shall gain
That heart thy Roscoe loved in vain."

Before many years, however, these gloomy forebodings were dissipated. Roscoe prospered in the business which he disliked. In 1781 he married his "dearest Jane," and it proved a happy, a long, and a fruitful union.

Roscoe's first appearance as a public man was made with his pen, and in opposition to the slave trade. It was in the years immediately preceding the first French Revolution that Clarkson and his friends banded themselves together for organised action to suppress the slave trade, and great was

their delight when Roscoe began in prose and verse to issue protests against it from the very town which profited most by the ugly traffic. He became known to a still wider circle when, after the breaking out of the French Revolution, he figured as the Liverpool laureate of the new European movement, writing the song "O'er the vine-covered hills and gay valleys of France" (which was a favourite lay of Robert Burns); venturing to assail the great Mr. Burke himself; taking the lead in local opposition to the anti-Gallican and repressive policy of the Government, and in every way approving himself a staunch and fearless friend of "civil and religious liberty all over the world." The Roscoe of those days must have been a much-occupied man, conducting a considerable business, pamphleteering and poetizing, active, in local as in general politics, writing the life of Lorenzo de Medici, for which a friend at Florence helped him with material; and working energetically, withal, to carry out a scheme for the reclamation of Chat Moss,—a project to which he may in some degree have been stimulated by his early experiences in his father's market-garden and potato-ground. The biography of Lorenzo was published in 1795, and was at once successful. Most cultivated people in those days took a considerable interest in Italian art, literature, and history. Old Horace Walpole, king of the English dilettanteism of the day, and verging towards his latter end, bestowed his warm approval,—and praise from my Lord of Orford was at that time praise indeed. The Life of Lorenzo went rapidly through several editions, and was translated into Italian and German. As the eighteenth century drew to its close, Mr. William Roscoe of Liverpool, attorney-at-law, found himself quite a celebrated man, the friend and correspondent of Lords Lansdowne and Holland, as of good Dr. Aiken, and of the awful Dr. Parr.

Attorneyship had naturally been always distasteful to

Roscoe, and having, after twenty years of it, secured independence, he quitted it in 1796 for ever. Not long afterwards he bought a little estate, Allerton Hall, near Liverpool, and withdrew from business to combine, as he thought, the cultivation of literature and art with agriculture and gardening. Three years later, in an unlucky hour, he fancied himself bound by the claims of friendship to exchange his "retired leisure" for the hazardous business of banking. The friend to whose researches at Florence, Roscoe owed much of the original material worked up in his *Life of Lorenzo*, was one of the chief partners in a Liverpool private banking house, the affairs of which became embarrassed at the close of the century. This friend died, and on the extrication of the firm from its embarrassments depended the future of his family. The partners asked for, and received Roscoe's confidential assistance, and he rescued them from immediate danger. It was then proposed that he should become an active partner in the bank, and from a feeling of regard for his friend's family he assented, and became "Mr. Roscoe, the celebrated banker." When a busy banker, just as when a busy attorney, he stole moments for literature, and in 1805 appeared his *Life of Lorenzo's son, Leo X., Luther's Pope*,—a work which was also very successful, though not so much so as its predecessor. In the following year the Liberals of Liverpool invited him to stand for the borough, and he was returned by a large majority, due, doubtless, to the general respect in which he was held as much as to sympathy with his political views, or with his steady hostility to the slave trade. During his short parliamentary career, he had the satisfaction of lifting up his voice in the House of Commons, as member for Liverpool, against the traffic on which the prosperity of his constituents was supposed to rest, and of thus helping to procure at last the passing of the Act which for ever abolished the slave trade.

His support, however, of this measure, and of the "Catholic claims," enabled his political opponents to get up a formidable opposition to him in the borough. When he made a public entry into Liverpool after the dissolution of Parliament in 1807, they organised a riot, in which the principal part was played by "strong parties of seamen, chiefly consisting of the crews of vessels lately engaged in the African trade, armed with bludgeons and other weapons." The refined Roscoe shrank from such a contest, and declined to become a candidate again.

The next nine years of Roscoe's life passed happily and busily. No great literary work occupied him, but his leisure was devoted to political correspondence, to bibliography and botany, to increasing his library, to collecting pictures and engravings, to promoting schemes for the cultivation of literature and art in Liverpool, and to experiments for the reclamation of Chat Moss, the last an enterprise which led to a friendship with Coke of Holkham. Possibly, however, the expenditure of money on this particular object was one of those investments of "considerable sums of money in landed and mining property" which involved Roscoe's bank in difficulties, when, after the peace of 1815, a great demand for capital was created by "the opening of the American trade," and cash became extremely scarce. In the January of 1816, Roscoe and his partners suspended payment. When its affairs were investigated, the house seemed to be solvent, at least on paper, and a majority of the creditors assented to Roscoe's proposal that he should continue to manage the business, and that six years should be allowed him in which to discharge its liabilities, principal and interest. One of his first steps was to apply his private property in liquidation of the debts of the bank. He sold the library and art-collections which he had been nearly half a century in bringing together. Characteristically, he took great pains

with the compilation of the sale-catalogue, which was an elaborate bibliographical and critical performance. But the blow of parting with his beloved books was softened by the delicate liberality of his friends. They purchased all of his library which had been collected for his two chief literary undertakings, and which might be afterwards useful to him when correcting, revising, or further illustrating his biographies of Lorenzo de Medici, and of Leo X. These volumes, reserving to him their use and removal from the institution during his lifetime, they presented as a separate collection to the Liverpool Athenæum, which twenty years before he had aided energetically in founding. At this very time, too, while struggling to retrieve the affairs of the bank, he co-operated with his friend Dr. Traill (afterwards editor of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*) in the establishment of the well-known Royal Institution of Liverpool, of the committee of which he became chairman, and the opening of which he "inaugurated" by a lecture on the origin and vicissitudes of literature, science, and art. He began, moreover, a series of publications on penal jurisprudence and prison discipline, advocating the reformatory as opposed to the vindictive principle in the treatment of criminal offenders, quite in the spirit of the efforts of Mackintosh and Romilly. At last, in 1820, it became painfully evident that the debts of the bank could not be paid off, and that there was nothing for it but the Bankruptcy Court. A small minority of ill-conditioned creditors contrived to delay the grant of a certificate, which the great majority assented to; so, in order to save himself from arrest, Roscoe retired for a little to the seclusion of his farm on Chat Moss, respecting which, and the whole enterprise of its attempted reclamation, one cannot help wishing that more were known. When the certificate was issued, Roscoe finally retired from business. Many offers of literary employment had been made him, and he saw a

reasonable prospect of supporting himself by his pen. Some kind friends easily raised the sum of £2500 for his benefit and that of his family ; nor is there any symptom that his later years were clouded by poverty.

It must have been about the time when Roscoe returned from Chat Moss to Liverpool, freed from the fear of arrest, that he was seen by Washington Irving, and made the theme of the graceful and feeling paper, "Roscoe," which appeared in the earliest numbers of "The Sketch Book." It was in the Liverpool Athenæum (of which Roscoe was one of the founders in 1797) that the attention of the then young American enthusiast was attracted "to a person just entering the room. He was advanced in life, tall, and of a form that might once have been commanding, but it was a little bowed by time, perhaps by care. He had a noble Roman style of countenance, a head that would have pleased a painter ; and though some slight furrows on his brow showed that wasting thought had been busy there, yet his eye still beamed with the fire of a poetic soul. There was something in his whole appearance that indicated a being of a different order from the bustling race around him. I enquired his name, and was informed that it was Roscoe. I drew back with an involuntary feeling of veneration. This, then, was an author of celebrity ; this was one of those men whose voices have gone forth to the ends of the earth ; with whose minds I have communed, even in the solitudes of America."

The chief, or the most conspicuous of Roscoe's later literary labours was his edition of the works of Pope, to which he prefixed a life of the poet. It was in his latest years that Mrs. Hemans recorded her impressions of him thus : "He is a delightful old man, with a fine Roman style of head, which he had adorned with a green velvet cap to receive me in ; because,

as he playfully said, 'he knew I always admired him in it.' Altogether he put me in mind of one of Rembrandt's pictures; and as he sat in his quiet study, surrounded by busts, and books, and flowers, and with a beautiful cast of Canova's Psyche in the back-ground, I thought that a painter, who wished to make old age look touching and venerable, could not have had a better subject." His declining years flowed on in industrious serenity, and when at seventy-eight, he died of paralysis in the June of 1831, he left behind him many friends and not a single foe. At the time of his death, his residence was "a modest brick house in Lodge Lane, near the end of Bentley Road." His funeral was attended by men of all parties, political and religious. He lies buried in the graveyard behind the Unitarian Chapel, in Renshaw Street,—he had belonged to that communion through life,—and within doors there is a marble bust of him with a commemorative inscription. Time may have dimmed the lustre of Roscoe's literary works, but its flight ought to increase rather than diminish,—at least in the estimation of Liverpool or Lancashire men,—the force of the eulogium passed on him so many years ago by his young American admirer, Washington Irving:—"Born in a place apparently ungenial to the growth of literary talent; in the very market-place of trade; without fortune, family connection, or patronage; self-prompted, self-sustained, and almost self-taught, he conquered every obstacle, achieved his way to eminence, and having become one of the ornaments of the nation, turned the whole force of his talents to advance and influence and embellish his native town." The respect which he won from distinguished men at home and abroad, encouraged his fellow-citizens to pay homage to intellect, and, directly as well as indirectly, he contributed powerfully to the advancement of culture in Liverpool. As the great mart on the Mersey

grew in magnitude, population, and wealth, it was chiefly through the influence of Roscoe that it became studded with institutions which fostered something more refining than the love of wealth. The Botanic Garden was almost entirely his handiwork, while the Academy of Arts, the Athenæum, the Royal Institution, the Literary and Philosophical Society, were deeply indebted to him. His private beneficence was great, and he was ever ready to encourage struggling and obscure merit. It was Roscoe who discovered the genius of John Gibson, when that famous sculptor, after having been apprentice to a Liverpool cabinet-maker, was elaborating mantelpieces and funeral monuments for a firm of superior builders and plasterers. Through Roscoe's kindness he was enabled to settle in Rome, and he never forgot his early benefactor. The bust of Roscoe, which he executed and presented to the Liverpool Royal Institution in 1827, is an enduring monument of his gratitude. Of the regard of his fellow-townsmen for Roscoe's memory, there is a memorial in the marble statue of him by Chantrey, the result of a public subscription, and placed in 1841 in the Gallery of Art attached to the Royal Institution, of which he was one of the founders.

XI.

*FELICIA HEMANS.**

GERMANY and Ireland, Venice and Lancashire, contributed, all four of them, to the being of this interesting and gifted woman, and it might amuse a fanciful critic to discover in her poetry traces of elements so different. Her father, Mr. Browne, a Liverpool merchant of some eminence, was of an Irish family in which the Celtic element had been doubtless interfused with the original Saxon, which his surname indicates. Her mother, who bore before marriage the unmistakably German name of Wagner, was "of mingled Italian and German descent," and "daughter of the Imperial and Tuscan Consul at Liverpool" by a wife whose maiden name was Haddock, "a good and ancient one among the yeomanry of Lancashire."

Felicia Dorothea Browne, afterwards Hemans, was born on the 25th of September 1793, in Duke Street, Liverpool; but, since through one of her grandmothers she inherited Lancashire blood, her connection with the county does not altogether arise from the circumstance that the great city on the Mersey was her birthplace. Little more is recorded of the father than that, like Dogberry, he "had losses," in consequence of which he broke up his establishment in Liverpool when Felicia was a mere child, and removed himself and his family to Gwrych, on the Denbighshire coast.

* *Works*, with a Memoir of her Life, by her Sister (London, 1839).
H. F. Chorley, *Memorials of Mrs. Hemans* (London, 1836), &c.

As you whirl along from Chester towards Holyhead, a mile past Abergele Station (once the scene of a too famous railway accident), you see on the left what the guide books call "a prominent object," an enormous modern "castellated edifice," displaying a very indifferent taste in architecture. This is "Gwrych Castle,"—near it, in the olden times, were fought various fierce battles between English kings and Welsh princes,—and on its site stood the more modest mansion in which, about the beginning of the present century, Mr. Browne, of Liverpool, took refuge with his wife and family when fallen from his pristine estate. Ultimately, we are told, he "again engaged in mercantile pursuits," went out to Quebec, and there died. His wife was a superior and accomplished, though simple-minded, woman, to whom Felicia was passionately attached. The future Mrs. Hemans was the fifth of seven children, but she soon became by death the eldest daughter, and her mother did her best to educate her at home. She was never sent to school, but there were plenty of old-fashioned books at Gwrych, while behind her were the mountains and before her was the sea. At six she delighted in Shakespeare, reading him in "a secret haunt of her own—a seat amongst the branches of an old apple tree." At eleven she was taken to London by her father and mother, a visit repeated in the following year, and she never saw the great metropolis again. Among the earliest of her rhymes are some verses written from London to one of her brothers. The child-poetess and early lover of nature expresses in them her longing to return to her dear Welsh home, "and wander through the well-known vale," or "view the ships that swiftly glide," hand in hand again with her beloved brother.

She was a girl of remarkable beauty as well as precocity, and of course her family and friends were very proud of her. She had reached the ripe age of fourteen, when

they were foolish enough to collect some of the verses which she was always throwing off, and print them in a quarto volume! The earliest of her ventures in print was also, perhaps happily, the most unsuccessful. An ill-natured critic laughed at the quarto, and she felt the ridicule bitterly, at least "for a few days;" after which, with the irrepressibility of true authorship, she began to rhyme again as flowingly as ever, but not for four years did she appear in print a second time, with "The Domestic Affections and other Poems," a volume of much less pretentious dimensions than its predecessor. Meanwhile, new objects and interests were engaging and engrossing her young heart and soul. Two of her elder brothers were in the Welsh Fusiliers. One of them was fighting in Spain, under Sir John Moore, and the imaginative girl became enthusiastic for the deliverance of Spain by British valour. She wrote a poem on "England and Spain," and it was at the height of her enthusiasm in the cause that her dreams became, as she fancied, embodied in flesh and blood. There arrived on a visit in the neighbourhood a Captain Hemans, presumably young, handsome, and intelligent, and an officer in the 4th, or King's Own Regiment. He was introduced to the family at Gwrych, and to the young poetess, "then in the full glow of that radiant beauty, which was destined to fade so early. The mantling bloom of her cheeks was shaded by a profusion of natural ringlets, of a rich golden brown, and the ever-varying expression of her brilliant eyes gave a changeful play to her countenance, which would have made it impossible for any painter to do justice to it." Captain Hemans of the 4th did ample justice to it. He fell in love with it and with her. The love was returned by the ardent girl of fifteen—all the more warmly that she did not see much of him, as he was soon ordered to proceed with his regiment to Spain,

a destination which gave him an additional interest in the eyes of the romantic Felicia. Friends on both sides shook their heads, and hoped that the young people would forget each other, as the match was not recommended by what are called "prudential considerations;" but their hopes were disappointed.

Soon after the fascinating warrior's departure, and with or without the society of Paterfamilias, the date of whose migration to Canada is shrouded in a certain obscurity, the Browne family removed from Gwrych to Bronwylfa, near St. Asaph, in Flintshire. Here, with her Peninsular enthusiasm still strong upon her, Felicia learned Spanish and Portuguese, sketched and played upon harp and piano, nourished her love of the romantic past by excursions to Conway Castle, and wrote an abundance of verses, serious and gay, some of which were published in the volume of "Domestic Affections." Those were happy days, and followed by a still greater, though, alas! a short-lived happiness, when, within two years from the removal to Bronwylfa, and nearly three after they had fallen in love, Captain Hemans reappeared upon the scene. He was, or seemed, more interesting than before, for he had been in the retreat from Corunna, and made one of the disastrous expedition to Walcheren. The young people were as fond as ever of each other, and they married in the summer of 1812. The Captain took his lovely young bride to Daventry, where he had to do duty as adjutant of the Northamptonshire Militia. The change from mountainous Wales to the tame country in which Daventry lies was not a pleasant one for the young bride and poetess. However, Fawsley Park was there to enrich her mind and memory with the images of a noble old English domain; and she did not remain long at Daventry. Within twelve months from the birth of a first son, the Northamptonshire Militia

was "reduced" or disbanded, and Captain Hemans ceased to be its adjutant. The young wife was naturally anxious to return to her beloved Wales, and her still more beloved mother. The Captain did not object, probably because he knew not what else to do with himself, or where else to go. The retreat from Corunna and the expedition to Walcheren are charitably said to have enfeebled his constitution; and the young couple were soon domiciled at Bronwylfa, clearly without the society of Mr. Browne, senior, who was by that time again engaged in mercantile pursuits at Quebec, and appears no more upon the biographic scene.

For five years this state of things remained unaltered. Four more children, all of them sons, were born to the Hemanses, under the roof of Mrs. Browne, near Bronwylfa. Mrs. Hemans read, studied, and wrote as diligently as ever. At this time, her tendency was to classical or quasi-classical themes, and her "Modern Greece" was pronounced by Byron "a good poem, very:"—Who can tell but that it may, in some slight way, have influenced his choice of a final career? But now an event occurred which saddened her for life, so far as anything could sadden one who was by nature full of vivacity, as well as of ardour and enthusiasm. Captain Hemans's health was not good, and he resolved to try the effects of a southern climate. He left Bronwylfa for Rome, and he never returned from Rome to Bronwylfa, or to England; in fact, he never saw his wife again. Friends said that the education of the children, and the "literary pursuits" of their mother, made it desirable that she should remain in England. There were, however, it is well known, other reasons for the separation, but they have never been stated, and can only be inferred. The pair communicated with each other respecting the education of their sons, the two eldest of whom

once paid their father a visit, but the burden of educating and supporting them seems to have been left to the disenchanting poetess at Bronwylfa. She grappled with her task like a brave woman, but it was a difficult one, and its severity bore heavily upon her, just when the circumstances under which it was imposed began to cloud more or less the remainder of her life. From classical themes she turned to religious, and wrote "The Sceptic," with the occasional counsel of her friend and neighbour, the kind old Bishop of St. Asaph, Dr. Luxmoore. It was to her pen that she had to look for the performance of her maternal duty, and while "The Sceptic" was being written, she competed, successfully, for a prize of £50 offered by a patriotic Scot for the best poem on "The Meeting of Wallace and Bruce on the banks of the Carron." Soon afterwards she made the acquaintance and gained the friendship of the good Reginald Heber, who sometimes visited his father-in-law, the Dean of St. Asaph. He encouraged her in the grave design of writing a poem on "Superstition and Revelation," which was to pourtray the workings of all the religions of the world, and to contrast them with Christianity. A *magnum opus* of this or some other kind remained to the end of her days an object of Mrs. Hemans's ambition; but there were five boys to bring up and to educate, and elaborate poems would do less for this object than popular verses and the composition of successful tragedies. It was a happy day for her when, in 1821, she received the announcement that the Royal Society of Literature had assigned her the prize for a poem on Dartmoor,—all the happier that, when the joyful news reached Bronwylfa, her son Arthur sprang up from his Latin exercise and shouted aloud, "Now I am sure mamma is a better poet than Lord Byron!" She was less fortunate with her tragedy, the "Vespers of Palermo," which failed at Covent Garden

in 1823, and of which high hopes had been entertained in the little circle near St. Asaph. But the name of Felicia Hemans was becoming known; and though the tragedy failed, John Murray agreed to give her two hundred guineas for the copyright. Removing, in 1825, from Bronwylfa to Rhyllon (only a quarter of a mile distant), she had scarcely settled in her new home when she received the pleasant tidings from beyond the Atlantic that a complete edition of her works was asked for in the States, where her vague imaginativeness was prized much more widely than in England, and every newspaper delighted to reprint her last magazine verses.

But another great blow soon befell her. In 1826 came the death of her mother, with whom she wholly, and her children for the most part, had lived since the separation from her husband, who had relieved her of much domestic care, and who, when she was scarcely qualified to make one for herself, had given her a happy home, or at least a home as happy as it could be under the circumstances. After this loss, her health—it had long been delicate—suffered greatly from the neglect of precautions which her mother had insisted on, and her struggle became more trying than ever. Fortunately her fits of depression, whether caused by melancholy or ill-health, were always broken by periods of buoyancy and of high spirits that nothing could extinguish. Even sorrow and sadness, too, could be transmuted into poetry, and at the very worst she was solaced by a piety fervid though unpretending. Not long after her mother's death, partly for the sake of the education of her sons, and partly for that of the society of some dear friends, she removed from her beloved Wales to Wavertree, near Liverpool. The change did not prove a pleasant one. The people of Wavertree stared at her as a curiosity, or pestered her with compliments, and were surprised when "the cele-

brated poetess" insisted on talking like anybody else about common things, and declined to do her part of an ordinary conversation in metre or high-flown prose. From Wavertree, she was happy to escape on two flying and delightful visits to Scotland and the Lakes. To Scotland she went (in 1829) as the guest of the author of "Cyril Thornton," and under his roof she was the neighbour of Sir Walter Scott, who took to her at once, as she did to "the dear old gentleman." In Edinburgh she found herself a lioness, welcomed by the Man of Feeling, by Mrs. Grant of Laggan, and most cordially by Jeffrey. Scarcely had she returned to Wavertree, when the *Edinburgh Review* appeared with a graceful and very laudatory article on her poetry, from the pen of the arch-critic himself. After launching (in the summer of 1830) her "Songs of the Affections," she carried out an old wish to visit Wordsworth, who appreciated her as highly as did his enemy Jeffrey, and there were then few poets or poetesses of whom *that* could be said. It was clear that Mrs. Hemans was never to settle at Wavertree, a place which she found so disappointing and unsatisfactory, even as regarded the education of her boys. At one time she thought of removing permanently to Edinburgh, but her physicians declared that a year in the "grey metropolis of the North" would be death to her. A visit to Ireland, where she had kind friends, and where her brother occupied an official post, decided her in favour of Dublin, and there, in 1831, she settled for the last time on this side the grave. Her health was breaking fast, and few could have recognised in the worn and wasted woman, not yet forty, the lovely Felicia of Gwrych. Yet she wrote on and on; little volume after volume appearing from her pen; her very sufferings furnishing raw material for a series of sonnets, "Thoughts During Sickness." The education of her son Charles was superintended under her own eye, and the future of his

brothers sedulously cared for. What kindness could do for her was done, and every friendly attention was paid her by Archbishop Whately and his wife, who placed their country seat at her disposal. As her end approached, the serenity which marked her later years was disturbed by anxiety respecting the career of her son Henry, whom she had educated at Shrewsbury, and who was ready for the battle of life. Without Mrs. Hemans's knowledge, a steadfast lady friend exerted herself in high places, and Sir Robert Peel was then Prime Minister. One day, to the suffering mother's surprise and delight, arrived a letter from Sir Robert, "appointing her son to a clerkship in the Admiralty, and accompanied by a most munificent donation, which, emanating from such a quarter, could create no feelings but those of heart-felt thankfulness, unmingled with any alloy of false delicacy or mistaken pride." It is her sister who says this. Mrs. Hemans did not long survive the reception of Sir Robert's bounty, dying in her lodgings at Dublin, on the 16th of May 1835. She was buried in St. Ann's Church of the city of her death, and there is a memorial tablet erected to her in the Cathedral of St. Asaph.

Her poetry contains too little thought, or too little picture, for the new generation, which would be surprised if it knew the depth and extent of the influence exerted in her own day by Felicia Hemans. But the slightest inspection of her writings reveals singular grace and tenderness, a faultless taste, a great variety of music, and an ardent sympathy with whatever is noble, heroic, and holy in man, or beautiful and expressive in nature. Her struggle in life would have been a hard one for a prosaic or strong-minded woman ; it was still harder for a sensitive and suffering poetess. But she never flinched from the performance of her duty ; she never repined ; and her sorrows were breathed out in song to charm her readers, not vented in private to harass her friends. She

could be, and often was, cheerful, animated, and even gay. Of one fault, said to be peculiarly feminine, Felicia Hemans seems to have been entirely devoid—nowhere in her works and correspondence is there the slightest trace of vanity. She must have been no ordinary woman who won the admiration and friendship of men so dissimilar as Scott and Wilson, Heber and Whately, Wordsworth and Jeffrey.

XII.

*JOHN DRINKWATER-BETHUNE.**

THE Drinkwaters were a respectable Cheshire family, of which the main line seems ultimately to have been settled at Latchford, near Warrington. Whether by marriage, or otherwise, they rose somehow in the world, and the John Drinkwater who represented them between 1718 and 1760 "inherited considerable property in Cheshire, Lancashire, and Northamptonshire." Unfortunately he "wasted the whole of it," and the sins of the father being visited on the children, his extravagance, we are told, "entailed great embarrassment on the family." Therefore, presumably, it was that his second son, also a John, found himself restricted to the career of surgeon in the navy, one at that time (*teste* Tobias Smollett) much more than now unprofitable and repulsive. Born in 1740, he entered at eighteen the medical service of Britannia as Ruler of the waves, and saw some fighting during the last years of the war waged by Chatham in alliance with Frederick the Great,—England "conquering America in Germany" and elsewhere. As Surgeon of the *Ripon*, of sixty guns, he was at the capture of Guadaloupe in 1759, the year in which Wolfe fell victorious on the Plains of

* Burke's *History of the Commoners of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1836), vol. iii., § Drinkwater of Salford. *Gentleman's Magazine* for April, 1844. Baines's *Lancashire* (first edition), &c., &c.

Abraham, wresting Canada from the French. His father died in the following year, 1760, and therefore, perhaps, it was that in 1761, before the war was fairly over, he returned home and married "Elizabeth Andrews, of Salford, in Lancashire." Soon afterwards he established himself in Salford as a medical man (in 1783 he obtained the diploma of M.D.), and lived there and thus up to his death in 1797. By this his (first) wife he had several children. The eldest son, John Drinkwater, the historian of the Siege of Gibraltar, was born in the June of 1762, at the Latchford aforesaid. Probably the family retained there some little property, saved from the wreck of the prodigal Drinkwater's patrimony.

Of the early years of the Historian of the Siege of Gibraltar nothing has been chronicled until he reached the age of fifteen. Possibly in the dull old Salford of those days he listened with interest to paternal anecdotes of adventure on the Spanish Main, and was thus smitten with a love for a martial life. At any rate, this was the career chosen by him, under circumstances which kindled a blaze of warlike ardour in Manchester and his native Salford. When John Drinkwater was a boy of fifteen there came from beyond the Atlantic news of a great disaster suffered by the British arms. It was the year before the American Declaration of Independence, and General Burgoyne (author of various dramatic pieces) had surrendered himself and army at Saratoga to the Yankee General Gates. Nowhere did the tidings of the calamity produce a greater impression than in King George the Third's loyal town of Manchester. At the commencement of the American war the inhabitants of Manchester had voted an address to the throne, in which "His Majesty was assured that his people were ready to support him with their lives and fortunes in the prosecution of this just and necessary contest,

for the punishment of rebels instigated by the artful designs of a discontented faction.”¹ The news of the disaster of Saratoga increased instead of diminishing the warlike zeal of Manchester. A fund was at once eagerly subscribed by the loyal Manchester of 1777 to raise a regiment of volunteers who might be employed against the American “rebels.” This “fine body of men” was called the 72nd Regiment of the Line, or Royal Manchester Volunteers. It was raised in three months at a cost of about £8,000, wholly by voluntary subscription, and it was then a thousand strong. *Ætat.* 15, young John Drinkwater, the doctor’s son of Salford, joined as an ensign the Manchester Regiment, and was thus enabled to become the historian of a most notable episode in British military history.

The 72nd were not sent to America after all; work nearer home was cut out for the Manchester Regiment. War between England and France (who took her revenge for the loss of Canada and so forth by aiding and abetting the American “rebels”) had virtually commenced. It was probable that Spain would join France, and it was therefore deemed prudent to strengthen the garrison of Gibraltar. To Gibraltar, accordingly, the gallant Manchester Volunteers were dispatched, and with them Ensign John Drinkwater, probably as clear-headed and diligent a young officer and gentleman as the British army then contained. The news of the Convention of Saratoga decided the wavering policy of Spain. She offered to mediate between France and England, but on a basis which she knew could not be accepted by King George’s Ministers. They rejected the offer, and, in the June of 1779, Spain, too, declared war against England, chiefly with the hope of recovering Gibraltar, and the rock-fortress was at once attacked by land and sea. The memorable siege began in the June of 1779,

¹ Baines, ii. 310.

and ended in the February of 1783, with the negotiation of a general peace—and Gibraltar still untaken. For more than three years and a half a little British force of 5,000 men successfully resisted a Spanish-French army of 30,000, provided with the most powerful ordnance, and often commanding the sea, blockading as well as bombarding. From the time of his landing on the famous Rock to that of its deliverance, the methodical young Lancashire ensign, little more than a school-boy, steadily jotted down what he saw and heard throughout a siege, in its duration as in the frequent fierceness of the attack and the courage, persistence, and patience under privation of the defenders, then almost unparalleled. The result was, in after years, "A History of the Siege of Gibraltar, 1799-1783, with a description and account of that Garrison, from the earliest periods. By John Drinkwater, Captain in the late Seventy-second Regiment, or Royal Manchester Volunteers," a little military classic deserving a place on the same shelf with Cæsar's Commentaries, or Xenophon's Anabasis, clear and calm like them, though it was the production of quite a young man, and "our special correspondent" of to-day might turn with a shrug and a yawn from its lucid simplicity of style and treatment. Once only in the course of his narrative (how unlike "our special correspondent") does Drinkwater refer to himself, and it is in a mere note, towards the close, too, of the volume. To his description of one of the later and almost desperate assaults of the besiegers by land and sea, with artillery and mortar-boats, along the whole line of the British defence, Drinkwater makes the following incidental appendage:—"It was during this attack that the materials from which this work is compiled were in the most imminent danger of being entirely destroyed. A 13-inch shell from the enemy's mortar-boats, falling above the camp-guard, rolled along the road leading from Buena

Vista and entered the author's marquee, brushing the pillow of his bed, and lodging close by under the corner of the bedstead. Though lighted when it entered, and though its force must have been greatly spent in the ricochets before it entered, the fuse luckily broke as it lodged within, and the marquee and its contents by that fortunate circumstance was preserved." Such is Drinkwater's solitary reference to himself, and indulged in solely because the event recorded connected itself with the very existence of his book. A few weeks after the incident, peace came; Gibraltar remaining British. The 72nd were ordered home, with Drinkwater no longer an ensign, but, as has been seen, a captain. On their return to England, says the historian of Lancashire, they were "received in Manchester with enthusiasm, and their colours were deposited with much ceremony in the Collegiate Church; from thence they were removed to the College, where they still remain as trophies of the gallantry of the regiment and the patriotic fervour of the town." The people of Manchester were greatly elated by this display, and in an ode written on the occasion they are eulogised thus:—

“But Britain, in this race of fame,
Which of thy daughter-towns may claim
The greater share of glory for the whole?
’Tis Manchester that claims the share,
’Twas Manchester re-urged the war,
’Twas Manchester re-waked the British soul.”

Some strange old memories are “re-waked,” and some rather interesting reflections are suggested, by this jingle of ninety and more years ago.

Soon after their return to England and their warm welcome by Manchester, the 72nd were disbanded. During the two or three years that followed, Drinkwater occupied himself in compiling from his memoranda and

in preparing for the press (how unlike the hurry of "our special correspondent," and his intense eagerness for a cheque from his publisher!) the history of the Siege. It seems to have been first published in 1785, with a dedication, by permission, "to the King." It went through its four editions in as many years, and at once stamped its young author as an officer of merit and promise. Meanwhile, in 1787, he purchased a company in the second battalion of the 1st or Royal Regiment of Foot, which, as it chanced, was stationed at Gibraltar. He thus saw the old Rock again, and its old Governor, Lord Heathfield, who had been raised to the peerage for the successful defence, and who, on Drinkwater's arrival, publicly thanked him for his record of the services of the garrison. "During his second stay at Gibraltar," be it noted as a decidedly interesting little fact, "he planned and carried into execution the measures for establishing the Garrison Library. This institution," our authority adds, "has since become very important, and has been the model for forming similar establishments in many of the British foreign garrisons;" perhaps in our home garrisons and barracks also. After the breaking out of the war of the French Revolution, Drinkwater found himself at Toulon, on its occupation by the English; and as military secretary there, despatched on special missions thence, he led a stirring and eventful life for several years. Among his other posts was that of Secretary for the Military Department in Corsica, when, with the Scotch Sir Gilbert Elliot for its viceroy, the First Napoleon's island-birthplace came into the temporary possession of England at the invitation of the anti-Gallican General Paoli—Boswell's venerated hero, and "the Corsican landlouper" of Boswell's growling old father. In 1794, he became (by purchase) Major, and in 1796 Lieutenant-Colonel of his regiment. He was

still attached to the service of Sir Gilbert Elliot, when, after the English evacuation of Corsica, he found himself, early in 1797, sailing homeward from the Mediterranean in the *Minerve*, a frigate hoisting the pendant of no less a person than Commodore Nelson, even then a distinguished naval officer, though not nearly so famous as he afterwards became. Drinkwater and Nelson had formed a close intimacy during the English occupation of Corsica, and to a book of the soldier's, much less known than his "Siege of Gibraltar,"—indeed, scarcely known at all,—we owe some traits and anecdotes, not to be found elsewhere, of "the greatest sailor since the world began." As the *Minerve* steered westward from Gibraltar, she was followed by two Spanish line-of-battle ships, and Nelson had her decks cleared for action. "At this period," says Drinkwater, "I was walking with Commodore Nelson, commenting on the probability of the enemy's engaging the *Minerve*, and his words and manner of uttering them made a strong impression upon me. He said that he thought an engagement very possible, as the headmost ship appeared to be a good sailer, but (continued he), looking up at his broad pendant, 'before the Dons get hold of that bit of bunting, I will have a struggle with them; and sooner than give up the frigate, I'll run her ashore.'" In this cruise Drinkwater was sleeping in a cot beside Sir Gilbert's, when Nelson woke him at dead of night with the alarming news that they were in the very midst of the Spanish fleet. The fog and the darkness, however, favoured the brave, and they got clear through, with interesting tidings of the strength and the whereabouts of the enemy for Sir John Jervis, whom they joined at the appointed rendezvous off Cape St. Vincent. After much entreaty, Sir Gilbert Elliot procured permission for himself and suite to see from the deck of the *Lively* (they had been transferred to it on joining

the fleet) the great battle of St. Vincent, which gave its name to the title rewarding the successful admiral commanding. The *Lively* acted as a repeating frigate during the engagement. On that Valentine's Day of 1797 Drinkwater was all eye and ear, and when it was over and a magnificent victory had been won by Nelson's daring disregard of orders, he diligently compared his own notes with those of others, thus qualifying himself to become its historian.

Drinkwater landed with his chief at Plymouth, on Sunday the 5th of March, bringing, as they thought, joyful news, but nobody would believe them, and everybody was sad. It was impossible for any English fleet, the Plymouth people said, to stand against the combination, then and there reported and believed in, of the Spanish and French fleets. The news of the suspension of cash payments, too, had just arrived, and it was with difficulty that Drinkwater could raise, in incredulous and panic-stricken Plymouth, fifteen golden guineas wherewith to enable the party to carry to London intelligence of the splendid victory off Cape St. Vincent, in which fifteen sail of the line and four frigates, but with a Jervis to command them and a Nelson to disobey him, had beaten twenty-seven Spanish sail of the line and ten frigates,—capturing four of the former, two of them three-deckers. For this great victory Sir John Jervis was made Earl St. Vincent, and Nelson Knight of the Bath. But Nelson was not mentioned in the published despatches, and it seemed to Drinkwater and several others that the commodore's services on the occasion were under-estimated. Accordingly, the Historian of the "Siege of Gibraltar" set to work and wrote his "Narrative of the Battle of St. Vincent," the piece already referred to as little known, though a perfect model of naval historiography. He published it anonymously, because he

fancied that it might be thought presumptuous in him, a soldier and a landsman, to describe and criticise naval operations—modesty which “our special correspondent” would laugh at very heartily. Full justice was done in it to Nelson, and the great sailor appreciated the landsman’s labour of love. “The first time,” says Drinkwater, speaking of himself in the third person, “that he met Lord Nelson, after the battle of Aboukir, the Admiral approached with the eagerness which always characterised him, and shaking the author by the hand, exclaimed, ‘Why were you not with us at Aboukir?’”

By Sir Gilbert Elliot Drinkwater was strongly recommended to Pitt, who persuaded him to undertake the arrangement and settlement of the complicated accounts which had sprung out of the British occupation of Toulon and Corsica. His personal knowledge of the matters was great, but he accepted the employment with a sigh, since on undertaking it he was placed on the half-pay list, and ever afterwards he was connected with the purely civil administration of the army. Had fate ordered it otherwise, and had he remained on active service to the end of the struggle, which was closed at Waterloo, Drinkwater might have been one of our best military historians. As it was, employment after employment in the civil administration of the army rewarded his diligence and ability. In 1807, he was even offered (by Mr. Windham) the Under-Secretaryship of State for War and Colonies, but he declined it. Four years later, he was appointed one of the two Comptrollers of Army Accounts, and in this office he remained for a quarter of a century or so, until it was abolished in 1835. The duties of his post left him little leisure for authorship. Some years after his forced withdrawal from the Comptrollership, however, he republished (in 1840), with the authorship now avowed, and

in aid of the fund for the Nelson testimonial, his early "Narrative of the Battle of St. Vincent," adding to it various new and interesting Nelsoniana. He was busy with an enlarged edition of the "History of the Siege of Gibraltar," of the gallant defenders of which he was then the sole survivor, when he died on the 6th of January 1844, at Thorncroft, near Leatherhead, in Surrey, at the advanced age of eighty-one.

Colonel Drinkwater,—he had been a colonel since the time when he was placed on half pay,—took the name of Bethune after his withdrawal from public life and on the death of his brother-in-law, whose property (Balfour Castle in Fifeshire) his wife inherited. The State gained a good and faithful servant in Drinkwater, who, when his office of comptroller was abolished, proved, in an elaborate document, that while he held it he had saved the country a very considerable sum. But what the State gained was perhaps a loss to the military literature of a country which has produced many more great commanders than men competent or even willing to commemorate their exploits. Under other circumstances the Historian of the "Siege of Gibraltar" might have been the worthy chronicler of the war against the first Napoleon.

XIII.

*THE TWO THOMAS WALKERS.**

THE father of Thomas Walker, the reformer, and grandfather of Thomas Walker, author of "The Original," was a Bristol merchant, who claimed descent from a Monmouthshire family of gentle blood. In the last decade of the first half of the eighteenth century, apparently, he removed to Manchester, and certainly it was after that removal that his eldest son, the first Thomas Walker, the reformer, was born, on the 3d of April 1749. Concerning the Bristol merchant, who founded a Lancashire family, next to nothing is known or has been recorded; but "his wife," we are told, "was the first person who carried an umbrella in Manchester, and was mobbed for her pains;" indeed, as has been elsewhere mentioned, it was not until 1758 that any one actually in business ventured to set up a carriage in Manchester.¹ The husband of this innovating lady died, at the age of seventy, in 1786, by which time his eldest son, *ætat.* 36, was, "as

* *A Review of some of the Political Events which have occurred in Manchester during the last Five Years*, by Thomas Walker (the elder), (London, 1794). *The Original*, by Thomas Walker (the younger), edited by Blanchard Jerrold, 2 vols. (London, 1874). Baines's *Lancashire* (first edition), &c., &c.

¹ *First Series*, p. 305.

a merchant, a leading figure in the town, a gentleman prosperous and of high position, with Barlow Hall for his summer residence, and a house in South Parade, St. Mary's, for the winter." Two years before his father's death, the first Thomas Walker had become a conspicuous public man in the town of his father's adoption. In 1784, as has been previously chronicled,¹ Pitt imposed the "Fustian Tax," which naturally roused the discontent and vehement opposition of the Lancashire manufacturers, an opposition fomented and championed by Fox and the Whigs to damage their political enemy, the triumphant Pitt. It was the Lancashire agitation against the Fustian Tax which brought both the first Sir Robert Peel and the first Thomas Walker before the public, and the Manchester merchant even more prominently than the Bury calico-printer. Thomas Walker and a certain Thomas Richardson, being "two of the principal merchants of Manchester," were sent to London to protest against the Fustian Tax. The movement was, as the reader knows, completely successful, and Pitt, who had imposed the obnoxious tax, moved and carried its repeal, Fox seconding the motion; the two great political rivals being equally anxious to conciliate the rising cotton interest. "The joy excited by this triumph of sound policy was manifested in a splendid public procession in honour of the delegates, on their return to Manchester, to each of whom was presented a superb cup and stand, bearing an inscription expressive of the feelings of gratitude entertained towards them by their fellow-citizens."²

In all probability Walker was already a Foxite, and certainly the part which he played in the opposition to the Fustian Tax brought him into personal relations with the Whig leaders

¹ *Anti*, p. 101.

² Baines's *Lancashire*, ii. 312.

in Lancashire and London. These were made closer and more cordial by the combined resistance of manufacturing Lancashire, for its own supposed interests, and of the Whigs, for political and party purposes, to Pitt's Irish propositions, the story of which has been already told.¹ The modern conjunction of political with commercial Liberalism was unknown in those days. Throughout his career, Thomas Walker, the ardent political reformer, was neither more nor less than what at a later date was called a Protectionist. He opposed Pitt's Irish propositions. He was unfriendly to Pitt's Commercial Treaty with France, and while admitting that the opinion of Manchester was "almost universally in favour of it as advantageous to the industry of the locality," he protested against its alleged reciprocity in quite modern phraseology as "Irish, I suppose, with the advantage all upon one side." Nay, when in the last years of his life the famous Corn Bill was introduced, and was opposed by the first Sir Robert Peel and the manufacturing interest, Thomas Walker was as strongly in favour of the "Bread Tax" as, at the outset of his public career, he was hostile to the Fustian Tax. In 1816, the veteran Radical reformer wrote thus to his son:—"A principal object of the clamour that has been raised against the Corn Bill is to prevent a union between the landed and commercial interests in favour of reform, and against the authors and supporters of the late sanguinary, *expensive*, and unnecessary war, the origin of which, at present, seems to be entirely lost sight of by the simple and undiscerning people. We must not go into the Baltic for our loaf, when, if agriculture is only properly encouraged, we may always have it cheaper at home;" a sentence which might have come from the pen or the lips of a Protectionist of thirty years later. But when Walker first became a public man,

¹ *Ante*, p. 101, &c.

the Whigs were fierce opponents of the Free Trade, or quasi-Free Trade, policy which Pitt had learned from Adam Smith. Walker's readiness, after the repeal of the Fustian Tax, to become the mouth-piece of the Lancashire manufacturers in their opposition to Pitt's Irish proposals, made him more acceptable than ever to the Whig chiefs. The leading Whig nobleman of Lancashire, the Earl of Derby of that day, writes to him sympathetically in the August of 1785 about "this unhappy business," Pitt's Irish project; and a month later invites Walker to Knowsley to meet Charles James Fox, who strenuously opposed in the House of Commons Pitt's commercial policy towards Ireland, and, indeed, his Liberal commercial policy generally. Three years later the same Lord Derby became god-father to one of Walker's sons, and exerted himself to have his friend, the Manchester merchant, elected a member of the Whig Club.

This was in 1788, with the first French Revolution at hand, which was to throw for the time being commercial questions into the shade, and to efface them by the substitution of much fiercer issues of political controversy. But party-spirit seemed to slumber in Manchester until 1787, and there was probably no strong feeling of dissatisfaction evoked anywhere in the town when, in 1788, the Manchester Whigs celebrated with a sumptuous public banquet, at which Thomas Walker took the chair, the first centenary of the glorious Revolution of a hundred years before. On the 5th of November 1788, one hundred and thirty of the principal gentlemen of Manchester sat down to dinner, after the anniversary of the landing of King William had been otherwise duly commemorated by "the ringing of bells and the firing of the military in St. Ann's Square." The night before "a ball and supper were given at the Assembly Rooms, on

which occasion the ladies displayed orange-coloured ribbons." ¹ But questions soon arose, and startling political events soon occurred, which divided Manchester, with the rest of the kingdom, into two hostile camps, and which split up even the Whigs, who had been unanimous in their devotion to the glorious memory. On the 8th of May, in the year following the first centenary of the arrival of William III. in these islands (and a few days after that meeting of the States-General at Versailles, with which the first French Revolution began), there was a debate in the House of Commons on the Test and Corporation Acts. The motion to repeal them was rejected by a majority of only twenty votes. The cry of the "Church in danger" was raised in Manchester as elsewhere, and the Whig Churchman could no longer fraternise with the Whig Dissenter. In Manchester was formed a "Church and King Club," the members of which displayed on their buttons an engraving of the Old Church. In opposition to this club, Thomas Walker and his friends founded the Constitutional Society, the chief original object of which seems to have been to support the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts. This was but the beginning of the end. Thomas Walker still stood so high in the general favour and esteem of his townsmen, that in 1790 he received from them the greatest honour that could be conferred on a Manchester man as such. Then, and for many years afterwards, Manchester was neither a corporate town nor represented in the House of Commons. Its chief civic officer was still, as in olden times, the borough-reeve (*burg-graf*), or head-borough, who had come to be a sort of mayor without a town council, and who, with two (!) constables, was appointed annually (in October) by "a jury of the leet sum-

¹ Baines, ii. 313.

moned by the Lord of the Manor." In 1790 their choice fell on Thomas Walker.¹

But as the French Revolution proceeded in its course, political controversies aggravated, or rather absorbed, the ecclesiastical quarrel in Manchester. In the May of 1792, the Constitutional Society called for a reform of Parliament; only a few months later the first French Republic was proclaimed, and the Reign of Terror had begun. Manchester was by this time thoroughly Tory. In many of the taverns of the town, boards were suspended bearing the inscription, "No Jacobins admitted here." War with France was imminent. A day meeting was held in Manchester on the 11th of December (1792) to excite the inhabitants against the French Republic, and to support the anti-Gallican policy of the Government. At night the Church and King mob attacked the houses of several leading Manchester "Liberals," and among them the warehouse of Thomas Walker. Walker was prepared, and had firearms ready, with which, though not until after a fourth attack, he fired over the heads of the mob. The assailants retired, and in the morning renewed the attack, which he seems to have repelled with nothing harder than oral expostulation. He was now a marked man, on whom spies and informers had their eyes.

¹ In spite of his reforming zeal, Walker was perfectly satisfied with this obsolete arrangement. When he wrote his *Review*, in 1794, the ardent Parliamentary reformer thus defended the government of Manchester by a borough-reeve of feudal origin. "If this," he says, "were the proper place, I think I could show that the town of Manchester owes much of its wealth and importance to its unincorporate character, and that by the above-mentioned system"—of a borough-reeve and a couple of constables—"public order might be as fully maintained as it ever was in the best-regulated corporations in England. It has been observed with great truth that towns where manufactures are most flourishing are seldom bodies corporate, commerce requiring universal encouragement instead of exclusive privileges to the natives and freemen of a particular district."—*Review*, p. 23.

It was not, however, until the April of 1794 that the authorities could collect evidence on which plausibly to arraign him, and then he and several others were tried at Lancaster for a conspiracy to overthrow the Government. The principal witness for the Crown was a certain Dunn, who swore that he had heard treasonable expressions used at meetings of the Constitutional Society, and that he had seen men drilling in Walker's warehouse. The prosecution was conducted by Law (afterwards Lord Ellenborough) as Attorney-General for the county palatine; Walker was defended by his friend Thomas Erskine. It was easily proved that there was not a word of truth in Dunn's evidence. Law threw up the case, the judge remarking that Mr. Attorney "acted very properly," and Dunn was committed, to be afterwards condemned, on a charge of perjury. Within eight years from the time of the "splendid public procession" and the presentation of the "superb cup and stand" to the successful opponent of the Fustian Tax, Thomas Walker had learned something of the vicissitudes of public and of private opinion.

On his acquittal, Walker was warmly congratulated by Charles James Fox and others of the leading Whigs, who had not, like Burke, recoiled into support of Pitt and his strong government, from the shock given by the development of the French Revolution. But when, years afterwards, Fox and Erskine acceded to power, Thomas Walker did not share, however slenderly, in the material results of their triumph. He had remained in the interval an ardent and laborious "friend of the people," though, what with the expenses of his trial and other circumstances, which have not been recorded, he was sinking into poverty. Lord Grenville's short-lived ministry of All the Talents, came into being in the February of 1806, with Erskine for its Lord Chancellor, and Fox as Foreign Secretary and vir-

tual Premier. "It was shortly before the death of Fox," in the September following, "that Mr. Walker was encouraged to hope that his broken fortunes (his trial alone, in 1794, cost him £3000) would be mended somewhat by a Government appointment." In May 1806 (*ætat.* 57), he wrote to Fox, claiming his influence (which Fox had cordially promised him) to obtain one of the Commissionerships of Customs for the port of London,—a position for which his extensive knowledge and life-long pursuits eminently qualified him. He wrote also to Lord Erskine. The Commissionership of Customs having eluded his grasp, he wrote, in the July of the same year, to Erskine to aid him to obtain a vacant commissionership for auditing the public accounts, adding that Fox was too ill to receive any application on the subject. For the second, and last time—so far as any record remains—he failed.¹ In old age he remained, what he had been at first, a Reformer, and something of a Protectionist, as is shown by his latest political utterance (already quoted) when the Corn Bill of 1816 was being discussed. He died at Longford in the following year, 2d February 1817, and was buried "at St. Clement's Church, Chorltoncum-Hardy, Lancashire." It is pleasant to know that his last years were not embittered by poverty. A private friend, "Felix Vaughan," who had been one of his counsel at the trial of 1794, was, in death as in life, faithful to him. "Had it not been for the noble legacy which his affectionate friend and defender, Felix Vaughan, left him, he would have died in poverty. Vaughan bequeathed his fortune to the wife of Mr. Walker, and then to the wife of his brother Richard, and this god-send kept the Longford family together for many years after the death of the first Thomas Walker."²

¹ Blanchard Jerrold, i. 115.

² *Ib.*, p. 116.

II.

The lesson of his father's life was perhaps laid to heart by the second Thomas Walker, the author of "The Original," in whose writings (seldom or never professedly political) there is not to be found the slightest trace of the spirit of the Manchester Constitutional Society. He was born at Barlow Hall, on the 10th of October 1784, the eldest boy in a family of six children, three sons and three daughters, "who were all remarkable for great personal beauty, and created a sensation when they drove into Manchester in the family carriage, drawn by four horses, or when they appeared at the theatre." According to his own statement, he was a sickly child, whose life was frequently despaired of, and on this account he was brought up at home. The earliest glimpse we have of him is at the age of fourteen, in a letter written, apparently from Lancaster, to his mother, during a trip in which he accompanied the good friend of the family, Felix Vaughan, then on circuit. It is the letter of an intelligent and lively boy, who thinks Plutarch "one of the most entertaining books I ever read," and, what is still more noticeable, he is already a severe critic of provender. "The fare here," writes Master Tom, *at lat.* 14, "is not of the best kind. I have my dinners from the inn; yesterday I had some st-nk-g trout (I dare not put that word in full for fear of Miss Walker) and some salmon, which was pretty good. The butter is very bad, but this morning it was worse than ever; however, I managed to eat one piece with washing it down with tea." Without ever having been at a public school, he was sent in due time to Trinity Col-

lege, Cambridge, where he took his degree, and in 1812 he was called to the bar at the Inner Temple. He did not practise much, and this was of less consequence as, in 1819, he succeeded to the estate at Longford. With his settlement there he began two classes of experiments, one on himself, the other on the pauperism of his district. It was soon after taking possession of Longford that he received the impression, and came to the resolution, which he thus chronicled long afterwards for the edification of the readers of "The Original." "One day," he told them, "when I had shut myself up in the country, and was reading with great attention Cicero's treatise, *De Oratore*, some passage, I quite forget what, suggested to me the expediency of making the improvement of my health my study. I rose from my book, stood bolt upright, and determined to be well. In pursuance of my resolution, I tried many extremes, was guilty of many absurdities, and committed many errors, amidst the remonstrances and ridicule of those around me; I persevered, nevertheless, and it is now (1835), I believe, full sixteen years since I have had any medical advice or taken anything by way of medicine." His experiments for the diminution of pauperism began at the same time, and their character and results are pretty fully described in a pamphlet which he published in 1826, entitled "Observations on the Nature, Extent, and Effects of Pauperism, and on the means of Remedying it." He dealt with the pauperism of Stretford in accordance with views which he seems to have embraced very early in life,—views which he was never wearied of enforcing. Poor-laws he held in abhorrence. Pauperism Walker believed to be, in nine cases out of ten, the result of the pauper's own misconduct, fostered by a legal provision for his support, while the tenth case ought to be dealt with by private charity. Stretford was then "a district partly manufacturing but principally agricultural, and

containing about 2000 acres of land and as many inhabitants." According to his own account, Walker found the paupers of Stretford banded together to extort as much as they could from the rates, and practising "all sorts of tricks and impositions for that purpose." He, however, seems to have been too much for them. He procured the adoption "of somewhat the same plan as Mr. Sturges Bourne's Select Vestry, not then legalised," and began openly a reform by refusing to admit families to the workhouse. The paupers tried to outwit him and to weary him out, but in vain. "I spent almost my whole time," he says, "for some months, in visiting the labouring classes,—in making myself master of their habits, in explaining to them the causes of their distress, and *in enforcing, as occasions arose, the doctrines of Mr. Malthus*, which I took care to put in the most familiar and pointed manner I was able." By degrees he ingratiated himself with the poor of Stretford, who came to look upon him, not as a foe, but as a friend and adviser. They learned to depend more on themselves; the league of paupers was broken up, and in three years the amount of money paid to the poor of the district in outdoor relief sank from £800 to £350. As to indoor relief, when Walker ceased from his labours as an amateur poor-law guardian, the number of inmates of the Stretford Workhouse was reduced to eight, "viz., six aged persons and two young women,—one of the latter half idiotic, and the other labouring under severe disease. Three of the old men broke stones for the road, and the idiotic girl maintained herself. In fact, a workhouse was become quite unnecessary." After profiting by four years of this disinterested exertion, grateful Stretford presented him with a testimonial; and when, ten years later, he paid the township a casual visit, he found the impulse which he had given still so successfully active that, whereas in 1817 the monthly payments to

regular poor had been £68, they were in 1828 only £13, and that in spite of a great increase of population.

Why or when Walker left Longford for London we are not told. So early as 1823 he was certainly in communication on the subject of pauperism and poor-laws with the second Sir Robert Peel, then Home Secretary, and possibly his doings and writings recommended him for official employment. As already said, he published the pamphlet on pauperism in 1826 (that of 1831 is little more than a new edition of it), and three years later, in 1829, Walker was appointed a stipendiary magistrate in Whitechapel, then, as now, one of the poorest and most populous districts of the great metropolis. He became a year or two afterwards one of the magistrates of the Lambeth Police Office, the post which he filled till his death. In both offices he had ample opportunities for revising his rigid view of the impolicy of a poor law, but he remained faithful to it all his days, which, be it remembered, were those of the old not of the new poor law. Nothing more than that he was a "worthy magistrate" would have been known of him to the general public, had he not, in the year 1835, determined on the unmagisterial proceeding of starting a weekly periodical. On May 20, 1835, appeared No. 1 of "The Original, by Thomas Walker, M.A., Trinity College, Cambridge, Barrister-at-Law, and one of the Police Magistrates of the Metropolis; published every Wednesday, at 12 o'clock, price 3d." Walker was his own proprietor, his own editor, his own contributor, and much of "The Original" was devoted to himself. Papers on "The Art of Health," as exemplified by his own experience; on "The Art of Dining," similarly illustrated, with extracts from his diaries of foreign travel, and an occasional criticism, literary or dramatic, constituted the lighter portions of the fare which he offered weekly to his readers. The *pièce de résistance*

consisted of disquisitions on local self-government, and on those, to him, inexhaustible and ever-interesting themes, pauperism and the poor laws. The little sheets seem to have taken amazingly, from the writer's good sense, knowledge of man and of the world, as well as pleasant and gossiping egotism. It was impossible not to court the further acquaintance of a writer on the art of living, who was able to report that by care he had brought himself into such a condition of glowing health that he could not look dirty if he tried. "By way of experiment," he confided to his readers, "I did not wash my face for a week, nor did any one see, nor I feel any difference." The papers on the art of dining are full of racy instruction as well as of a delightful gusto. Let one specimen suffice:—"I now wish," he says, "to add about a page, and, as like other people, I suppose I can write more easily about what is freshest in my mind, I will give you, dear reader, an account of a dinner I have ordered this very day at Lovegrove's, at Blackwall, where, if you never dined, so much the worse for you. This account will serve as an illustration of my doctrine on dinner-giving better than a long abstract discourse. The party will consist of seven men beside myself, and every guest is asked for some reason, upon which good fellowship mainly depends; for people brought together unconnectedly had, in my opinion, better be kept separate. Eight I hold to be the golden number, never to be exceeded without weakening the efficacy of concentration. The dinner is to consist of turtle, followed by no other fish but white-bait, which is to be followed by no other meat but grouse, which are to be succeeded simply by apple fritters and jelly,—pastry on such occasions being quite out of place. With the turtle, of course, there will be punch, with the white-bait, champagne, and with the grouse, claret; the two former I have ordered to be particularly well iced, and they will all be placed in suc-

cession upon the table, so that we can help ourselves as we please. I shall permit no other wines, unless, perchance, a bottle or two of port, if particularly wanted, as I hold variety of wines a great mistake. With respect to the adjuncts, I shall take care there is cayenne, with lemons cut in halves, not in quarters, within reach of every one, for the turtle, and that brown bread and butter in abundance is set upon the table for the white-bait. It is no trouble to think of these little matters beforehand, but they make a vast difference in convivial contentment. The dinner will be followed by ices, and a good dessert, after which coffee and one glass of liqueur each, and no more ; so that the present may be enjoyed rationally without inducing retrospective regrets. If the master of a feast wishes his party to succeed, he must know how to command, and not let his guests run riot, each according to his own wild fancy. Such, reader, is my idea of a dinner, of which, I hope, you approve ; *and I cannot help thinking that if Parliament were to grant me £10,000 a year, in trust, to entertain a series of worthy persons, it would promote trade, and increase the revenue more than any higger-mugger measure ever devised.*" Clearly the mantle of his father, the political reformer, had not fallen on the magisterial *bon vivant* of the Lambeth Police Office.

It does jar a little, perhaps, upon the nerves of the reader of sensibility, when turning the page after such a passage as that just quoted, he comes upon a vigorous denunciation of a legal provision for pauperism, and of the impostures and worthlessness of paupers. Our own copy of "The Original" teems with such marginal notes as "hard-hearted brute !" the handiwork of a previous philanthropic and anti-Malthusian owner and commentator. Yet it was for the sake of the poor themselves, especially of the industrious and self-reliant poor, robbed and liable to be degraded by the professional and hereditary pauper, that Walker declared him-

self an enemy of the old system of indiscriminate poor-law relief. Nor was his own plan of dealing with the poor one at all consistent with a lazy indifference on the part of the rich. On the contrary, his notion of local self-government, including the management of the poor, was based on the active exertion of many more persons than troubled themselves then, or, in truth, trouble themselves now, about the administration of local affairs. Walker recommended a subdivision of the kingdom into comparatively small districts, with a sufficient number of local managers in each, instead of the old or present system of parishes, often huge and unwieldy, where the guardians or other authorities cannot possibly overtake or feel a personal or local interest in the business of the district. At the same time, he suggested that to allure the able and ambitious to take part in the management of local affairs, a much wider authority should be given the local functionaries than they possessed in his time or possess at present, when it was and is only some fraction of administration that is committed to any one body. With more manageable areas of local administration, and greater power entrusted to the local functionaries, Walker urged that the best class of men would be attracted to the conduct of local affairs. He even suggested proved local usefulness as a better stepping-stone than any other to a parliamentary life, and looked forward to a time when "representation might be the extraction of the choicest of the land." The worthy magistrate does not forget among the attractions to be held out to the local authorities of the future, entertainments at the public expense, but "in refined moderation and with simple refreshments, *particularly with suppers to induce occasional inspection of the parish at uncertain hours of the night,—a regulation I know to be of the greatest efficacy.*"

"The Original" had gone on successfully for more than

six months, when its editor, proprietor, and solitary contributor announced, in the number for the 2d of December, 1835, his intention of suspending it "till the first Wednesday in March." "London living and authorship," he informed his readers in his usual confidential way, "do not go on well together. My writings," he added, "have latterly drawn upon me more numerous and cordial invitations than usual, which is a gratifying sign of approbation, but of somewhat ruinous consequences. Conviviality, though without what is ordinarily called excess, during the greater part of the week, and hard fagging during the remainder, with a sacrifice of exercise and sleep, must tell; and if I was to go on without intermission I must make myself a slave, with at the same time great danger of falling off." No other number of "The Original" appeared. Before the 2d of March, fixed for the resumption of his periodical, Walker was in his grave. He died suddenly of pulmonary apoplexy, at Brussels, on the 20th of January 1836, at the age of fifty-two. In the pride of his later health and self-acquired strength, Walker professed to fear for the constitution of his brother Charles, who survived him, however, for many years, and died recently at Manchester, much respected and regretted, in extreme old age. For some days before Thomas Walker's death, he had, as usual, when absent from home on a holiday, been visiting gaols and houses of detention to increase his knowledge of prison discipline, respecting which, characteristically, he held the penal and deterrent rather than the reformatory view.

There are works of far greater didactic pretensions and fame than "The Original," which are much inferior to it in wisdom, and it is no small praise to say of it that its contents do not belie its title. After a period of comparative neglect, its first popularity seems to be in some measure

reviving, and two new editions of it have been published within the last few years, one of them prefaced by memoirs of the two Walkers (from family papers), of which ample use has been made in this sketch. Very probably, Walker's pamphleteering and other labours contributed to the much-needed amendment of the old poor-law. In spite, too, of occasional eccentricities of treatment, his expositions of the value of good local administration are sound and sensible, and deserve to have attention pointed to them at a time and in a country when and where an exaggerated importance is still attached to what is called "Imperial" legislation and the possession of a seat in the House of Commons. With every year Parliament does less and talks more. How to attract the best men to the work of local administration, ever increasing as it is in amount and importance, is a problem for the solution of which Walker's disquisitions may still be usefully consulted.

XIV.

MARIA JANE JEWSBURY.

THE gifted lady who died Mrs. W. K. Fletcher, but who was better known and is better remembered under her maiden name, was born on the 25th of October 1800, the eldest child of a large family. At the time of her birth, her father was engaged in the cotton manufacture, which he had learned from the first Sir Robert Peel. Her mother was a clever, bright, and, for those days, an accomplished woman, graceful, refined, of cultivated artistic taste and skill, and an excellent housewife withal. Their eldest daughter was sent betimes to a country boarding-school, but a severe attack of fever compelled her parents to remove her at fourteen, and the rest of her education was given her chiefly by herself. Some other instruction, however, she received at home, as is testified by this reminiscence of one who taught her, seemingly after her return from school:—

“I found her rather backward as to solid information, and as to the well grounding and the disciplining of the mind for study, or for accuracy of reflection or discriminating judgment, but the imaginative and inventive powers lively, and, as I afterwards learned from herself, in continual exercise; for, unknown to her parents, she used to sit up in her chamber in light evenings or early mornings to indulge in reveries, and in compositions of a kind to give scope for those qualities. Among

these, I believe, were a few small poems, the fragment of a play, and one or two short sketches of tales or novels. By this habit she rather injured her health, and enfeebled the powers of her mind; but, being soon convinced of her error after she had communicated the circumstance to me, I believe she entirely discontinued the practice, and never rose before five or six in the morning. For a considerable time the patient application of her mind to the quiet matter-of-fact studies of grammar, right reasoning, and history was irksome to her; but her good sense and desire for improvement convinced her of the necessity, and she certainly used every exertion to compel her mind to forego its appetite for high-seasoned and effervescing aliment, if I may so term it."

"I was nine years old," she herself afterwards recorded, "when the ambition of writing a book, being praised publicly, and associating with authors, seized me as a vague longing." But her early circumstances were not favourable to the gratification of any of these desires. The Staffordshire village of Measham, where she was born and spent most of her girlhood, was one of the dullest of places, and her chief companions, out of her family circle, were a few books and her own thoughts. Nor, as regarded self-culture and society, were matters greatly mended when, at the age of nineteen, she removed with her parents to Manchester, a change of residence due to losses which at that time of general commercial depression her father had sustained in business and otherwise. Manchester was a much more stirring place than Measham; it offered libraries and cultivated society. But heavy domestic duties were soon imposed—to some extent they were self-imposed—on the ardent and aspiring maiden of nineteen. Soon after the arrival of the Jewsbury family in the town, with which some of its members have ever since been pleasantly identified, the mother died, leaving a baby of a month old and six other children, of whom, as already said, the future authoress was the eldest. Of the sons, two were youths of sixteen and seventeen, but the rest almost formed a second family, there being a difference of many years between the eldest of the

younger group and the youngest of the older one. To the care and education of these younger children, the eldest of them being a girl of six,¹ Miss Jewsbury, herself only nineteen, devoted all her time, thought, and energies. She had, also, to be the counsellor as well as the companion of her father, and, hardest task of all, to struggle with the difficulties presented by a large household and a small income. It was a trying position, the more trying that she never recovered from the effects of her early illness, and her health was always delicate. Her own tastes and aspirations, too, had for a time at least to be sacrificed. Some of those who knew her then have recorded their wondering admiration of what a strong sense of duty enabled her to do and to suffer.

After a year or two, however, Miss Jewsbury succeeded in snatching a little time for self-culture. She repaired her neglected education by hard study; and reading much, she began to write a little. The poetry of Wordsworth opened up to her a new and welcome region of thought and feeling, and at this time, apparently, she addressed him a letter, which resulted in the establishment of a correspondence between the poet-philosopher of Rydal and his fair Manchester admirer. At last, too, came an opening into that world of authorship, to be a denizen of which had been one of the dreams of her childhood. In 1824, Mr. Alaric A. Watts, then a young man of five-and-twenty, returned to Manchester to undertake the editorship of the newly-established *Manchester Courier*. Mr. Aston, the Editor of the *Manchester Gazette*, was an acquaintance of her father's, and had published a little of her poetry in his paper. He now introduced her to Mr. Watts and his wife, the latter a sister of Wiffen the translator of Tasso and historian of the House of Russell. Mr. Watts soon recognised Miss Jewsbury's intellectual gifts. Very possibly she practically

¹ The present Miss (Geraldine) Jewsbury.

confirmed his impression of them by contributions to the *Courier* or to the *Literary Souvenir*, an annual which he was also then editing. In any case, it was through the kindness of this editorial friend that an arrangement was made with a London publishing firm for an original work from her pen, to consist of poems, tales, sketches, essays, criticisms, and on what, for an altogether unknown author, were considered liberal terms. The glowing visions of girlhood could now be realised. The young authoress set to work full of hope and confidence, and in 1825 appeared, modestly anonymous, two volumes of "Phantasmagoria, or Sketches of Life and Literature." The contents were marked by a wide range of thought and feeling, and by a combination of the poetic with the playful, of seriousness and sentiment with satire. There is a freshness and brightness in the volumes that make them pleasant reading even now. Domestic cares and worries had not destroyed a natural buoyancy of spirit, and her first work is full of cheerful vivacity. One great pleasure which the authoress herself derived from its appearance was, that she was thus enabled to give public expression to her admiration of Wordsworth, whose poetic greatness was not then generally recognised, and to whom "Phantasmagoria" was dedicated in graceful and grateful verse. The dedication led to a personal acquaintance with the poet and his family, and this ripened into an intimacy which ended only with Miss Jewsbury's life. During a visit paid by her to Rydal, Christopher North caught a glimpse of her in the company of her poetic guide, philosopher, and friend, and he has recorded it in the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*. The whole of the passage is worth giving as a testimony to the literary reputation which she had acquired in four years after the publication of "Phantasmagoria." The *Nox* is one of the March of 1829. Christopher and the Shepherd are planning

a banquet at which female as well as male genius is to be present, and in the course of the dialogue the Shepherd puts the question :—

“But wunna you ask Miss Jewsbury to the first male and female Noctes? She is really a maist superior lassie.

North. Both in prose and verse. Her ‘Phantasmagoria,’ two miscellaneous volumes, teem with promise and performance. Always acute and never coarse.

Shepherd. Qualities seldom separable in a woman. See Leddy Morgan.

North. But Miss Jewsbury is an agreeable exception. Always acute and never coarse, this amiable and most ingenious young lady.

Shepherd. Is she bonny?

North. I believe she is, James. But I do not pretend to be positive on that point, for the only time I ever had the pleasure of seeing Miss Jewsbury, it was but for a momentary glance among the mountains. Mounted on a pretty pony, in a pretty rural straw hat, and pretty rural riding-habit, with the sunshine of a cloudless heaven blended in her countenance with that of her own cloudless soul, the young author of ‘Phantasmagoria’ rode smilingly along a beautiful vale, with the illustrious Wordsworth, whom she venerates, at her side, and pouring out poetry in that glorious recitative of his, till the vale was overflowing with the sound. Wha, Jamie, wouldna ha’ looked bonny in sic a predicament?”

“Phantasmagoria” seems to have been successful, and from the time of its publication Miss Jewsbury followed Literature as a profession, more or less. Early in her new career, however, her health broke down again under the double pressure of domestic and literary labour. It was partly, and only partly, restored by a visit to Leamington, and the medical treatment there of the famous physician, Dr. Jephson. During her slow convalescence she wrote at Leamington her “Letters to the Young,” published in 1828, and which, she said, in a prefatory notice, “comprise a real and not fictitious correspondence.” Illness had evidently deepened her religious impressions, and the tone of the letters is uniformly serious and devout. The little volume becoming at once popular with the

religious world, went quickly through several editions, and is still, it seems, cherished by the class of readers for whom it was written. Seriousness, not to say sadness, pervades, too, her "Lays of Leisure Hours," published in 1829, and dedicated to Mrs. Hemans. The dedication is, it says, "in remembrance of the summer passed in her society," the summer of 1828, after the visit to Leamington. Miss Jewsbury and Mrs. Hemans had corresponded for some years previously, and the junior had introduced her senior to the poetry of Wordsworth. But it was not until this summer that they met. On her return to Rhyllon, near St. Asaph, at the end of July, Mrs. Hemans found Miss Jewsbury domiciled in a cottage not far off her own abode.

"The place," says the affectionate sister and enthusiastic biographer of Mrs. Hemans, "was as little attractive as a cottage in Wales could well be; but it possessed the advantage of being not more than half a mile from Rhyllon, and it had its little garden, and its roses and its green turf, and pure air; and these, to an inhabitant of Manchester, which Miss Jewsbury then was, were things of health and enjoyment. Thither then she repaired, with the young sister and brothers to whom she had long and well performed the duties of a mother; and there Mrs. Hemans found her established. . . . It was scarcely possible to imagine two individual natures more strikingly contrasted: the one"—Mrs. Hemans—"so entirely feminine, so susceptible and imaginative, so devoted to the tender and the beautiful; the other endowed with masculine energies, with a spirit that seemed born for ascendancy, with strong powers of reasoning, fathomless profundity of thoughts and feelings like those of her own Julia"—of whom more anon—"flashing forth at intervals with sudden and Vesuvian splendour, making the beholder aware of depths beyond his vision." . . . She came into Wales, indeed, completely as an invalid, but was soon sufficiently recruited to enter with full enjoyment into all the novelties around her"—in spite of the aforesaid "fathomless profundity of thought" and other rather alarming characteristics—"to pass long mornings in the dingle, to take distant rides on her donkey, surrounded by a troop of juvenile knights-errant, and to hold levees in the tent she had contrived as a temporary addition to her tiny dwelling, whose wicket gate can now never be passed by those still left to remember the converse of those bright hours, without a gush of mournful recollections."

From 1825 onwards, Miss Jewsbury had also been contributing frequently to the Annuals of that day and generation, and to the *Athenæum*, from the time when it passed into the hands of Mr. Dilke, who became its editor as well as its proprietor. Occasionally, moreover, she seems to have visited London, and to have mixed in its literary society. It is possible that in the social whirl of London, so striking a woman, and one whose conversation was so vivid, may have been visited by transient impulses of social ambition, alternating with that contempt for such aspirations which philosophy, religion, and sharp feminine insight into character could scarcely fail to engender in reflective moods and moments. If there was in Miss Jewsbury's mind and heart any conflict of the kind, it ended as became the disciple of Wordsworth and the writer of the "Letters to the Young." Some traces of the struggle may perhaps be discovered in the latest of her completed works, "The Three Histories," published apparently about 1831. These are imaginary biographies of an Enthusiast, a Nonchalant, and a Realist, and they proved that her mind had recovered its balance, and that while still earnest and reflective, she could pass from the grave and serious to the gay and the satiric. In her sketch of the character and career of Julia, the Enthusiast, ardent, ambitious, impulsive, and impetuous, Miss Jewsbury undoubtedly worked up some memories and impressions of her early life; whether it should be regarded as embodying any passing moods of her later self cannot be determined. But while Julia, disappointed and solitary, is left to roam about the world in wayward idleness, the purposes and destiny of the authoress are expressed and foreshadowed in the happier finale of the heroine's successful rival for the love and hand of the hero. He accepts a chaplaincy in India, that he may aid in the missionary work

proceeding there, and she accompanies her husband to the far East. When Miss Jewsbury finished the composition of the "Three Histories," her mind was doubtless made up. After the publication of the tale, thus distinctly indicating her own settled resolve, she married, in 1832 (being of the same age as the century), the Rev. William Kew Fletcher, a Chaplain in the then East India Company's service. The husband was in every way worthy of her, and of his excellence and earnestness, his urbanity and amiability, his surviving friends still speak with regretful admiration. They were married at Penegoes in Montgomeryshire, on the 1st of August 1832, in "a little quiet church among the Welsh mountains," the ceremony being performed by the vicar, the husband of Mrs. Hemans's sister and biographer, whose happy home Penegoes then was. In the September the newly-wedded pair sailed for India, whence the wife was never to return.

The writer of this sketch has been favoured with a perusal of Mrs. Fletcher's MS. Journal of her voyage to and residence in India. It is full of the results of a vivid and sympathetic observation of the novel aspects under which Nature was now presented to her, and of the practical good sense which, born with her, had been developed by the training of her earlier womanhood. She enjoyed the voyage, during which she made and chronicled lively and shrewd remarks on life at sea, and was, as might be expected from a woman of her poetic temperament, greatly impressed by the grandeur of Ocean in movement and repose. The Fletchers landed at Bombay in the March of 1833. Mr. Fletcher had been "gazetted" to Sholapore, but for some reason or other he proceeded to Kurnee, on the Malabar Coast, near Severndroog, once the scene of a famous English naval victory, and where his peculiar charge was to be that of "the society in camp at Dapoolie," and

then the head-quarters of Anglo-Indian military invalids. The Chaplain and his wife reached their destination a few weeks after the landing at Bombay, and on the 24th of April the English lady, half-crying, half-smiling, thus diarizes her impressions of India, and of her new, strange home :—

“Here is an interregnum! I have debated the matter long, and I now think I shall tell it by speaking the truth, since granting my impressions of this date wrong, I can correct them in a future one. Well, then, the interregnum has been spent in conjugating the verb “I hate India,” in every mood, form, tense, and person, in lavishing so much good abuse upon it that either it, or I, are very bad. That the fit is somewhat passed is proved by my setting pen to paper again—but to my retrospect. We remained in Bombay, *alias* biscuit-oven, *alias* brick-kiln, *alias* burning Babel, *alias* Pandemonium, *alias* everything hot, horrid, glaring, barren, dissonant, and detestable, till the morning of the 27th March, when, in a very melancholy state both of mind and body, I was put on board the Pattamar, or country vessel, hired to take us and our households to this place. . . . We anchored off Severndroog at one in the morning, and at seven I was carried in my palanquin to the Travellers’ Bungalow, and in the morning slept in our pitched tents, with an enormous banyan tree spreading its green arms over us; my old friend the sea rolling and roaring past in front, and on two sides forts and rocks, black and barren; to the back, one or two European houses scattered about. . . . My first ride was a melancholy one, reminding me of Milton’s lines :—

‘The lonely mountains o’er,
And the resounding shore,
A voice of weeping heard and loud lament.’

“The sea-side (except in a watering-place, is always one of Nature’s solemn shrines, and the route I took lay along that part which is scattered over with tombs, Moorish, Catholic, Protestant, Hindoo, the dead of many creeds, the sleepers after many sorrows, the graves varying from square solid structures of granite to single slabs with head and foot stones, and pillars surmounted by crosses. But only the Europeans have inscriptions, and after turning from the massy Mahometan structure, with its white flag placed in a tree over it, or looking in an open shed at a coarse image of some Hindoo god, it is painfully touching to read an English inscription, ‘To the beloved wife of so and so, aged 18’—a fact of common occurrence in this land of death. The first night I felt and saw only the better part of all this; and as one inevit-

ably is most disposed to wish for death when least in the state to be fit for such a change, I believe I

‘Wished to be with them and at rest.’

To use a terribly graphic expression that I once heard Mr. Fletcher apply to some one, I was ‘drunk with discontent.’ I could see nothing but in the black aspect of desolation.” . . . But things and moods had mended a little before the poor lady sat down to her Diary. “I now often ride on this part of the shore, and the blackened tombs, almost washed by the rolling tides, looked down upon by high barren hills—no shrub or flower about them, nothing but salt, sand, sea-shells, and wild onions—now strike me as picturesque.”

The aspects of man in that desolate region were as unattractive as those of nature, though at last Mrs. Fletcher grew almost reconciled to those as to these. The population about her was mostly one of poverty-stricken and crouching ryots, given over to a debased and debasing idolatry, in which the most cosmic philosopher could discover nothing good, and which appeared inexpressibly repulsive and shocking to a cultivated and devout Christian gentlewoman. How to reach the benighted native mind, how to break down the barriers interposed by immemorial custom between the native and the European, was a problem that much perplexed Mrs. Fletcher, as it has perplexed—before and since—many other Anglo-Indian well-wishers to the Hindoo. “I declare,” she exclaims once, “if I had, which I have not, the spirit of a missionary, I should be utterly at a loss how to set about teaching these people.” Meanwhile she tried to win her way into their confidence, beginning with the children, who appreciated little gifts and kindnesses. In the intervals of his direct professional engagements, the husband was learning Mahratta to enable him to hold converse with the natives. And both took little trips into the country behind their tented home, visiting temples, becoming guests at native entertainments, and otherwise trying to familiarise them-

selves with the people among whom their lot seemed to be cast. Scarcely two months after her "I hate India," Mrs. Fletcher diarizes thus cheerfully and rationally.

"Setting aside the terrible trial of first encountering the climate, I now perceive that the great cause of my utter wretchedness on first settling down in India arose from disappointment in not finding English pleasures, English habits, and English conversation, or rather conversation about English things. Much of our unhappiness arose from being unreasonable ; just as much as my present reconciliation to the country is attributed to my having consented to judge it by itself, and require from it interests of its own growth. Figs, I find, will only grow on fig-trees. It is only England that can be English ; India must be Indian. Therefore, throwing aside as much as may be all pinings after what is 15,000 miles off, and throwing myself as much as possible into the scenes and occurrences round one, striving to observe and understand them, I do find the remark verified that 'India has pleasures of its own.' To Bombay, or to a station possessing what is called a large society, I should never grow reconciled, but a situation that many would call banishment is to me absolutely interesting. I believe there is something in me either of the wild ass or the wild Arab, for our tents and our camp furniture (*Anglicè*, three cups and saucers, with a similar proportion of plates and dishes) I prefer to what is termed 'a regular establishment.'"

Just, however, when the Fletchers were growing used and even attached to Kurnee, they were ordered off to their original destination, Sholapore. Mrs. Fletcher regretted the change, since, though with her customary dislike for communities or groups of Anglo-Indians, she never even visited Dapoolie, yet she had formed some friendships at Kurnee, and tears flowed on both sides when she mounted the "palanquin dressed as a bed" that bore her away from that barren, barren shore. At the beginning of May (1833) they were at Mahabuleshwar, the "Montpellier of Bombay," and soon on the march again towards Sattara, a place with the name of which the English public became afterwards wearisomely familiar. The life of palanquin by day and of tent by night seems to have exhilarated Mrs.

Fletcher, and her some-time silent muse burst forth into cheerful song, as in these verses beginning—

“ Ay, up with the tent-pegs,
And down with each wall,
'Tis evening, 'tis sunset,
March forward, march all !

“ Very fair was this shelter,
With tank and with tree,
I leave it my blessing,
Yet leave it with glee.

“ The bullocks are laden,
And pleasantly ring
Their bells, as their patient heads
To and fro swing.

“ And yonder the Coolies
In dark groups defile,
Human bearers of burdens
For long mile and mile.”

A pleasant and an India-suggested chaunt, not one inspired by sentimental or sorrowful reminiscence of home and England.

Sattara was reached on the 6th of May, and after a month's repose at the Residency, the march began again. On the 10th of June the travellers were at “Mussoor-Peloune” (?), where the Journal contains the ominous jotting:—“I had an attack of semi-semi cholera, only demi-semi.” Still more ominous are the two entries made in the Journal at Sholapore, divided as they are by an interval of three months. The destination of the travellers, or what they thought to be their destination, was reached on the 17th of June, and this is a part of the day's dismal record:—“Entered, to breakfast—heart sinking lower every step. . . . drought—famine sweeping off the natives—a people of skeletons—a land that looks covered with the curses of Jeremiah and Ezekiel.” The next entry is dated “Sholapore, September 16th,” and runs thus:—“An inter-

regnum of three months; how spent few words may tell. Fever—sadness—discontent—workmen—bungalow made comfortable—charity for natives instituted by Mr. Fletcher—*the dart of death shaken over him*—seven weeks' struggle—climate pronounced the cause—medical certificate—journey to Kurnee sanctioned—preparations for another journey." "On march" is the next entry—"Babelgaum (?), September 26, 1833"—and it shall be quoted as the poor lady's very last:—

"I remember when about sixteen (an age when one generally likes finery of all kinds), thinking these two lines of poor Kirke White very fine:—

'Once more, and yet once more,
I give unto my harp a dark-woven lay.'

"I commence with them a new journal-book and a new journey. Our three months at Sholapore seems nothing but a hurried dream, and coming this morning over the very ground when going to it, merely with this difference, that the earth was then one dust, and is now, owing to the monsoon, one mud, I felt emphatically a stranger—a pilgrim, at least. The novelty, too, is gone off travelling; except we go Dak (having Hamals posted, so as to proceed without stopping), I feel as if travelling through a country known to me from childhood. The draperied women, carrying water vessels on their shoulders, and having rings in their noses, are no longer strange; and the brown and half-naked artizan fills up his village-place, in my eye, as the blacksmith, and baker, and cobbler in England. This, a fresh Durma villa—where we have halted to take a very primitive breakfast—no longer excites or shocks me by its stone images, its monkey god, and elephant god and gods. . . . I enjoy this rough marching without servants, your materials for a hasty meal hanging to your palanquin, better than the train of baggage when you march with tent and by stages. The monsoon not being over, the roads are often mid-leg deep in mud. The nullahs are often swimmable. The rivers are full, and extra palanquin-bearers are needed to meet the extra exertion. We have thirty-two for our two palanquins; they are to carry us the remainder of forty miles before ten to-night. We left Sholapore about one this morning. What marvellous animals these natives are! The Hammal branch, especially stupid, slow, tiresome about other things, but walking a distance with a load over roads that no stout English beef-eater dare look at.

“One new feature in this journey is a new companion, though an old pet, in the shape of a superb China cockatoo.”

And here the record abruptly ends. “More,” adds the hand of the sorrowing husband, “my beloved one never wrote. Eight days after this the spirit became a glorified saint.” Scarcely seven months had elapsed since the landing at Bombay when—on the 4th of October 1833—Mrs. Fletcher died, of cholera, at Poonah, and there she was buried.

News from India travelled slowly in those days, and, Mrs. Hemans, according to her biographer, did not receive the sad intelligence until the summer of 1834.

“I was indeed,” she wrote to some one who belonged both to Mrs. Fletcher’s and to Wordsworth’s circle, “deeply and permanently affected by the untimely fate of one so gifted and so affectionately loving as our poor lost friend. It hung the more solemnly upon my spirits, as the subject of death and the mighty future had so many, many times been that of our most confidential communion. How much deeper power seemed to lie coiled up, as it were, in the recesses of her mind than was ever manifested to the world in her writings! Strange and sad does it seem that only the broken music of such a spirit should have been given to the earth—the full and finished harmony never drawn forth. Yet I would rather a thousand times that she should have perished thus in the path of her chosen duties, than have seen her become the merely brilliant creature of London literary life, at once the queen and slave of some heartless coterie, living upon those poor *succès de société*, which I think utterly ruinous to all that is lofty, and holy, and delicate in the nature of a highly-endowed woman. I put on mourning for her with a deep feeling of sadness. I never expected to meet her again in this life, but there was a strong chain of interest between us, that spell of *mind on mind*, which, once formed, can never be broken. I felt, too, that my whole nature was understood and appreciated by her, and this is a sort of happiness which I consider the most rare in all earthly affection. Those who feel and think deeply, whatever playfulness of manner may brighten the surface of their character, are fully *unsealed* to very few indeed.”

Then follows this touching episode of Mrs. Fletcher’s last stay at Sholapore, only a few weeks before her death,

during the famine, to which a brief, sad reference in her Diary has been already quoted:—

“Will you tell Mr. Wordsworth this anecdote of poor Mrs. Fletcher? I am sure it will interest him. During the time that the famine in the Deccan was raging, she heard that a poor Hindoo had been found lying dead in one of the temples at the foot of an idol, and with a female child, still living, in his arms. She and her husband immediately repaired to the spot, took the poor little orphan away with them, and conveyed it to their own home. She tended it assiduously, and one of her last cares was to have it placed at a female missionary school, to be brought up as a Christian.”¹

Wordsworth no doubt received, and was touched by, this anecdote of Mrs. Fletcher's last days. He himself has left a record, both in prose and verse, of his admiration and friendship for her. The whole of his poem of “Liberty” (dated 1829) is addressed to her. It turns upon the transfer of some gold and silver fish (apostrophised in a previous poem) from their glass globe indoors to a pond in the grounds of Rydal Mount. There is a reference to Cowley, “the tried servant of a thankless Court,” seeking in old age true liberty; “to you,”—the muses,—

“The remnant of his days at least was true.”

The poet then proceeds:—

“Far happier they who, fixing hope and aim
On the humanities of peaceful fame,
Enter *betimes* with more than martial fire
The generous course, aspire and still aspire;
Upheld by warnings, heeded not too late,
Stifle the contradictions of their fate,
And to one purpose cleave, their Being's god-like mate.

“Thus, gifted Friend, but with the placid brow
That woman ne'er should forfeit, keep thy vow;

¹ *Memoir of Mrs. Hemans*, by her Sister, p. 276.

With modest scorn reject whate'er would blind
 The ethereal eyesight, cramp the wingèd mind.
 Then with a blessing granted from above
 To every act, word, thought, and look of love,
 Life's book for thee may lie unclosed, till age
 Shall with a thankful tear bedrop its latest page."

In a note, Wordsworth adds :—

"There is now, alas ! no possibility of the anticipation, with which the above epistle concludes, being realised ; nor were the verses ever seen by the individual for whom they were intended. She accompanied her husband, the Rev. William Fletcher, to India, and died of cholera, at the age of 32 or 33 years, on her way from Sholapore to Bombay, deeply lamented by all who knew her. Her enthusiasm was ardent, her piety steadfast, and her great talents would have enabled her to be eminently useful in the difficult part of life to which she had been called. The opinion she entertained of her own performances, given to the world under her maiden name, Jewsbury, was modest and humble, and indeed far below their merits ; as is often the case with those who are making trial of their powers, with a hope to discover what they are best fitted for. In one quality, viz., quickness in the motions of her mind, she had, within the range of the author's acquaintance, no equal."

This is high praise from one so little given as Wordsworth was to public acknowledgment of the merits of his contemporaries. Of Mrs. Fletcher's "modest and humble" estimate of her own performances, there may be added the following illustration, in a letter to a friend, written not long before her departure to India, and pathetically foreshadowing her approaching end :—

"I have done nothing to live, and what I have done must pass away with a thousand other blossoms, the growth, the beauty, and oblivion of a day. The powers which I feel, and of which I have given promise, may mature, may stamp themselves in act, but the spirit of dependency is strong upon the future exile, and I fear they never will.

'I feel the long grass growing o'er my Heart.'

In the best of everything I have done, you will find one leading idea, Death ; all thoughts, all images, all contrasts of thoughts and images, are derived from living much in the valley of that shadow."

Mr. Fletcher survived his wife many years, and died of "malarious Indian fever," at Worthing, in 1867.

*HENRY LIVERSEEGE.**

THREE years or so after the birth of Frank Stone at Manchester, came that of another artist whom Lancashire may well be proud to have produced. Henry Liverseege was born there on the 4th September 1803, but to him was not granted the length of days enjoyed by his senior, and he died just when his powers were beginning to be fairly developed and conspicuously recognised. With his very birth, indeed, he seemed destined to be short-lived. From his cradle he was sickly and deformed, and an organic disease of the chest rendered him early a victim to asthma. It was on this account, it has been said, that, as he grew in years, a marked dislike for him was evinced by his father, who was "a joiner and mechanic." The elder Liverseege has been written of as a coarse-minded and ill-conditioned man, who saw in the weakly boy a burden and nothing more. If so, he little thought that he himself would be remembered, and remembered only, for his cruelty to a child who should have been cherished all the

* *Library of the Fine Arts* (London, 1832), vol. iii., "Memoir of the late Henry Liverseege." Allan Cunningham's *Lives of the most eminent British Painters, &c.* (London, 1833), vol. vi., § Liverseege. *The Works of Henry Liverseege*, with a Memoir by George Richardson (London, 1875).

more warmly that nature had dealt with him so unkindly. In after-years, according to one account, Liverseege never spoke of his father without emotion, and it was emotion in which gratitude neither found nor deserved to find a place. But his latest biographer contradicts these statements emphatically. "We are desirous," he says, "to correct a common impression that the elder Liverseege had an antipathy towards his son. We knew the father well, and the report is utterly unfounded. The father was a taciturn, simple, and harmless old man, and proud of his son."

However this may have been, a kind uncle and aunt did much for the deformed and sickly boy. The good souls seem almost to have adopted him, and, on finding that he was unfitted for business, encouraged him to draw and paint, as soon as it became clear that he was an artist born. The first glimpse we have of Liverseege is afforded by one of his early friends, who remembered him "occupying a room in the mill of his uncle, in Canal Street," reading Shakespeare with the keenest enjoyment, throwing off, for amusement, sketches to illustrate his favourite poet, and painting for profit, miniatures on ivory. When young he was fond, passionately fond, it seems, of private theatricals, a taste which harmonised well with the essentially dramatic character of his genius in art. He did not disdain sign-painting under special circumstances; and when the late Mrs. Fletcher (the Maria Jane Jewsbury of the preceding memoir) wrote a brief biography of him after his death, in 1832, she recorded that two of his signboards, "a Saracen's Head and an Ostrich, yet hang up at two obscure public-houses in Manchester.¹ The Ostrich," she added, "is bad, the

¹ "That of the Saracen was the first. It was painted upon a flag weighing several hundred weight. The owner and, of course, landlord, Mr. Williams, is still at the same tavern in Rochdale Road, where the sign may be seen, though it is now inside the house."—*Richardson*.

Saracen's Head is well done ; and he always spoke of them with interest." This sign-painting, however, was occasional, not customary ; and the Saracen's Head, it appears, on other authority, brought Liverseege ten guineas—a very fair price for a tavern-sign. In truth, Liverseege's portraits soon became famous in his native town ; and had he chosen to devote himself to that branch of art, he need never have been without profitable employment. But the spirit of the true painter was strong within the deformed and sickly young man. Moreover, though affectionate and even genial to his friends, he had a somewhat peevish and irritable temper, the result, no doubt, of his physical defects and complaints, and it can easily be imagined that he grew wearied of the complaisances required from the portrait-painter and of the whims and caprices of exacting sitters. Untaught though he was, he was impelled irresistibly upward to higher regions. His first contribution to the Manchester Exhibition seems to have consisted of three small pictures of Banditti, in 1827. They did not easily find purchasers, and the price given was not a large one. By and by, however, a picture which he painted of Adam Woodcock, from Sir Walter's "Abbot," was praised and purchased by the Earl of Wilton, and then (as is the manner of this world), a nobleman having led the way, others began to wonder and admire. His first picture in the Royal Academy Exhibition was also from a work of Sir Walter's, "The Black Dwarf." The painting was small, but graphic and vivid ; the scene chosen is that where the Recluse unsheathes his dagger on being told by the heroine of her marriage on the morrow, while Isabella starts in alarm at the act. It is characteristic of Liverseege's thoroughness as a painter, that not being able to find a living model for the Black Dwarf, he made one of clay. Unpleasing as was the subject of "Isabella and the Recluse,"

the talent displayed in the picture was undeniable. Lord Wilton's verdict was confirmed by connoisseurs, and at five and twenty or thereabouts, Liverseege found himself "a rising young man."

To London of course he went, in or about 1827,—though not to settle, but merely to draw and study for two or three months in each spring and summer. The kindly and generous Sir Thomas Lawrence welcomed him and gave him a letter which, but for some informality in the presentation, would have admitted him a probationer of the Royal Academy. He drew, however, at the British Museum, and copied at the British Institution. In copying the great masters his rapid dexterity was wonderful; and of a particular reproduction of Rubens he said to a friend, with an emphasis which was justified by the merit of the workmanship: "Sir, they could not tell one from the other,"—the copy from the original. During a visit to London, he lodged, with Lancashire shrewdness, at a famous printseller's in the Strand: a choice of residence which gave him great opportunities for copying prints and drawings. After each of these visits, he returned to Manchester and to the warm home which was always ready for him under the roof of his uncle and aunt. There he planned, sketched, and worked. His tendencies and his ambition may be gathered from a remark which he made to a friend when standing before Wilkie's "Village Festival," in the National Gallery. Liverseege expressed his ardent desire that some patron of art would give him a commission to execute a work of the same character as that admirable picture. He would be content with a bare subsistence, he said, while he worked at it, and then he would never paint more. For landscape he had no turn. To him, human life, in its infinite variety, was all in all. In treating the main subject and the accessories, he laboured to attain the

most scrupulous fidelity. "He never worked upon any design without having the objects before him in the exact order in which he wished to represent them." The model which, when he could find none in real life, he made of the Black Dwarf has been already mentioned. Another example of his realism is furnished by the amusing story which one of his biographers has told. He was to paint Christopher Sly and the Hostess, from the "Taming of the Shrew" of his darling Shakespeare, a large one-volume edition of whom he had always on his table, calling it his work-day Bible. Liversseege looked about him long before he could light upon any one fit to sit for the drunken Christopher. At last he found a cobbler whom he fancied would suit; and having seated him in the studio, he placed a bottle of strong gin before him, saying: "Drink whenever you please." "The liquor vanished in a short time; the spirit of the cobbler refused to stir; he sat as sober as a judge on the circuit. Another bottle of gin was brought: it went the same way in course of time, and the son of Crispin sat as steady as ever. 'Begone,' cried the painter in a passion, 'it will cost me more money to make you drunk than the picture will fetch.'"

In 1830, Liversseege contributed to the Society of British Artists and to the British Institution three pictures, which, if not the best that ever came from his easel, are amongst the most characteristic of his works. They were "The Enquiry," "Cobbett's Register," and "The Recruit." Allan Cunningham's criticism on all three has the merit (for our purposes) of brevity; to "The Enquiry," however, he scarcely does sufficient justice. It represents, he says, "a simple country lad with a present of game in his hand, inquiring his way of a pompous and supercilious porter, standing at the door of his master's house. There seems nothing more aimed at than a delineation of a real scene;

the swollen turkey-cock air of the one, and the timid awe-struck simplicity of the other, are happily hit off. Of a similar character in point of literal delineation from life is 'The Cobbler reading Cobbett's Register.' You see at once that the son of Crispin is spelling his way, though he is putting on a look of wondering sagacity. It is a happy little picture. 'The Recruit' is another of those natural and striking things. This is a wonderful performance. Within that range of subjects nothing has been produced which surpasses it. The expressive attitude and general air of the perplexed recruit; the free and devil-may-care bearing of the soldier, are admirable and truly depicted, and no less so the anxious attitude and imploring look of the female. He has introduced an incident which adds considerably to the interest of the work: in the background is represented an old woman watching beside an old, infirm soldier, whose shattered body and wooden leg tell the story of his life. The painting is clear and light, and the handling beautifully free. These three pictures are all the offspring of the painter's own observation or fancy, and bear upon them the marks of a mind which studied the workings of the human heart." Thus far "honest" Allan, always appreciative, always trustworthy. The three pictures were in the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition of 1857.

They were exhibited in London, as already said, in 1830. 1831 was the last year of Liverseege's life, and in it some of the best of his works were produced or made known. It was in this year that he sent to the Royal Academy "Sir Percy Shafton" and "Mysie Happer," from Sir Walter's "Monastery," and "Hamlet and his Mother in the Closet," from Shakespeare; to the Exhibition of the Society of British Artists, "The Grave-diggers" from Hamlet, "Catherine Seyton" from the Abbot, and a work of fancy, "The Benedicite or Holy Daughter;" while in the

August of the same year, of new pictures alone, he contributed to the Exhibition of his native city, "Don Quixote in his Study," and "The Fisherman." The excellence of almost all of these pictures is considerable, and the very titles of them show that Liverseege's range was widening. "The Grave-diggers" and "The Fisherman" belong to the same class as the "Register" and the "Recruit," but he rises into a far higher sphere of delineation in the "Hamlet," which has "all the feeling and poetry of Fuseli, without his extravagance," and in the "Don Quixote," thought to be the best picture he ever painted, with dignity and magnanimity thrown into the wasted and care-worn visage, in which the imagination of most painters seems capable of seeing only the lanthorn-jaws. The rising man of 1828 had fairly risen in 1830. For the "Recruit" Liverseege received a hundred and thirty guineas; his fame was established in art-circles, and the Duke of Devonshire was becoming his patron. His stay in London was protracted longer than usual into the summer of 1831, because this nobleman wished to see him. The irritable Liverseege was growing angry at the delays interposed to the interview, but it came at last, and he had every reason to be satisfied with it. The Duke told him (his Grace had bought the "Mysie Happer" for fifty guineas) that when he had anything to dispose of he would always find a purchaser at Devonshire House, and great was Liverseege's delight, the delight of a true artist, to think that works of his might be hung among those of the old masters which he then and there inspected in the company of their owner. A proud and happy man, he returned to Manchester from the last visit which he was to pay to London.

To his friends, who used to console him with the saying, "a rickety hinge holds longest together," and even to himself, his health seemed to have improved and his

strength to have increased in the sunshine of prosperity and recognition. Formerly, when he visited any of his artist-intimates (David Roberts was one of them), who lived up two pair of stairs, he had been carried to his destination: latterly, he could walk some distance without fatigue. But these were deceitful appearances, delusive preludes to the fast approaching doom. After his return to Manchester in 1831, he seemed gloomier and more irritable than usual. He still resided with his uncle and aunt, to whom he was always grateful and attached, and their care of his health was aided by his own. Yet a presentiment of what was coming flitted before him. He spoke of death, and spoke of it from the point of view of an artist who lived only for his art. "I care not," he used to say, "for what is called dying, for I have no enjoyment in life save what is derived from success in my pursuit; yet I should not like to die until I had done some great work to immortalise my name—to be remembered after death is indeed a great consolation." As winter approached, he was sketching and painting as earnestly as ever, with Shakespeare, Scott, and Cervantes beside him, when a lethargic feeling came over him, and his legs began to swell. The day before his death, he arranged for the purchase of a pony; in the evening he sat before the fire, heavy and dozing. Rousing himself, he asked the day of the month, and then said to the ever kind relative who was with him: "Aunt, if anything should happen to me, take care of all my pencil sketches; they will be valuable." Next morning, as he did not seem astir, his sister went up into his room, and found him quietly sleeping. A considerable time elapsed; she returned, and saw him motionless, with face strangely altered. The doctor was sent for, and he immediately administered restoratives. Liverseege just opened his eyes, turned round, threw his arms across his chest, and died, without the least

apparent pain or struggle. "In the moment of expiring," it is added, "his countenance was overspread with a dignity and nobleness of expression which astonished every one present." At the *post-mortem* examination it was discovered that his left lung, having never been exercised, had become a piece of solid muscle; the right one had distended until at last it burst. Liverseege died on the 13th of January 1832, at the early age of twenty-eight. On the 19th, the graveyard of Old St. Luke's, Chorlton-on-Medlock, received the remains of one who, if longer life had been granted him, might have ranked among the masters of the British school of painting. When the new church was built, the painter's body was exhumed and placed under pew 51 leading to the chancel. A brass plate records his resting-place, and at the east end of the chancel there is a white marble tablet to his memory with a suitable inscription.¹

In person, Liverseege was below the middle height, and his left shoulder showed the deformity which was born with him. His forehead was "ample and serene," his irritability and peevishness were the result of disease and malformation, and were seldom visited on his friends, though even with them he was rather exacting, and complained bitterly if they were any length of time without coming to see him. His innate disposition was generous and friendly; his manner and appearance those of a gentleman. In society he was excellent company, lively and sprightly; and his greatest delight was to play the host to a merry set of brother-artists, and to enjoy their enjoyment. His region of art may not have been the highest, but was not very far below it. If, with such gifts as his, with his

¹ "John Edward Taylor, Esq., of the *Manchester Guardian*, was the gentleman who was chiefly instrumental in raising this graceful tribute to the memory of Henry Liverseege."—*Richardson*.

strong love of improvement, and his purely artistic ambition, he had been granted the ordinary span of human life, it is probable that the names of few modern English painters would have been better known than that of Henry Liverseege.

XVI.

*SIR JOHN BARROW.**

HALF a mile from the busy little town of Ulverstone, the capital of Furness (which district of North Lancashire gave birth to Romney the painter), lies the obscure village of Dragley Beck. Here still stands, or lately stood, the little cottage in which John Barrow was born, on the 19th of June 1764. For nearly two centuries his mother's progenitors had been owners of the cottage which went with her to her husband, one of the sons of "an extensive farmer." Some of the brothers occupied large holdings, but John's father was content to cultivate the few fields attached to the cottage, and on which grew grain and vegetables, with the grass for two or three cows. Fortunately, however, John was an only child, and the little property being their own, his parents seem to have been comfortable, without pretensions to opulence. Of anything like struggle and hardship in their life and lot there is no mention in the son's autobiography. At eight John was sent to a small endowed school in the neighbourhood, which was

* *An Autobiographical Memoir of Sir John Barrow, Bart., late of the Admiralty; including Reflections, Observations, and Reminiscences at Home and Abroad, from early Life to advanced Age* (London, 1847). *Gentleman's Magazine* for January 1849, &c., &c.

taught by an excellent master and man, the Rev. William Walker, a son of the Robert Walker, incumbent of Seathwaite, who brought up eight children on a stipend of £17 a year, and whose long life of beneficence, frugality, industry, and primitive simplicity, has been commemorated by Wordsworth. Under Walker the little Barrow remained for five years, and learned something of the classics, English as well as ancient. What proved of more use to him, John also benefited by the lessons of an old gentleman, "a sort of perambulating instructor," who for three months in the year taught arithmetic and mathematics in a separate room of the Town Bank school to all whose parents chose to pay for these "extras." "From him," says Barrow, "I received instruction in those branches of mathematics which are most easily attained under a master, such as algebra, fluxions, and conic sections. Euclid needed no master,"—a statement which shows the boy's strong bent for mathematical study.

The knowledge thus acquired was soon and unexpectedly turned to practical account. The agent of a neighbouring landed proprietor asked the master of the Town Bank school to recommend him two competent pupils to assist him in making a survey of an extensive estate near Ulverstone. Walker recommended his own nephew and young Barrow. They entered upon their task, and while performing it Barrow derived what he calls "incalculable benefit" from the lessons in land-surveying received under skilful superintendence, and from a practical knowledge of the theodolite and the other mathematical instruments of his immediate employer. A certain good fortune, indeed, seems to have accompanied Barrow through life; and whatever he learned or did, proved, sooner or later, useful to him when he least expected it. The almost accidental study of astronomy, to which he devoted some of his time on leaving

school, turned out, long afterwards, an important aid in his career. "Five or six of the upper boys agreed to subscribe for the purpose of purchasing a celestial globe, and also a map of the heavens, which were lodged in the mathematical apartment of Town Bank school, to be made use of jointly or separately, as should be decided on. Our cottage at Dragley Beck was distant a mile or more, yet such was my eagerness of acquiring a practical knowledge of the globe and the map, that I never omitted a starlight night without attending to the favourite pursuit of determining certain constellations and their principal stars, for one, two, or three hours, according as they continued above the horizon. It was a pleasure then, and a profit thereafter," as will be seen by and by. Moreover, finding himself occasionally puzzled by a difficult geometrical problem, he resolved to consult an old farmer of the name of Gibson, living "among the hills," varying his agriculture with the study of mathematics and astronomy, and called the "wise man" by his simple neighbours, who wonderingly related of him that he made his own almanacs and could calculate an eclipse. Gibson gave the perplexed and ardent young student a hearty welcome, enlightening his ignorance then, and keeping him afterwards in mind, at a time when a remembrance of him determined for good Barrow's whole subsequent career.

Meanwhile, a varied probation and training in practical life, with the discipline which they usefully enforced on him, awaited the young mathematician and star-gazer. His parents, simple and zealous church-people, wished their clever son to be a clergyman, but, to say nothing of economic obstacles to the attainment of a "college education," Barrow, "though," he says, "of a serious turn of mind," felt no inclination for the clerical profession, and therefore very properly shirked compliance with the parental pro-

posal. But something had to be done ; he was too well educated for cow-keeping, ploughing, and vegetable-growing. Yet other opening there seemed none, and at fourteen he could not remain living in idleness on his father. At this juncture came a call at the Dragley Beck cottage from a Liverpool lady, who had heard in the neighbourhood a good character of the young Barrow. Her husband was the "proprietor of a considerable iron-foundry in Liverpool," his chief assistant in superintending the workmen and keeping the accounts of which was old and infirm. An active and intelligent youth was wanted to learn the work, and then take the entire charge of it. He would live with the family, and give lessons to a weakly son, a boy of ten. He was to serve for three years, with a salary just sufficient to provide clothes and a little pocket-money. Barrow accepted the proposal cheerfully, and did his duty so satisfactorily that at the end of two years his master, whose health was precarious, talked of retiring and of making his young assistant the active partner in a new firm, of which the son should be the nominal head. But he died before the arrangement was completed. The widow decided on parting with the business, and Barrow "thought it best" to decline the offer to continue in it made by the new-comer, who was a perfect stranger to him, and from whom he could not expect the friendly treatment to which he had been accustomed. He happened, however, to become acquainted, at the house of his defunct master's widow, with an invalid gentleman, who was in partnership with some Liverpool merchants concerned in the whale fishery, and who had been recommended by his physician to take a voyage to Greenland. Seeing that Barrow was out of employment, and would be an intelligent and agreeable companion, Captain Potts invited him to join him in such a voyage, and the invitation was accepted with eagerness. "Being natu-

rally of an inquisitive turn," Barrow utilised his opportunities to learn as much as he could of the art and practice of navigation, and to take and work observations. This knowledge, with the interest which the voyage gave him in the Arctic regions, was not unproductive, though many years passed away before their results became visible.

On returning from Greenland, Barrow hastened to Ulverstone to see his parents and old friends, after so considerable an interval of absence and varied employment. He arrived in time to attend the funeral of his worthy master, Walker, and he saw the venerable incumbent of Seathwaite, "with his flowing locks white as snow," weep and pray over the new-filled grave. He paid a visit to his old friend Gibson, the mathematical farmer, who advised him to pursue the study of nautical astronomy, and talked to him of the field presented to a young man by London, where he himself had two prosperous sons, one of them high in the service of the Bank of England. Barrow's ambition was stimulated by this talk, but how to gratify it was a problem. In the meantime he prosecuted his studies in melancholy mood, and trimmed up the little garden of the parental cottage, while pining for active and independent employment. Just when he was prepared to accept almost any honourable occupation, his friend Gibson received from the son in the Bank of England an application to recommend a "north country youth" qualified to teach mathematics to the upper boys in a large "academy" at Greenwich. Gibson proposed Barrow; and he, with his usual prudence, accepted an offer which at least promised to bring him into proximity to the great metropolis. He took coach to London, and going with the junior Gibson to Greenwich, found the principal to be a clergyman with a pleasant family, and sons of Lord Anson and of Lord Leveson Gower among his pupils. He was forthwith installed in his new post, and one of the first

employments of such leisure as he had at command was to utilise the knowledge of mathematical instruments which he had acquired when a boy in the survey of the Coniston estate. "On arriving in London," he says, "I extended my knowledge of them, so as to draw up and publish a small treatise to explain the practical use of a case of mathematical instruments, being my first introduction to the press, for which I obtained twenty pounds, and was not a little delighted to send to my mother."

Barrow seems to have worked out his engagement at the Greenwich school, and when it came to an end he was far from being left resourceless. His pupils were attached to him, and at their two half-yearly vacations he was frequently asked to their parents' houses, thus forming a tolerably large circle of more or less advantageous acquaintances. When he left Greenwich he was asked to give lessons, "and to such as were well advanced in years and knowledge I had no objection," he having learned much himself while teaching others. In this way he passed several years serenely in London, not forgetting to pay an annual visit to his parents at Ulverstone, whom he found "happy and well" in their old age. He was becoming known in his own modest department, and was gaining friends, when something welcome occurred, which, if not very striking, proved to be the turning point of his career.

"One day," he writes, "on my return to town, I was honoured with a visit from Sir George Staunton, a gentleman with whom I had not yet had the good fortune to meet, and who introduced himself by saying he was acquainted with several of my friends, and mentioned Dr. Gillies in particular,"—an industrious author of good repute in that day,—"and some others who were accustomed to meet at the Westminster Library. He said the object of his visit was to know if I had leisure time, and was willing to bestow a portion of it to give instruction in mathematics to an only son, between the age of ten and eleven years, who had been studying the classics under a German gen-

tleman residing in the house ; that his son was a lively, animated boy, with more than average abilities, and great docility. 'And,' he added, 'from the character I have heard of you, I think you both would be disposed to a mutual attachment.' I thanked him for the obliging offer, and the friendly and courteous manner in which it was introduced, and was ready and most willing to afford his son my best assistance. 'I suppose,' he said, 'you are practically acquainted with astronomy, and know the constellations and principal stars by name? I am a great advocate for practical knowledge.' I answered in the affirmative ; and the constellations and astronomy brought vividly to my mind my old friend Mr. Gibson, and the globe and the map of Town Bank school, and I was more than ever persuaded that all is for the best."

An arrangement was made, which turned out well, especially for Barrow. Had it not been for this introduction to Sir George Staunton, he might have remained a teacher all his life, with no episode in his biography more vivid than the possible success of a mathematical treatise and school-book or two. Both Sir George and his son liked Barrow ; and through this acquaintance his fortunes took a new and surprising start. He had gone on for some little time teaching the young Staunton, and was on the point of accompanying an English family to Italy, when he received from Sir George an invitation to join him in a far greater expedition. For various reasons, among them the ill-treatment to which the factors employed by the East India Company were subjected in China from the lack of anything like official communication between the British Government and the authorities at Peking, the Ministry had decided on sending Lord Macartney as ambassador-extraordinary and plenipotentiary to China, and with a suite and presents appropriate to the dignity of the mission. Lord Macartney appointed his old friend of Indian days, Sir George Staunton, Secretary of Embassy, and Barrow's pupil was also to go as an *attaché*. Father and son wished Barrow to accompany them, and Sir George had recommended him to Lord Macartney as a most useful addition to the suite. It was news almost

too good to be true, thought the whilom assistant in the Liverpool iron-foundry, who had been glad even to make a voyage to the Arctic regions in a Greenland whaler. After a week or two of anxious expectation, the news turned out to be true. Barrow was nominated to the suite as "Comptroller of the Household;" and Lord Macartney gave him, at an interview, a list of the mathematical, philosophical, and scientific instruments and of the works of art which he was to procure as presents for the Emperor of China. The grass, we may be sure, did not grow under the feet of the happy Comptroller of the Household, and soon his commission was deftly executed.

"Non cuivis homini contingit adire Pekinum,"

he exclaimed with delight when he was first informed of his good fortune. And just while the September massacres of 1792 were running their course of carnage in Paris, with Europe on the eve of a long and terrible war, Barrow bade adieu to the revolutionary West, and sailed from Portsmouth for the empire that knows no change.

The mission was not unsuccessful, and Barrow played his part in it with his usual industry, prudence, and skill. He saw the presents committed to his care, globes, clocks, glass lustres, and so forth, unpacked and arranged in an Imperial palace near Peking, without a single loss through negligence, theft, or breakage. Going and returning, as the Embassy traversed the Flowery Land, he kept his sharp eyes well open to all the novelties, singularities, and wonders that met him at every turn, and qualified himself to aid, when at home again, in the preparation of Sir George Staunton's official history of the Embassy. On their arrival in England in the September of 1794, two years after they had left it, Sir George Staunton bade Barrow make a home of his house, and promised that

Lord Macartney and himself would take care to find employment for the ex-Comptroller of the Household—facts that testify to Barrow's successful and acceptable discharge of his duties. But first he asked leave to pay a few weeks' visit to Ulverstone, where his parents received him with delight, and the inhabitants were lost in wondering pride over the Chinese travels of this son of their own remote district. Back in London again, Barrow soon found employment cut out for him. The Cape of Good Hope had been wrested by England from the Dutch, and Henry Dundas was the new Secretary for the Colonies. That long-headed Scot knew the Dutch to be a peculiar and a refractory people, and judged that a "civilian" of high rank and character would be more acceptable to the conquered colony than the military man then commanding there. Lord Macartney was offered the appointment of Governor of the Cape, and he accepted it, at least experimentally. He appointed Barrow one of his private Secretaries, and in the May of 1797 they landed at Cape Town.

On their arrival they found the Dutch Boers in a state of semi-revolt against the new English rule, as well as of warfare with the encroaching Kaffirs. Lord Macartney at once despatched the solid and trustworthy Barrow on a mission, partly of pacification, partly of geographical exploration; there being then no map embracing a tenth of the area of the colony. With a scanty equipment, most of it scientific, Barrow began the first of a series of missions and of explorations of the Cape Colony, which, when all was done, enabled him to say:—"Between the 1st of July and the 18th of January I had traversed every part of the colony of the Cape of Good Hope, and visited the several countries of the Kaffirs, the Hottentots, and the Bosjesmen; performing a journey exceeding 3000 miles on horseback, on foot, and very rarely in a covered

waggon, and full one half of the distance as a pedestrian." In his dealings both with natives and Boers, Barrow appears to have been highly successful. As soon as his official reports of his missions reached home, they were published at the suggestion of Dundas, who saw that their author was a capable man, deserving and likely to repay promotion. Lord Macartney rewarded him with the appointment of Auditor-General of the Cape Colony. After another and a military mission, Barrow settled down to the duties of his new office, and fancying that his wanderings were at an end, he married, in August 1799 (*ætat.* 35), a well-connected Dutch lady. But by the peace of Amiens the Cape was restored to the Dutch, and Barrow's occupation was gone. He returned to England, and found Henry Dundas out of office, yet ready to be civil to a man whose services might be useful when he reassumed it. Barrow dined in Pitt's company at Dundas's soon after his return. Pitt received him cordially, and while praising Barrow's book to its author, as corroborating the opinion which he had given in Parliament, that the Cape of Good Hope ought never to be parted with, the patriotic statesman characteristically "suggested that I had left rather short one portion of the subject which he had always considered of vast importance to this country, and that was, its geographical position with reference to India, as a half-way house between our settlements there and England; as a place of refreshment for our shipping and troops; its capabilities for supplying all kinds of produce; its ports and harbours, along a great extent of sea-coast, favourable to commercial enterprise." From such a quarter a hint was to be taken almost as a command, and, says Barrow, "I speedily produced a second volume, detailing the political, geographical, and commercial advantages of this southern part of Africa, which had the effect of producing a second

edition of the first volume,"—so felicitous in every way was the statesman's suggestion.

Pitt was soon in office again as Prime Minister, with his right-hand man, Dundas, for First Lord of the Admiralty; and Barrow's claims were at once remembered. He was appointed, in 1804, second Secretary of the Admiralty. In 1806 the Whig Ministry of All the Talents acceded to office, and Barrow was displaced to make room for a *protégé* of the new First Lord's, who had, as the saying is, "claims upon the party." But the recapture of the Cape by England drew attention to Barrow, who knew so much of that colony. The Whig ministers promised that he should not be forgotten, and encouraged him to present a memorial of his services, which procured him a pension of £1000 a year, to be abated, however, out of the emoluments of any office which he might afterwards hold. The Ministry of All the Talents came to an untimely end, after an existence of little more than a year, and its successors reinstated Barrow in his former office, with John Wilson Croker for First Secretary. He held it without another intermission until 1845 (in all, forty years, save the one during which All the Talents were in power), and under some twelve administrations. The office is one of those called permanent, but such permanence as this is rare, and proves that Barrow could make himself generally agreeable as well as generally useful.

Barrow's official life was left unwritten by himself when he composed his autobiography, and what seems best known or most remembered about it is, that he was a zealous promoter of Arctic voyages of discovery, his interest in them having perhaps been heightened by that early trip of his from Liverpool in the Greenland whaler. A history of Arctic voyaging was one of the rather numerous contributions which he contrived to make to nautical and

naval literature, in spite of the laborious duties of his office. Croker (whose sister married Barrow's son and heir, the second baronet) wrote about everything but the navy; not so Barrow. His lives of Lord Anson and Lord Howe are the standard biographies of those naval heroes. His life of Lord Macartney is an affectionate memoir of an excellent and amiable man, and his volumes of Chinese travel form a pleasant and instructive supplement to Sir George Staunton's official history of the Embassy. Barrow, too, was almost from its establishment a steady contributor to the *Quarterly Review*, for which he wrote, from first to last, no fewer than 195 articles, never political, and generally in the department of voyages and travels. In 1835, William IV. (who, as Lord High Admiral, had been brought into official and personal relations with him) bestowed on him a baronetcy rather against his will, and ten years later, at the age of 80, he retired from the office of Second Secretary of the Admiralty, full of honours as of years. Within a year after his resignation, the indefatigable old man sent forth a volume on the history of Polar voyaging; and of the many testimonies borne to his official merits on his withdrawal into private life, none pleased him more than the presentation of a piece of plate, subscribed for by officers who had served in Arctic expeditions, and accompanied by a letter from Parry and Franklin, Ross and Back, thanking him for the "talent, zeal, and energy" which he had "displayed in the promotion of Arctic discovery." A year later appeared his autobiography. He died in London on the 23d November 1849, in the 87th year of his age. He had never forgotten the spot that gave him birth. In his will he left directions that the annual subscription which he had given for many years to the school in which he was educated should be continued, and his mother's cottage at Dragley Beck was as-

signed in perpetuity to trustees, who were to appropriate the rent derived from it to educate poor children under its roof. Others have exerted themselves to keep his memory alive in his native district. There is a monument to him in the church at Ulverstone, and as the railway traveller approaches that town from the east, he sees on the right hand another and most conspicuous one, a hundred feet high, "in imitation of Eddystone Lighthouse," erected, by subscription, on Hood Hill, to the memory of the man who went forth from its neighbourhood to keep the accounts of a Liverpool foundry, and who rose to become what has been seen even in this brief sketch of his industrious, successful, and protracted life.

XVII.

WILLIAM WHEWELL.*

THE historian of the Inductive Sciences was the son of a house-carpenter of Lancaster, and was born on the 24th of May 1794, in that old metropolis of the county palatine, ten years afterwards the birth-place also of Richard Owen. His father is said to have been "a man of probity and intelligence," and his mother, it seems, was a really superior woman, of considerable cultivation for the sphere in which she moved. "To both his parents he was always dutiful and affectionate." A remarkably strong and healthy man in later years, Whewell was a sickly child, and, with the usual result, that of being debarred from mingling in the sports of other children. From his earliest years he was a voracious reader. He soon exhausted the treasures of his father's slender library, the *Spectator* among them, and learned all that was to be learned at the Grammar School of

* *William Whewell: In Memoriam*, by W. G. Clark, M.A., Public Orator in the University of Cambridge (*Macmillan's Magazine* for April 1866). *Proceedings of the Royal Society* (London, 1868), vol. xvi. *Obituary Notices of Fellows Deceased*, 1865-7, § Whewell (by Sir John Herschel). *Saturday Review* of 10th March, 1866, "Dr. Whewell." I. Todhunter, *William Whewell, D.D., Master of Trinity College, Cambridge: An Account of his Writings, with Selections from his Literary and Scientific Correspondence*, 2 vols. (London, 1876), &c., &c.

his native town. His obligations to its master for the sound training which he received in arithmetic and practical geometry, he publicly acknowledged at the opening of a new Lancaster Grammar School half a century or so after he first went to the old one, and when his fame had become European. Parents and teachers doubtless thought that such a young glutton of books and knowledge was too good for the carpenter's bench, and should be sent to a university. Fortunately it occurred to one or other of them that not far away, over the borders of Westmoreland, there was a school which offered its successful pupils an exhibition to Trinity College, Cambridge. This was at Heversham (in the parish of which name Milnthorpe is situated), where some beneficent Christian of a by-gone generation had thus endowed the school, afterwards taught by the father of Bishop Watson, and to which that episcopal antagonist of Tom Paine owed his start in life, a sub-sizarship of Trinity. To Heversham the studious Lancaster boy was sent. He went, he saw, he conquered; at eighteen, like Watson before him, he gained the Heversham exhibition of £50 a year, and, in the October of 1812, he, too, proceeded to Cambridge as a sub-sizar of Trinity. Under any circumstances, Whewell's energy and capacity would probably have gained him a name; but it was to the forgotten benefactor of Heversham school that he was indebted for the opportunities of wide and liberal culture denied to Dalton, and for an escape from the long drudgery which crippled the activity, cramped the character, and stunted the intellectual growth of the originator of the Atomic theory.

There still survive early university associates of Whewell's, who remember him as he looked when, fresh from rustic Heversham, he made his first appearance at Cambridge—"a tall, ungainly youth, with grey worsted stockings and country-made shoes." The uncouth son of the Lancaster

joiner rapidly distinguished himself, however, in the arena where intellectual force and perseverance are the weapons of battle—in the race which is always to the swift and the sturdy, whatever the texture of their stockings or the shape of their shoes. “He soon became known in the college as the most promising man of the year.” Elected to a foundation sizarship and to a scholarship, he gained in his second year the Chancellor’s prize for the best English poem on the subject of Boadicea, said to be a very spirited performance, and of a merit far above the average of academic prize poems. This seems a curious prelude to his subsequent mathematical and scientific triumphs ; but there really was a strong vein of poetry in Whewell, which may be seen cropping out in the lyrical prose scattered through some of his profoundest disquisitions ; and to say nothing of the many metrical effusions of his later years, his remains include a good many pieces of juvenile verse, one of them being an address to the Muse, who is apostrophised as, “Friend of my youth, my dearest, earliest, best !” Among his academic seniors, Sir John Herschel, and among his contemporaries and coevals of the University, Julius Hare, were of the more intimate of his friends. When he graduated in 1816, it was as second wrangler and second Smith’s prizeman, the first honours in both competitions being won by a Mr. Jacob (son of the political economist), who went to the bar and died early. The result was unexpected in the University, and probably by Whewell himself. He took his defeat quietly, remarking, with humour,—not one of his prominent characteristics,—“Is he not rightly named Jacob, for he hath supplanted me these two times ?” The year after that in which he took his B.A. degree, the distinguished and prominent young man was elected a Fellow of his college—the first in Cambridge—and in 1818 he was appointed its lecturer in mathematics, with what

seems the very modest stipend of £75 a year. The post was offered him by Mr. Monk, then a tutor of Trinity, afterwards Bishop of Gloucester and biographer of Bentley. Six years later, in 1824, he became full tutor of one of the "sides" of the college, his colleagues on the other "side" being successively Dr. Peacock, afterwards Dean of Ely, and Perry, afterwards Bishop of Melbourne. As a tutor, Whewell was not popular; and indeed it was only with his later years that he ever acquired a university popularity. His manner was haughty as well as uncouth; his mind ranged far and wide over the whole universe of knowledge and speculation, and he could not fix it on those personal details of tutorial duty, the pleasant adjustment of which by a college tutor affects so greatly the feeling of his pupils towards him. Yet his reputation attracted them to him in crowds, and he did his duty by them in his own way, though it is characteristically recorded of him that he often forgot their faces, and was thought to slight them by a failure to recognise them. But during his fifteen years of tutorship he did much for Cambridge, and helped to efface from the University the reproach into which it had fallen, of lagging behind the age in its own special studies. "During the period," says his friend, Sir John Herschel, "when he was pursuing his studies at Cambridge, the mathematical department of the University curriculum was in what might be called a traditional state. A perception had begun to be entertained of the absolute necessity of including within its range a knowledge of those powerful methods of investigation so familiar to the Continental mathematicians, but which could hardly be said to be known in England, and which at Cambridge had by some even been regarded with dislike as innovational. In this latter feeling, in common with most of its younger members, he was far from participating; but, on the contrary, was only desirous to forward

the movement which he saw commencing." According to the same high authority, something of this deficiency had been repaired by the translation which Peacock and his coadjutors made of the treatise of Lacroix on the differential and integral calculus, published in 1816, followed in 1820 by a copious collection of examples illustrative of its application to problems of pure mathematics and the theory of curves. But the want of readable elementary works (Sir John's own phrase), based on the new analysis, it was Whewell who supplied, in a series, which began with the "Elementary Treatise on Mechanics," published in 1819, and ended in 1837 with the "Mechanical Euclid," works either obsolete or superseded now, but of great use in their day and generation. The year after the publication of the first of these, he was elected (*at lat.* 26) a Fellow of the Royal Society. Meanwhile he was active in all university business, and was one of the founders, in 1819, of the Cambridge Philosophical Society, to the Transactions of which he became an indefatigable contributor. In 1826 he began his co-operation with the present Astronomer Royal, in experiments (at a Cornish mine) for ascertaining the mean density of the earth. In 1828 he was chosen Professor of Mineralogy, a post which he filled for four years, and he threw himself heartily into the work of the British Association, of which he was President in 1841. To its reports he contributed, from time to time, valuable papers on the Tides, and on the Mathematical Theories of Heat, Magnetism, and Electricity.

In 1825, six years after taking his M.A. degree, Whewell was ordained deacon, and priest in 1826, becoming, in due course Doctor of Divinity. He never, however, accepted a college or other living, though, as will be seen hereafter, he once, and seemingly only once, was inclined that way, and had he entered on an ecclesiastical career,

he would, doubtless, like his predecessor at Heversham, Richard Watson, have risen to the Episcopal Bench. Whewell's orthodoxy and Churchmanship were unimpeachable, but he fought shy of the cure of souls, probably from an inherent disinclination for such an employment, and he solaced himself with the reflection that he would do more good by remaining at academic work, and improving the studies and culture of the University. His tutorial duties, not surrendered until 1839, did not prevent him from prosecuting private studies, which left no region of knowledge, especially of science, unexplored, and which, in their range and depth, were unparalleled in the England of his time. "A more wonderful variety and amount of knowledge," says Sir John Herschel, "in almost every department of human enquiry, was perhaps never in the same interval of time accumulated by any man, embracing not only mathematical and physical science in all its forms, but extending over classical and Continental literature, metaphysics and history, ethics, social and political economy, together with botany, architecture, engineering, and a host of other subjects—and that not by merely a general and superficial acquaintance, but one which an exact and conscientious application, such as most men devote to some favourite branch of study, alone can give." "Science," said Sidney Smith of Whewell some time afterwards, "is his forte, and omniscience his foible." A good story is told of the failure of an attempt once made to pose the all-knowing tutor. One of the fellows of Trinity determined to get up a subject which would be beyond the range of even Whewell's ubiquitous and omnivorous reading. He pitched upon Chinese music, and adroitly started the topic at one of those reunions after "Hall," at which even Dons relax and unbend. To the great astonishment of the conspirators—for several of the fellows had been taken into the secret,

and played their parts accordingly—Whewell showed that he knew a great deal more of the matter than his challenger, and it turned out that he was the author of the very article in an encyclopædia to which his baffled colleague had betaken himself to “cram” for the occasion! The sickness of his boyhood seems to have long before disappeared, and a robust health enabled him to prosecute with impunity his gigantic labours of research and of reflection. For with Whewell reading was no mere act of reception, enriching the memory alone. His comprehensive and powerful mind was for ever fusing and purifying the crude ore which he gathered from books, and casting it into forms impressed with his own stamp. When he was nearly forty, the world outside the walls of Trinity and the University received the assurance that Cambridge contained a man who added to profound scientific acquirements a keen and vigorous intellect and a powerful imagination; the master, too, of an impressive and animated style, which rose at times into a noble eloquence. The application of the famous Bridgewater bequest for the production of a series of treatises “on the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, as manifested in the Creation,” was left to Davies Gilbert, at that time President of the Royal Society; and acting on the advice of Blomfield, then Bishop of London, Whewell was commissioned, in 1830, to contribute the volume on “Astronomy and General Physics considered with reference to Natural Theology.” The work, the first of the series, appeared in 1833; Whewell having in the preceding year resigned his Professorship of Mineralogy. Despite the abstruse character of the theme, it went rapidly through several editions, and Whewell’s fame was no longer academic but national. Subject, of course, to the objections which can generally be urged against such disquisitions, Whewell’s treatise displayed merits of a rare order, and, in

spite of all that had been written on Natural Theology, a very considerable originality both of conception and of detail. The chapter on "Cosmical Arrangements" belongs to the highest class of thinking and writing by which the science of Natural Theology has as yet been illustrated and enriched.

His Bridgewater Treatise created the reputation which was strengthened and extended by the publication, in 1837, of his great and greatest work, through which mainly he has procured himself an enduring fame. To be the accurate and philosophical historian of any one science is honour enough for most men, and has given a high rank among intellectual producers to the Delambres and Montuclas. But, in "The History of the Inductive Sciences" (dedicated to his early friend, Sir John Herschel, then at the Cape), Whewell was the first to attempt to chronicle the origin and development of all science, physical and natural, from its earliest dawn in the dogmatic guesses of the ancient philosophers of Hellas, to the latest theories of the cultivators of the youngest of the sciences, geology. That in a survey of science from Thales to Sir Charles Lyell, including characteristics of, and criticisms on, the discoverers and aspirants of all ages, and tracing the development of human study of the external world through so many centuries of intellectual effort and struggle, there should be some errors, is not surprising; the wonder is that they are so few. The effect produced by the affluence of knowledge, the universal grasp which the work displays, is seldom marred by faults of manner, and some grave defects might have been pardoned under the circumstances. The narrative flows onward in a broad, clear, and equable stream, and it can well be believed that after long preliminary labour and reflection, it poured from its author's mind like molten metal from the furnace. "We learn, on good authority, that it

was sent to the press chapter by chapter as it was written." Remarkable as the book was in many respects, it was in few more remarkable than in this, that in it, almost for the first time, a high scientific authority of encyclopædic attainments set himself to establish our knowledge of nature on a deeper foundation than the empirical philosophy of Locke and his disciples. In the course of his multifarious studies, Whewell had mastered the Kantian philosophy, and his manuscript-remains were found to include an epitome of the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*. In "The History of the Inductive Sciences," and still more elaborately, though not more strikingly, in his subsequent and less successful work, "The Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences," Whewell seems to have foreseen the influence, and by anticipation to have resisted the victory, of that able expositor of an anti-spiritual philosophy, the late John Stuart Mill.

In 1837, the year which witnessed the publication of his *magnum opus*, Whewell preached before the University four sermons on the Foundation of Morals, which, like Butler, he based on the dictatorship of conscience. He seems to have been now disposed to throw himself into ethics, and to give it a supremacy over physical science in the sphere of his intellectual activity. In 1838, accordingly, he accepted the University Professorship of Moral Philosophy, as he called and made what was nominally that of "Moral Theology or Casuistical Divinity." The chair had previously been a sinecure, but this it ceased to be as soon as it was occupied by Whewell, and, indeed, the year after his appointment to it, he withdrew, at the height of his fame, from the exercise of his tutorial functions.

As was natural in a spiritualist, he detested the utilitarian ethics of Paley, whose "Moral Philosophy" was the textbook at Cambridge, a position from which he succeeded in banishing it. He laboured to replace Paley's doctrine by a

system in which a supreme divinely-implanted Conscience was exhibited as at once legislator and judge in the domain of human action and of moral sentiment. Here again, as in the metaphysics of science, the influence of the materialist school was combated by Whewell. Altogether, the most important tendency of his later labours at Cambridge was to counteract the influence of the school which, under the leadership of Stuart Mill, became so powerful in the universities and out of them. In 1840 appeared "The Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences," in which his application of idealism to them is elaborately worked out.

The succeeding year, 1841, was an important one in Whewell's biography. It saw him married and Master of Trinity. It was probably with a view to marriage, that at the beginning of the year he thought of accepting the college living, then vacant, of Measham, in Yorkshire. He even paid it a visit, but he "found it," he says in a letter to a friend, "too laborious," and that it would interfere with what he called "my purpose of employing myself about my professorship," that of Moral Philosophy to wit. Nevertheless he married, in October, Miss Cordelia Marshall, of the well-known family of Leeds and flax-spinning. The wedding was scarcely over when Dr. Wordsworth resigned the Mastership of Trinity. Sir Robert Peel at once and spontaneously advised the Queen to bestow it on Whewell, and the son of the Lancaster carpenter found himself, *etat.* 47, in possession of the highest of academic dignities. Mrs. Whewell was an excellent lady; and among the first of many illustrious guests to whom she did the honours of her husband's new household, were the Queen and the late Prince Consort. Not very popular as a tutor, Whewell was at least at first scarcely more so as Master of his renowned College. He had taken with him to Cambridge a certain Lancashire downrightness, which he never lost;

and though he had his sovereign for a guest, and twenty years afterwards obeyed a requisition of her husband to deliver, for the express instruction of the young Prince of Wales (then a student at Cambridge), a short course of lectures on Political Economy, it would have been impossible to convert him into a successful courtier. The *fortiter in re*, much more than the *suaviter in modo*, was Whewell's characteristic. In conversation he was loud and dogmatic, as well as fluent and pointed, recalling the traditions of Samuel Johnson's talk. "When are you coming," Sydney Smith once wrote to him—"when are you coming to thunder and lighten at the tables of the metropolis?" In consideration of his great intellectual excellence and merits, his thoroughly upright and honourable character, his colleagues might forgive his faults; but justice to Whewell was scarcely to be expected from the undergraduates, who, from his position and authority in the University, regarded him as the author of every regulation and proceeding that was obnoxious to them. "At one time his appearance in the Senate-house was always the signal for a storm of disapprobation from the galleries. He bore all these insults with unflinching scorn. Inwardly, it may be, he was wounded more than he dared to show." But as years wore on, he came to be thought of only as the pride and ornament of the University, "and the sight of his white head towering above the rest was always greeted with loud applause." On one occasion, before this happy era had arrived, and when he exercised the austere functions of Vice-Chancellor, "he had nerved himself to face the usual demonstrations." To his surprise, the undergraduates "received him with profound silence, and then suddenly burst into enthusiastic cheering." He had just lost his wife, who died in the December of 1855, and whom he had anxiously tended during several years of painful illness. It

is recorded that this reception "completely overcame him, and he wept." Whewell was really a man of sensibility, as well as of science; and for months after the death of his wife, "he used to be seen going alone to the Cemetery, to weep there."

It was two years or so before the death of his first wife, and possibly in order to find in work a relief from his alarm about her health,¹ that Whewell composed the most generally read, perhaps, of all his writings, although, at the same time, it is the only one of which he never publicly acknowledged the authorship—to his friends in his correspondence and otherwise, however, he made no secret of it. This was "The Plurality of Worlds" (published towards the end of 1853), on which disputed question he took the negative side with a vigour and buoyancy not in the least suggestive of sick-room vigils, or of mental anxiety. Bringing all his astronomical and varied scientific lore to bear upon the problem, Whewell demonstrated to his own satisfaction that the probabilities were against the existence of intelligent beings in the planets and the stars, and there was a touch of the transcendental comic in the sketch which he drew of the necessarily grotesque plight of their denizens, if denizens they contained. The book, Whewell thought, demolished the argument to confute which had been one of the main objects of Chalmers's *Astronomical Discourses*. Man, instead of being dwarfed by the spectacle of the Immensities, was, after the appearance of "The Plurality of Worlds," to regard himself with considerable complacency as the chief of created intelligent and sentient beings; while his earth, though small in size, was the masterpiece of the universe,

¹ Mr. W. G. Clark, in his interesting paper, speaks as if the "Plurality of Worlds" had been written as a distraction from sorrow, just after the first Mrs. Whewell's death, but a comparison of dates shows this supposition to be baseless.

as the only orb prepared to be the home of thought and feeling. The next step was to acknowledge the truth of the epigram which, in playful reference to a certain self-sufficiency rather appropriate than otherwise to so mighty a Cambridge Don, declared that there was nothing in infinity like the Master of Trinity!¹

Whewell (*at. 64*) married again in 1858. His second wife was Lady Affleck, widow of Sir Gilbert Affleck, and sister of the able and accomplished Robert Leslie Ellis (he died, much regretted, in 1859), one of Mr. Spedding's coadjutors in editing Bacon. She is said to have "won all hearts by her gentleness and kindness," and at her death, seven years afterwards, the grief of her husband, then a forlorn old gentleman on the verge of seventy, is described as "sad to witness." He did not long survive her, dying from the effects of a fall from his horse (riding was the only exercise for which he ever cared), on the 6th of March 1866. He had recovered some of his buoyancy before his death; and a magazine for the very month in which it happened contained an article from his pen on Comte and Positivism. In this he paid some graceful compliments to his old antagonist, Stuart Mill, who had been beforehand with him in the pleasant rivalry of an exhibition of courtesy, and an expression of reciprocal admiration, by men vehemently opposed to each other in philosophy. In the preface to his *Logic*, Mill made the acknowledgment that "with-

¹ There are several versions of this epigram, which, it is understood, was by Sir Francis Doyle, now (1876) Professor of Poetry at Oxford. The following is the version given by a correspondent of *Notes and Queries* for September 23, 1876, who says that the original was entitled "A Short Analysis of the *Plurality of Worlds*, written by Dr. Whewell:

"Should man thro' the stars to far galaxies travel,
And of nebulous films the remotest unravel,
He still could but learn, having fathomed infinity,
That the great work of God was the Master of Trinity."

out the aid derived from the facts and ideas contained in Dr. Whewell's 'History of the Inductive Sciences,' the corresponding portion of this work would probably not have been written." In the magazine-article, which was published only a few days before his death, Whewell spoke of Mill's "profound philosophical thought and wide sphere of knowledge," of his "love of truth and fearlessness of consequences," and congratulated the electors of Westminster on having, by sending him to the House of Commons, "fully and practically adopted the great Platonic maxim, that it will never go well with the world till our rulers are philosophers, or our philosophers rulers." The article appeared on the 1st of March, and before a week elapsed, Whewell was no more. If he had survived a few months longer he would have been seventy-two. He died as he had lived, at Trinity. He had been heard to say that the sky always seemed to him brighter when framed by the walls and turrets of the Great Court of his beloved College, and in his last hours he desired to have the blinds raised that he might look once again on this familiar scene, so fair and pleasant to his eye. He was buried with great pomp and ceremony in the antechapel of Trinity, at the feet of the statues of Newton and Bacon, the latter his own gift to the College. Among the mourners were his former pupil, the Duke of Devonshire, Sir John Herschel, and the Astronomer-Royal.

He left no children to whom to bequeath his wealth, and both the University and the College which he loved in life, and which had done so much for him, were not to be forgotten after death. To his College he left a large and valuable space of adjacent ground, and a considerable sum wherewith to erect new buildings on it. To the University he bequeathed a noble legacy to found a chair of International Law, with scholarships for students of the subject. In the course of his ethical studies he was led to

that of International Law, and he had published an abridged translation of the work of Grotius. He died, too, when the American Civil War had come to a close, with its disastrous bequest of the Alabama controversy, partly due to the absence of a well-defined and self-subsistent International code.

In person Whewell was a tall, broad-shouldered, large-headed, and large-limbed man, ungainly in his movements and in his gestures. His forehead was broad and massive; his eye bright and benevolent, and a pleasant smile sometimes lighted up an otherwise stern countenance, overhung by bushy eye-brows. The story is told that when once Whewell, Peacock, and Sedgwick, the observed of all observers, were standing at the steps of the Senate House to receive the Prince Consort, Peacock, who loved a joke, remarked that the trio were accounted the three ugliest men in Cambridge. Sedgwick smiled, but Whewell rejoined with a disapproving frown, "Dean, speak for yourself." He was temperate in his habits, and an early riser and worker. Of his intellect and its accumulations and achievements it is enough, in conclusion, to say that what he was in life entitled him to the position which he occupies in death, that of reposing by the feet at least of the statues of Bacon and of Newton.

XVIII.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.*

A DE QUINCEY seems to have come from France to England with William the Conqueror, and from him, nearly eight centuries afterwards, our Thomas De Quincey claimed to be descended. There are places named Quincy scattered through the North of France, but, contrary to De Quincey's own assertion, none of them are in Normandy. The modern French writer Quatre-mère de Quincy may or may not be of the same stock as the Opium Eater, but it is very probable that from the family founded in England at the Conquest sprang the well-known American Quincys of Massachusetts. Saier De Quincey, a descendant of the companion of the Conqueror, was created Earl of Winchester in 1207, but on the death, in 1264, of his son and successor, Roger, without male heirs, the peerage reverted to the Crown.¹ The earl-

* De Quincey's Writings, *passim*. *Quarterly Review* for July 1861, § Thomas De Quincey (by Mr. T. K. Keibel). *Atlantic Monthly* for September 1863, § Thomas De Quincey. By Henry M. Alden. *The Admission-Register of Manchester School* (1876), vol. ii. (being vol. lxxiii. of the Chetham Society's Publications). Mrs. Gordon's *Christopher North; a Memoir of John Wilson*, by his Daughter (Edinburgh, 1862). John Hill Burton, *The Book-Hunter* (Edinburgh, 1862). Charles Knight's *Passages of a Working Life during Half a Century* (London, 1864), &c. &c.

¹ Concerning Saier De Quincey (or Seher de Quinci), his Scotch marriage and possessions in Scotland, there are many controversial and other disquisitions in *Notes and Queries*, Fourth Series, vols. x., xi., and xii.

dom of Winchester was revived by Edward II., and conferred on his ill-fated favourite, Hugh Le Despenser. The holder of this second earldom was not, however, in the least related to the holders of the first, and our De Quincey was altogether mistaken when he spoke of his alleged ancestors, "the Earls of Winchester," as "coming to grief," and of De Quinceys, purely imaginary "descendants from the guilty earl," whoever he may have been, projecting themselves, as he phrases it, "by successive efforts, from the smoking ruins of the great feudal house; stealthily through two generations creeping out of their lurking holes; timidly, when the great shadows from the threatening throne had passed over, re-assuming the family name," and so forth. The De Quinceys, Earls of Winchester, did not "come to grief," and their peerage died out from natural causes.

Whether collateral descendants or not of the De Quinceys, Earls of Winchester, *temp.* John and Henry III., the Opium Eater's modern progenitors were Quinceys without the De, and this aristocratic prefix was first resumed, or assumed, by himself. Thomas De Quincey's father, born about 1752, and who became a linen merchant in Manchester, called himself plain Thomas Quincey. According to his son, he began life with a fortune of £6,000, and marrying a lady of station superior to his own, he embarked in trade or commerce, not only because he was a man of active disposition, but that he might raise his income to a height commensurate with his wife's antecedents. As it happens, however, there is a record of him as engaged in trade before his marriage; the record being neither more nor less than the newspaper-announcement of this important event in his biography. In November 1780, when he was eight-and-twenty or so, a Manchester paper printed the following intimation:—"Wednesday last, was married, at St. George's, Queen Square, Mr. Thomas Quincey, linen

merchant in this town, to Miss Penson, of North Street, London.”¹ “My father,” De Quincey writes in one of his autobiographic sketches, “was a merchant; not in the sense of Scotland, where it means a retail dealer—one, for instance, who sells groceries in a cellar; but in the English sense, a sense rigorously exclusive; that is, he was a man engaged in *foreign* commerce, and no other; therefore in *wholesale* commerce, and no other; which last limitation of the idea is important, because it brings him within the benefit of Cicero’s condescending distinction:”—Cicero, it is added in a note, once speaking “of trade as irredeemably base, if petty, but as not so absolutely felonious if wholesale.” Unfortunately for this pretension of the Opium Eater’s, there is the best evidence, the father’s own to wit, that for three years after marriage he sold retail as well as wholesale. The following advertisement, sent to the Manchester newspaper, is “copied from his autograph:”—“Manchester, December 2, ’83. Thomas Quincey, intending very shortly to decline all retail trade, is now selling off *on low* Terms his Prints, Muslins, Table-Linens, Gauzes, Lutes, &c., of all sorts, with *all* his *cut* Goods, of whatever kind, and Haberdashery Articles in general. N.B.—The Irish-Linen, Scotch, &c., Trades in the *Wholesale* Line, he will continue as usual.”² He was not a clever man, his son admits, but he was an honest and even a scrupulous one. Occasionally, after his death, a stranger would say to the Opium Eater, “Sir, I knew your father; he was the most upright man I ever met with in my life.” He was in the West India trade, but only in its “honourable branches,” the son is careful to add. He would have nothing to do with the traffic in negroes; and, indeed, after Clarkson’s

¹ R. W. Procter, *Memorials of Manchester Streets* (Manchester, 1874), p. 261.

² *Admission-Register of Manchester School*, ii. 226.

proclamation of a crusade against slavery, he "strictly abstained from the use of sugar," because a product of slave-labour, "in his own family." He possessed, too, some artistic and literary taste; at least a small collection of paintings by old Italian masters was scattered about his house; and his library, according to the same filial authority, included "the whole genuine literature both of England and Scotland for the preceding generation." The elder Quincey even wrote a book, a description of a tour in the Midland Counties, which is highly praised by his son, and the first form of which, after a long hunt in search of any form of it, does seem to have been at last discovered.¹

¹ By Mr. James Crossley, of Manchester, who announced the discovery in the following communication to *Notes and Queries* (November 20, 1875):—

"DE QUINCEY'S FATHER: 'TOUR IN THE MIDLAND COUNTIES IN 1772.'—Who was the author of 'A Tour in the Midland Counties of England, performed in the Summer of 1772 (by T—Q—),' which appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of 1774 (vol. xlv. p. 206, continued in four following numbers), and which, the editor tells us in a note, 'was the first production of the writer's pen?' I should at once have ascribed it, as the initials agree, to Thomas Quincey, the father of the Opium Eater, who published, his son tells us, a similar tour, but which, notwithstanding a long-continued quest by myself and others, has not yet turned up. As, however, he would only be nineteen when the tour was made, and twenty-one when it was printed in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, the doubt is whether the composition is exactly that which so young a person would be likely to have produced. The style would rather seem to indicate the writer to have been a man of mature years and experience. Still, this is not conclusive as an objection, as early acquaintance with the world and its business ripens the mind quite as much as advance of years. Thomas Quincey's success in mercantile pursuits—he died at the age of thirty-nine—and the codicils to his will, giving directions as to the carrying on and disposal of his business, are sufficient to show that he was by no means an ordinary person, and his son tells us that he had been a great traveller. The 'Tour in the Midland Counties' appears to have been made from London, to which the tourist returned on its conclusion. Thomas Quincey had not then

It is not the production of a man of shining parts, but its writer evidently kept his eyes well about him, and occasionally philosophised on what he observed. The wife seems to have been not without character. Her father had "at one time held an office under the king," and was remembered among his friends by "the magical versatility of his talents and his power of self-accommodation to all humours, tempers, and ages," characteristics inherited in some degree by his grandson, the Opium Eater. Of herself her son expressly records that she was "high-bred and polished," and that she "spoke and wrote English with

settled in Manchester, and accordingly his name is not found in the Directories of 1772 and 1773. If the 'Tour' in the *Gentleman's Magazine* was really written by him, the probability is that his son, though aware of the fact of his father having composed such a journal, did not know where it had appeared, otherwise it would be difficult to account for his having barely noticed the existence of a production in which he might have taken a just pride, and which would have afforded him a paternal peg which he might have hung many a digression and disquisition upon. . . . I ought, perhaps, to mention that in the 'Tour' the writer has a good deal to say in the description of Boston, in Lincolnshire, and I find in the will of Thomas Quincey that Henry Gee, of Boston, Merchant, was appointed one of his trustees, and that a legacy is given to 'his respected friend and kinsman John Oxenford,' who resided in that neighbourhood.

"JAS. CROSSLEY."

Mr. Crossley's case is rather stronger than he seems to think it. The truth is that De Quincey did more than "barely notice the existence" of his father's little work, and, indeed, wrote of it and its scope with considerable exaggeration. But the passage in which this was done he pared down to next to nothing when he revised for the collective English (or Scotch) edition of his works his Autobiographic Sketches, which first appeared in *Tait's Magazine*. As will be occasionally noted hereafter, some interesting information, not to be found in the Autobiographic Sketches of the English editions, lies buried in the "Sketches of Life and Manners, from the Autobiography of an English Opium Eater," the first instalment of which was published in *Tait* for February 1834.

singular elegance," and in these respects the son resembled her also. Incidentally, it is discoverable that she was an affectionate and generous mother, and of strictly religious principles, belonging to a school which was then being only revived in the Church of England, namely, the Evangelical. With this devotional turn she combined a love of house-building, and the two tendencies combined to start her once on a rather strange tour in search of a site for a home:—

"Taking with her," says De Quincey, "two servants and one of my sisters, my mother entered upon a *periplus*, or systematic circumnavigation of all England. . . . My mother's resolution was to see all England with her own eyes, and to judge for herself upon the qualifications of each county, each town (not being a bustling seat of commerce), and each village (having any advantages of scenery), for contributing the main elements towards a home that might justify her in building a house. The qualifications insisted on were these five—good medical advice somewhere in the neighbourhood, first-rate means of education, elegant (or what most people might think, aristocratic) society, agreeable scenery, and so far the difficulty was not insuperable in the way of finding all four advantages concentrated. But my mother insisted on a fifth, which in those days insured the instant shipwreck of the entire scheme; this was a Church of England parish clergyman, who was to be strictly orthodox, faithful to the Articles of our English Church, yet to these Articles as interpreted by Evangelical divinity. My mother's views were precisely those of her friend Mrs. Hannah More, of Wilberforce, of Henry Thornton, of Zachary Macaulay (father of the historian), and generally of those who were then known amongst sneerers as 'the Clapham Saints.' This one requisition it was on which the scheme foundered. And the fact merits recording as an exposition of the broad religious difference between the England of that day and of this. At present no difficulty would be found as to this fifth requisition. 'Evangelical' clergymen are now sown broad-cast; at that period, there were not on an average above six or eight in each of the fifty-two counties"—a contrast worth noting.

Such were the parents of Thomas De Quincey. He was their second son, and was born on the 5th of August 1785, at "The Farm," which he speaks of as "a pretty rustic

dwelling, occupied by my father in the neighbourhood of Manchester." But six or seven years after his birth, the Quincey household migrated to Greenhay, as he spells it. Greenhay (*haie*, hedge) had been built by his father in 1791, under the controlling superintendence of his architectural mother, and with its grounds and garden was then a solitary house, "a clear mile from the outskirts of Manchester." From this mansion of the Quinceys the Manchester suburb of Greenheys, according to the Opium Eater, derives its name. It was standing, "sadly shorn of its former beauties, in the year 1852, when it and its surrounding grounds, about three acres in extent, were razed, and became the site of hundreds of miserable dwellings, bounded by the modern Pigot Street on the one side, and Embden Street on the other."¹ The father's business was carried on in Market Street Lane, and in a warehouse of his own which was "absorbed in the improvement of Market Street under the Act of 1821."² But the elder Quincey saw little or nothing of his family during what were his later and his second son's earlier years. He was then dying slowly of consumption, and he tried to escape the foe by taking refuge in southern lands and regions, in the West Indies, and on the coast of Devonshire. De Quincey's first remembrance of him was when, he himself being a child of about eight, his father returned to Greenhay to die. He languished for weeks upon a sofa, and from the "repose of manner" which already distinguished the little boy, his second son was a privileged visitor to him throughout his waking hours. "I was also present at his bedside"—the little boy, become a man of nearly fifty, remembered and wrote—"in the closing hour of his life, which exhaled quietly, amidst snatches of delirious conversation with some imaginary visitors. He

¹ *Admission-Register of Manchester Grammar School*, ii. 226.

² *Ib.*, p. 225.

died in the summer of 1793, leaving an unencumbered estate worth exactly £1,600 a year. Each of the boys was to have £150 a year, and Tom's interests during his minority were to be cared for by four guardians. One of them, probably the most active of them, was the Rev. Samuel Hall, then apparently a curate in Salford, but afterwards the first incumbent of St. Peter's, Manchester.

At the death of its head, the Quincey family consisted of the mother and six children, three girls and three boys, of whom Thomas was the second. Two daughters had died before their father. The death of the second of them happened when De Quincey was a boy of six, and, according to his own account, in a passage of his autobiography, full of solemn and pathetic beauty, grief for this favourite and beloved sister, at her death a girl of nine, made a profound and lasting impression on his mind and heart. This was the clever sister to whom and to her precocious little brother Tom (their "combined ages," he says, "made no more at this period than a baker's dozen"), Dr. Percival, the medical attendant of the family, presented, as formerly mentioned,¹ a copy of his "Father's Instructions." When the fact was recorded, the promise was made that it should be reverted to—and with sufficient reason, since thus it is possible to compare at least one small reality of De Quincey's childhood with the idealized representation of it given by him long afterwards in his autobiography. Goethe, in old age, writing memoirs of himself, frankly called them "Wahrheit und Dichtung,"—Fact and Fancy,—for he knew that when memory seeks to recall from a long-vanished past, the incidents, the thoughts and feelings of early years, they become transfigured by the imagination. How much of fact and how much of fancy there is in De Quincey's autobiographic reminiscences it is

¹ *Ante*, p. 175.

of course impossible to determine, but the contrast between the text of this one little story in Percival's compilation, and his poetic version of it in later years, is curious and instructive. Here, from Percival's book, is the anecdote, of which De Quincey says in his autobiography that the impression made by it on himself and his sister was "deep and memorable." "My sister wept over it, and wept over the remembrance of it, and not long after carried its sweet aroma off with her to heaven; while I, for my part, have never forgotten it." Percival entitles it

"A GENEROUS RETURN FOR AN INJURY."

"When the Great Condé commanded the Spanish army, and laid siege to one of the French towns in Flanders, a soldier being ill-treated by a general officer, and struck several times with a cane, for some disrespectful words he had let fall, answered very coolly that he should soon make him repent of it. Fifteen days afterwards, the same general officer ordered the colonel of the trenches to find a bold and intrepid fellow to execute an important enterprise, for which he promised a reward of a hundred pistoles. The soldier we are speaking of, who passed for the bravest in the regiment, offered his services, and going with thirty of his comrades, whom he had the liberty to make choice of, he discharged a very hazardous commission with incredible courage and good-fortune. Upon his return, the general officer highly commended him, and gave him the hundred pistoles which he had promised. The soldier presently distributed them among his comrades, saying he did not serve for pay, and demanded only that if his late action seemed to deserve any recompense, he would make him an officer. 'And now, Sir,' adds he to the General, who did not know him, 'I am the soldier whom you abused so much fifteen days ago, and I then told you I would make you repent of it.' The General, in great admiration, and melting into tears, threw his arms around his neck, begged his pardon, and gave him a commission that very day."—*Rollin*.¹

Observe now how this bald little anecdote, as told by the late Monsieur Rollin,—once, but no longer, a classic of the English governess and her girl-pupils,—becomes expanded, transformed, and glorified in De Quincey's memory.

¹ Percival's *Works*, i. 23.

“Here,” *he* says, “is Dr. Percival’s story” rendered into the “impassioned prose” of which De Quincey was so proud :—

“A young officer (in what army, no matter) had so far forgotten himself, in a moment of irritation, as to strike a private soldier full of personal dignity (as sometimes happens in all ranks) and distinguished for his courage. The inexorable laws of military discipline forbade to the injured soldier any practical redress; he could look for no retaliation by acts. Words only were at his command; and in a tumult of indignation, as he turned away, the soldier said to his officer that he would ‘make him repent it.’ This, wearing the shape of a menace, naturally rekindled the officer’s anger, and intercepted any disposition which might be rising within him towards a sentiment of remorse; and thus the irritation between the two young men grew hotter than before. Some weeks after this, a partial action took place with the enemy. Suppose yourself a spectator, and looking down into a valley occupied by the two armies. They are facing each other, you see, in martial array. But it is no more than a skirmish which is going on; in the course of which, however, an occasion suddenly arises for a desperate service. A redoubt, which has fallen into the enemy’s hands, must be recaptured at any price, and under circumstances of all but hopeless difficulty. A strong party has volunteered for the service; there is a cry for somebody to head them; you see a soldier step out from the ranks to assume this dangerous leadership; the party moves rapidly forward; in a few minutes it is swallowed up from your eyes in clouds of smoke; for one half-hour, from behind these clouds, you receive hieroglyphic reports of bloody strife; fierce repeating signals, flashes from the guns, rolling musketry, and exulting hurrahs, advancing or receding, slackening or redoubling. At length all is over: the redoubt has been recovered; that which was lost is found again; the jewel which had been made captive is ransomed with blood. Crimsoned with glorious gore, the wreck of the conquering party is relieved, and at liberty to return. From the river you see it ascending. The plume-crested officer in command rushes forward, with his left hand raising his hat in homage to the blackened fragments of what was once a flag, whilst, with his right hand, he seizes that of the leader, though no more than a private from the ranks. *That* perplexes you not; mystery you see none in *that*. For distinctions of order perish, ranks are confounded, ‘high and low,’ are words without a meaning, and to wreck goes every notion or feeling that divides the noble from the noble, or the brave man from the brave. But wherefore is it that now, when suddenly they wheel into mutual recognition, suddenly they pause?

This soldier, this officer—who are they? O reader! once before they had stood face to face. The soldier it is that was struck; the officer it is that struck him. Once again they are meeting; and the gaze of armies is upon them. If for a moment a doubt divides them, in a moment the doubt has perished. One glance exchanged between them publishes the forgiveness that is sealed for ever. As one who recovers a brother whom he had accounted dead, the officer sprang forward, threw his arms around the neck of the soldier and kissed him, as if he were some martyr glorified by that shadow of death from which he was returning; whilst, on *his* part, the soldier, stepping back and carrying his open hand through the beautiful motions of the military salute to a superior, makes this immortal answer—that answer which shut up for ever the memory of the indignity offered to him, even whilst for the last time alluding to it: ‘Sir,’ he said, ‘I told you before that I would *make you repent it.*’”¹

An effective and striking bit of writing, in De Quincey’s best narrative-style, but certainly this is *not* “Dr. Percival’s story.” And the reader, or the writer, who studies De Quincey’s autobiography to extract from it the truth about his life, whether outward or inward, must take into account the Opium Eater’s habit of allowing fancy, as in the foregoing version of Rollin’s anecdote, to magnify, transmute, and beautify fact. Yet some reminiscence of the fact was present in the autobiographer’s mind. Probably he had not seen Percival’s book since he was a child. He might easily have evolved a small romance without ever referring to Percival, and the reference proves in its own way that if his autobiography is not all fact, neither is it by any means all fancy.

With no companions but younger sisters and brothers, the little De Quincey was growing up in that solitary and secluded mansion a shy, sensitive, and dreamy boy. Suddenly he was made to feel the sway of a more vigorous will and temperament than his own, and was brought into rude contact with a fraction of the busy industrial world—so near

¹ *Works* (Second Edinburgh edition of 1863-71), xiv. 125.

and yet so far—that lay beyond the pleasant grounds and gardens and green lanes of still Greenhay. With their father's death came the return home of little Tom's elder brother, some five or six years older than himself, and then, therefore, about thirteen or fourteen. Master William Quincey, having been found at an earlier stage unmanageable at home, was sent to the Grammar School of Louth, in Lincolnshire, from which he returned, full of boyish vigour of all kinds, to domineer over the inmates of the school-room and nursery at Greenhay. He was not a reading boy like his younger brother, who, to say nothing more of Dr. Percival's juvenile literature, had already fed upon a "vast nursery collection of books,"—among them a favourite "Bible illustrated with many pictures"—and who had advanced so far in criticism as to challenge the preference given by Mrs. Barbauld to Sindbad and Aladdin over the other stories of the Arabian Nights. But the turbulent, mischief-loving, and despotic new-comer from the Lincolnshire school and its pugilistic encounters, was not without an odd intellectuality and imaginativeness of his own. He delivered lectures on Natural Philosophy in the nursery. He propounded plans for walking, like the flies, on the ceiling, and was more successful in the manufacture of fire-balloons. He had opinions of his own on every subject, from the Thirty-nine Articles to necromancy, and frightened his brothers and sisters by the profundity of his knowledge of the world of ghosts. He wrote a tragedy called "Sultan Amurath," which he compelled them to perform, and in which the dramatis personæ of each act were slaughtered off to make room for a new set in the next. By way of varying his amusements, he created an imaginary kingdom of which he was the ruler, and kindly permitted his younger brother to indulge a similar fancy. But the junior found that even in the realms of imagination he was domineered

over by his imperious senior. His own kingdom was an island of Gombroon, the whereabouts of which he carefully concealed until he knew that of his brother's. When Will announced that the capital of his dominions was in the high latitude of 65 degrees north, Tom "smacked" his little island-kingdom 10 degrees south of the line, in the hope that his brother would not dream of fitting out a naval expedition against distant and insignificant Gombroon. But as soon as the whereabouts of Gombroon was fixed upon the map, Will discovered that though his metropolis was so far north, yet his sway extended southward some 80 or 90 degrees! The acme of Tom's regal anxieties was reached when, after an accidental dip into the book in which that strange Scotchman, Lord Monboddo, asserted man to be a variety of the ape, and to have at one time possessed a tail, Will suddenly announced that Tom's Gombroonian subjects were still in the tail-wearing stage. There was no end to the ridicule and reproach which the elder brother heaped upon the younger for this backward condition of the Gombroonian development. Long afterwards De Quincey remembered and half-pathetically recorded what he suffered on this account, and the circumstantiality of the record goes to prove that the little boy of eight or nine, who could thus torment himself, must have been already morbidly sensitive.

These were merely mental torments, but physical pains and penalties were added by the *enfant terrible* of an elder brother to embitter poor Tom's existence. The two boys went daily from Greenhay to Salford, where lived their tutor, the Rev. Mr. Hall, of whom mention has been made as one of Tom's guardians. De Quincey's own account of the circumstances out of which this new trouble arose is worth giving for its topographical and in some degree for its

social interest. He is describing Manchester as it was in 1792, or thereabouts:—

“Greenhay, a country-house, newly built by my father, at that time was a clear mile from the outskirts of Manchester; but in after years Manchester, throwing out the *tentacula* of its vast expansion, absolutely enveloped Greenhay; and for anything I know the grounds and gardens which then insulated the house may have long disappeared. Being a modest mansion, which (including hot walls, offices, and gardener’s house) had cost only six thousand pounds, I do not know how it should have risen to the distinction of giving name to a region of that great town—however, it has done so;¹ and at this time, therefore, after changes so great, it will be difficult for the *habitué* of that region to understand how my brother and myself could have a solitary road to traverse between Greenhay and Princess Street, then the termination on that side of Manchester. But so it was, Oxford Street, like its namesake in London, was then called the Oxford Road; and during the currency of our acquaintance with it, arose the first three houses in its neighbourhood; of which the third was built for the Rev. S. H.”—Samuel Hall—“one of our guardians, for whom his friends had also built the Church of St. Peter’s—not a bowshot from the house. At present, however, he resided in Salford, nearly two miles from Greenhay; and to him we went over daily for the benefit of his classical instructions. One sole cotton-factory had then risen along the line of Oxford Street, and this was close to a bridge, which also was a new creation; for previously all passengers to Manchester went round by Garrat. This factory became to us the *officina gentium*, from which swarmed forth those Goths and Vandals that continually threatened our steps; and this bridge became the eternal arena of combat, we taking care to be on the right side of the bridge for retreat, *i.e.*, on the town side, or the country side, accordingly as we were going out in the morning, or returning in the afternoon. Stones were the implements of warfare; and by continual practise both parties became expert in throwing them.

“The origin of the feud it is scarcely requisite to rehearse, since the

¹ In one of those notes—of which De Quincey was so fond,—expanding, qualifying, or illustrating his text, he adds: “Greenheys with a slight variation in the spelling, is the name given to that district of which Greenhay formed the original nucleus. Probably it was the solitary situation of the house which (failing any other grounds of denomination) raised it to this privilege.”

particular accident which began it was not the true efficient cause of our long warfare, but simply the casual occasion. The cause lay in our aristocratic dress. As children of an opulent family, where all provisions were liberal, and all appointments elegant, we were uniformly well dressed; and in particular, we wore trousers (at that time unheard of, except among sailors), and we also wore Hessian boots—a crime that could not be forgiven in the Lancashire of that day, because it expressed the double offence of being aristocratic and being outlandish. We were aristocrats, and it was vain to deny it; could we deny our boots? whilst our antagonists, if not absolutely *sansculottes*, were slovenly and forlorn in their dress, often unwashed, with hair totally neglected, and always covered with flakes of cotton. Jacobins they were not,—a remark worth noting,—“as regarded any sympathy with the Jacobinism that then desolated France; for, on the contrary, they detested everything French, and answered with brotherly signals to the cry of ‘Church and King,’ or, ‘King and Constitution.’ But, for all that, as they were perfectly independent, getting very high wages, and these wages in a mode of industry that was then taking vast strides ahead, they contrived to reconcile this patriotic anti-Jacobinism with a personal Jacobinism of that sort which is native to the heart of man, who is by natural impulse (and not without a root of nobility, though also of base envy) impatient of inequality, and submits to it only through a sense of its necessity, or under a long experience of its benefits.

“It was on an early day of our new *tyrocinium*, or perhaps in the very first, that, as we passed the bridge, a boy happening to issue from the factory sang over to us derisively ‘Hulloa, Bucks!’ In this the reader may fail to perceive any atrocious insult commensurate to the long war which followed. But the reader is wrong. The word ‘dandies,’ which was what the villain meant, had not then been born, so that he could not have called us by that name, unless through the spirit of prophecy. *Buck* was the nearest word at hand in his Manchester vocabulary; he gave all he could, and let us dream the rest. But in the next moment he discovered our boots, and he consummated his crime by saluting us as ‘Boots! Boots!’ My brother made a dead stop, surveyed him with intense disdain, and bade him draw near that he might ‘give his flesh to the fowls of the air.’ The boy declined to accept this liberal invitation, and conveyed his answer by a most contemptuous and plebeian gesture, upon which my brother drove him in with a shower of stones.”¹

This was the young De Quincey’s introduction to Man-

¹ *Works*, xiv. 48.

chester Industrialism and the factory system. The quiet, dreamy, sensitive little boy had no taste for encounters with the rude sons of the mill, but his impetuous and aggressive brother insisted on his active alliance, offensive and defensive, and daily he had to assist in a battle of which "stones, fragments of slate, and a reasonable proportion of brick-bats were the weapons." Thrice he was captured by the foe ; once he made his escape ; the second time he was dismissed with kicks and an insolent message to his brother, who reviled him for transmitting it ; a third time he was delivered into the custody of the girls of the factory, who connived at his flight. At last, one of the boys' guardians interfered. He happened to be a magistrate, and thus to possess some weight with the proprietors of the factory. But the juvenile mill-hands were so independent of employers, and so careless of their displeasure, that the only means discoverable for putting an end to the warfare was an alteration of the hours at which the two young gentlemen came and went between Greenhay and Salford. Even this arrangement was proving ineffective for the preservation of the peace, when the elder of the brothers was summoned away to a distance. Among William Quincey's accomplishments was that of drawing. Some of his sketches were shown to De Lothembourg, the academician, who pronounced them promising. With a fee of a thousand guineas, at least so says De Quincey, he was sent as a pupil to the artist, in whose house at Hammersmith he died of typhus at seventeen. The news of his death does not seem to have been received by his junior with any of the transcendent grief which De Quincey represents himself to have felt at the death of his elder sister, and a reference to "horrid pugilistic brothers" once occurs in his autobiography. The daily combats with factory lads may not have been agreeable to the sensitive boy, but a little, not too much, of what is called roughing it

at a public school, would probably have done him good then and in after life.

When he did go to a public school, it was not a wholesome ordeal to which he was exposed. He was placed at the Grammar School of Bath, to which town, *atal.* 13, he migrated with his mother and her household. De Quincey had made progress under the Rev. Samuel Hall, though he speaks of the first incumbent of St. Peter's as a dull man, and remembered sadly when he wrote his autobiography, his weekly task of having to reproduce every Monday to the best of his ability the sermon which his clerical tutor preached on the Sunday. His aptitude for learning was great, and if it was only later that he became a good Grecian, his skill in Latin verse-making was already so considerable, that the master of the Bath school used to reproach his bigger and biggest boys with being outdone by this little fellow, who, with his diminutive stature, looked even younger than he was. The seniors resented the comparison, and made poor De Quincey's school-life very uncomfortable to him. After a year or two he had to leave in consequence of an accident, which led the doctors to fear that his skull was fractured. During his illness his mother read to him Hoole's Tasso, and he first read for himself the Paradise Lost, of which great poem his profound admiration and knowledge are visible throughout his writings. When he was well again, some adult local admirers asked that he might be allowed to return to the school where he had distinguished himself. "But," says De Quincey, "it illustrates my mother's moral austerity, that she was shocked at my hearing compliments to my own merits, and was altogether disturbed at what doubtless these gentlemen expected to see received with maternal pride. She declined to let me continue at the Bath school; and I went to another, at Winkfield, in the county of Wilts, of which the chief

recommendation lay in the religious character of the master."

At Winkfield, under its religious master, De Quincey remained about a twelvemonth, and of his experiences there his autobiography contains no record. Then, in his fifteenth year, the schoolboy was suddenly admitted to glimpses of the great world, and brought into contact more or less close with people of rank and fashion. He received an invitation to accompany, on a visit to Ireland during the summer and autumn, a "young friend" of his own age, Lord Westport, the son of Lord Altamont, afterwards first Marquis of Sligo. Of the origin of the friendship between the son of the Manchester linen merchant and the young Irish nobleman, De Quincey simply says: "My acquaintance with Lord Westport was of some years' standing. My father, whose commercial interests led him often to Ireland, had many friends there. One of these was a country gentleman connected with the west, and at his house I first met Lord Westport." Lord Westport was at Eton, and in the spring of 1800 De Quincey went to join him there. The young nobleman's mother was a daughter of the great Admiral, Earl Howe, and was intimately known to the royal family, and Lord Westport at Eton was therefore favoured with the special notice of George III. at Windsor. During one of their walks in the grounds of Frogmore, the two boys were amusing themselves throwing pebbles almost when the King came upon them. After a little conversation with Lord Westport, the good-natured monarch spoke to his companion, and was doubtless amused when, in reply to the question whether the Quinceys had settled in England on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the boy plunged into a genealogical account of his family, asserting with some eagerness that they were not French, but had come to England at the Conquest, and quoting

Robert of Gloucester in proof of their mediæval eminence. In May, De Quincey saw for the first time, though but for a day (most of it given to St. Paul's), the mighty London which he was to revisit under very different circumstances. In June the two young friends were with Lord Altamont in Dublin. De Quincey's stay in the Irish capital was made at an interesting time, for those were the last days of the legislative independence of Ireland; and with Lord Altamont for his host, he saw everybody and everything worth seeing. He was present in the Irish House of Lords on the death-day of the Irish Parliament, when the Union Bill received the Royal assent. The observant boy remarked with wonder at the time, and recorded long years afterwards, the curious fact that there was not the slightest sign of excitement in the crowd of legislators and privileged spectators when the fateful words *le roi le veut* tolled the knell of Ireland's separate legislation. "The man who presented his robes to Lord Altamont seemed to me," he says, "of all whom I saw on that day, the one who wore the face of deepest depression. But whether this indicated the loss of a lucrative situation, or was really disinterested sorrow, growing out of a patriotic trouble at the knowledge that he was now officiating for the last time, I could not guess." From Dublin, De Quincey accompanied Lord Westport and Lord Altamont to the family seat in county Mayo, and saw a good deal of the domestic life of the old Irish resident nobility, an experience novel and interesting. At Westport House he found himself near the centre of the second Irish insurrection of 1798, and only eleven miles from Castlebar, to which town the French expeditionary force, sent under General Humbert to assist the rebels, had "addressed their very earliest efforts." "Records there were on every side, and memorials even in our bed-

rooms, of this French visit; for at one time they had occupied Westport House in some strength." The conversation often turned on the doings of those eventful days, and the intelligent and inquisitive young gentleman learned all that was to be learned about them from people some of whom had witnessed the insurrection, while others of them had played a part in it. The events recorded in the chapters of his autobiography devoted to the two Irish insurrections of 1798 lie away from the story of De Quincey's life, but his chronicle of them combines vigour and picturesqueness with all that subtle analysis in the presentment of detail which characterises him as a narrator.

From the west of Ireland, with its jovial gentry and smouldering ashes of insurrection, the young De Quincey passed as a guest to Laxton, a country-house in Northamptonshire. One of his sisters was there, visiting a certain Lady Carbery, a young and beautiful peeress, who was an intimate friend of his mother's, and who had known himself when a child. In Ireland he had, of course, played a part subordinate to his young friend, Lord Westport. At Laxton he found himself somebody. When he arrived, Lord Carbery was absent, and Lady Carbery had for guests a Lord and Lady Massey. Lord Massey, an Irish peer, had been roused from a life of ennui and torpor by an attachment to the fair young Irishwoman whom he married, and whose fascinations of person, disposition, and manner, exercised after marriage the same spell on him as before it. But there were no males to keep him company and to amuse him in those two terrible post-prandial hours during which custom banished the ladies from the dining-room. De Quincey had no sooner entered the house than Lady Carbery, who was deeply attached to Lady Massey, took him into her confidence, and

asked him to entertain, in the intellectual sense of the word, the young nobleman after dinner. The young gentleman cheerfully consented to do his best. His Irish visit had rubbed off some of his shyness, and supplied him with topics of conversation interesting to an Irish peer. "I could talk," he says, "upon innumerable subjects," and "with the aid of three or four glasses of wine" he made himself an agreeable companion. From amusing his fellow-guest De Quincey took to instructing his fair hostess. His mother had made Lady Carbery religious after her own fashion, and she and her young friend were soon engaged in theological discussion. One great advantage the boy had over the woman in these friendly debates. He knew the original language of the New Testament, and Lady Carbery willingly accepted his offer to teach it her. The needful books were ordered from Stamford, and under the guidance of her youthful tutor she became an adept in New Testament Greek. He was urging on her the pleasure which she would derive from reading Herodotus in the original, when Lord Carbery appeared on the scene, and De Quincey left it. His guardians had decided that he should enter the Manchester Grammar School, and try for one of those exhibitions at Brasenose, which were open to pupils of three years' standing at Bishop Oldham's Foundation. Each exhibition yielded £50 a year, and this would have raised De Quincey's patrimonial income of £150 to £200 at Oxford. There is some justice in De Quincey's complaint that the proposed arrangement ought to have been tried when he was younger. He was now half-way between fifteen and sixteen, and he would remain a school-boy until he was half-way between eighteen and nineteen. After his free and quasi-virile life in Ireland and Northamptonshire, his soul sickened at the thought of the Manchester Grammar

School. To it, however, he was consigned, and after an examination, he was placed in the highest class. The head master, whose boarder he became, was not the man to reconcile him to his new lot. Mr. Lawson was a conscientious, a too conscientious, teacher. He cut down the hours traditionally allowed for meals and recreation, and added them to school-time. De Quincey's health suffered ;—though his organisation was frail, yet in ordinary circumstances and with plenty of exercise, he never knew illness—but at the Manchester Grammar School, according to his account, exercise was out of the question. As the months rolled on, the state both of his body and mind rendered the school insufferably repulsive. In some respects, on the other hand, there was much to make his new school-life pleasant. He had a room to himself; his mother presented him with an admission to a Manchester library, on the literary stores of which he fastened with keen enjoyment; and he was fortunate in his school-fellows of his own age or standing. One of his chief friends among them—the “G.” of his autobiography—was the amiable and excellent Gilbert, afterwards Bishop of Chichester. In his retrospect, moreover, of those days, and of the older or riper among his school-fellows, De Quincey lays stress on the rather striking as well as creditable fact, that the reproach to which the training given and the studies pursued at most other public schools were liable—that, namely, of a neglect of our own literature—could not be brought against the Manchester Grammar School. At this school, indeed, he says, speaking of himself and his companions :—

“It happened that most of us sought for the ordinary subjects of our conversational discussions in literature, viz., in our own native literature. Here it was that I learned to feel a deep respect for my new school-fellows—deep it was then, and a larger experience has made it deeper. I have since known many literary men; men whose

profession was literature, and who sometimes had with some one special section or little nook of literature an acquaintance critically minute. But amongst such men I have found but three or four who had a knowledge which came as near to what I should consider a comprehensive knowledge, as really existed amongst these boys collectively. What one boy had not, another had; and thus, by continual intercourse, the fragmentary contributions of one being integrated by the fragmentary contributions of others, gradually the attainments of each separate individual became, in some degree, the collective attainments of the whole senior common room. It is true, undoubtedly, that some parts of literature were inaccessible to boys at school—for instance, Froissart in the old translation by Lord Berners, now more than three centuries old; and some parts were to the young essentially repulsive. But measuring the general qualifications by that standard which I have since found to prevail amongst professional *littérateurs*, I felt more respectfully towards the majority of my senior school-fellows than ever I had fancied it possible that I should find occasion to feel towards any boys whatever. My intercourse with those amongst them who had any conversational talents greatly stimulated my intellect.”¹

It is a pity that De Quincey, with his passion for discursive philosophising, did not broach a theory to account for this striking difference between the Manchester school and public schools elsewhere. However, it is creditable to him that, with all his classical scholarship, he ever upheld the greatness of our own rich and noble literature, and maintained its superiority as a whole to that of Greece and Rome.

It was while at the Manchester school that De Quincey first made the acquaintance of two, then new and young, English writers, who both personally and intellectually were destined to affect his career most powerfully. In 1798 had appeared, anonymously, the first edition of the “Lyrical Ballads,” Wordsworth’s (chiefly) and Coleridge’s, a volume which opened with “The Ancient Mariner,” and closed with the “Lines written a few miles above Tintern Abbey.”

¹ *Confessions of an Opium-Eater*, in vol. i. of *Works* (edition of 1863), p. 57.

The sale of the work was so inconsiderable, that when its publisher, Cottle, the Bristol bookseller, transferred his copyrights to the Longmans, the value of this one copyright was formally estimated as "*nil*"! By degrees, however, the new poetic and philosophic music found an audience, fit, though few, and in 1801 a second edition was called for. A copy of it fell into the hands of the schoolboy De Quincey, and acted on his susceptible mind almost like a revelation. Deep was his disappointment when, at this time, reading it aloud, "with a beating heart," to Lady Carbery, she scoffed at the Ancient Mariner as an "old quiz"! For De Quincey was cheered during his stay at the Manchester Grammar School with the occasional society of the fair peeress who had been his pupil at Laxton. A former governess and dear friend of Lady Carbery's, who had settled near her, and was afflicted with some painful disease, decided on going to Manchester for a time to profit by the professional advice of one of its denizens, Charles White, at this time the most eminent surgeon in the North of England. Lady Carbery and the Laxton household, Lord and Lady Massey included, migrated with her to Manchester,—a town, according to De Quincey, little fitted then for the reception of aristocratic visitors.

"Gloomy they"—the streets of Manchester—"were at that time, mud below, smoke above, for no torch of improvement had yet explored the ancient habitations of the Lancashire capital. Elsewhere¹

¹ "Elsewhere" is in the "Confessions of an English Opium-Eater" (p. 45), where, speaking of the *alumni* of the Manchester Grammar School, De Quincey says: "I had lived familiarly with boys gathered from all quarters of the island at the Bath Grammar School, and for some time (when visiting Lord Altamont at Eton) with boys of the highest aristocratic pretensions. At Bath and at Eton, though not equally, there prevailed a tone of higher polish; and in the air, speech, deportment of the majority, could be traced at once a premature knowledge of the world. They had indeed the advantage over my new

I have expressed the inexhaustible admiration which I cherish for the *moral* qualities, the unrivalled energy and perseverance, of that native Lancashire population, as yet not much alloyed with Celtic adulteration. My feelings towards them are the same as were eloquently and impressively avowed by the late eminent Dr. Cooke Taylor, after an *official* inquiry into their situation. But in those days the Manchester people realised the aspiration of the noble Scythian ; not the place it was that glorified *them*, but they that glorified the place. No great city (which technically it then was not, but simply a town or large village) could present so repulsive an exterior as the Manchester of that day. Lodgings of *any* sort could with difficulty be obtained, and at last only by breaking up the party. The poor suffering lady, with her two friends, Lady Carbery and my mother, hired one house, Lord and Lady Massey another, and two others were occupied by attendants,—all the servants, except one lady's maid, being every night separated by a quarter of a mile from their mistresses."¹

Most welcome to De Quincey was the presence of the beautiful and friendly peeress, with her conversation "so

friends in graceful self-possession ; but, on the other hand, the best of them suffered by comparison with these Manchester boys in the qualities of visible self-restraint and of self-respect. At Eton high rank was distributed pretty liberally, but in the Manchester school the parents of many boys were artisans, or of that rank ; some even had sisters that were menial servants ; and those who stood higher by pretensions of birth and gentle blood, were at the most the sons of rural gentry or of clergymen. And I believe that, with the exception of three or four brothers, belonging to a clergyman's family at York, all were, like myself, natives of Lancashire. At that time my experience was too limited to warrant me in expressing any opinion, one way or other, upon the relative pretensions—moral and intellectual—of the several provinces in our island. But since then I have seen reason to agree with the late Dr. Cooke Taylor, in awarding the pre-eminence, as regards energy, power to face suffering, and other high qualities, to the natives of Lancashire. Even a century back they were distinguished for the culture of refined tastes. In musical skill and sensibility no part of Europe, with the exception of a few places in Germany, could pretend to rival them ; and, accordingly, even in Handel's days, but for the chorus-singers from Lancashire, his oratorios must have remained a treasure, if not absolutely sealed, at any rate most imperfectly revealed."

¹ *Works*, xiv. 429.

bold, so novel, and so earnest," and every afternoon he was allowed to spend some hours in her drawing-room. But even her society did not cure his dispiritment and depression, as one little incident testifies. During the stay of the Laxton party in Manchester occurred a Christmas, and according to old custom there was an oratorical display at the Grammar School on the breaking up for the holidays. As one of the three boys who composed the head class, De Quincey was called on to take part in the proceedings, and Lady Carbery, with a large party of friends, was among the auditors. According to his own account, he had to recite a copy of Latin verses on the recent capture of Malta, *Melita Britannis subacta*.¹ His declamation was received with loud applause, but long afterwards he remembered how "furious" was his "disgust," and how "frantic" was his "inner sense of shame at the childish exhibition." Morbid, indeed, must have been the state of mind of the clever boy of fifteen, when feelings like these quenched the natural glow of juvenile vanity. In after-years he came to the conclusion that much of his suffering might have been removed by the timely administration of a few doses of calomel. But the medical adviser, with whom his guardians allowed him to run up a bill, was an aged apothecary who dosed him with drastic medicines, and these merely aggravated his complaint. When Lady Carbery and the Laxton household left Manchester, De Quincey was reduced to despair. He opened negotiations with one of his guardians for a removal from school; but the guardian thought, not unnaturally, that as the young gentleman had completed

¹ Here, again, the fact of the declamation is confirmed by evidence, while, in regard to its theme, memory had played him false. "At the annual speech day in December 1800, Thomas De Quincey took part, reciting a Latin exercise on this text, 'Dolor ipse disertum fecerat.'"—*Admission-Register of Manchester Grammar School*, ii. 225.

one half of the term requisite for an exhibition, he had better stay out the other half, unless he had some more valid excuse for departure than a morbid mood of mind or a liability to bilious attacks. When this last hope of release from the bondage of school was destroyed, De Quincey resolved to "elope," as he phrases it,—in plain English, to run away. At first his unrest pointed in the direction of the Lakes, where was the abode of his idolised Wordsworth. But on reflection he decided not to present himself for the first time to the poet in the undignified character of a runaway and impecunious schoolboy. Ultimately he fixed on North Wales as his destination, partly because his way to it lay through Chester, where lived his mother, whom he was unwilling to alarm by disappearing into space, leaving not a trace behind. She had grown tired of Bath, and had migrated to Chester, and St. John's Priory, without the walls of the ancient city. Having bought the Priory, she had added to it, with her usual love for building, and was living there with her younger children and a brother, a retired East Indian officer. Her son's decision taken, he wrote to Lady Carbery, asking for a loan of five guineas, and after a week he received a letter enclosing ten. A rather curious incident further helped to drive him Chester-wards. Through some mistake of the post-office, he received a letter addressed "A Monsieur De Quincey, Chester." It contained a draft for forty guineas, and, as afterwards appeared, was intended for a French *émigré* at Chester, unknown to the postal authorities there, who accordingly forwarded it to a De Quincey whom they did know of. To return it to the Chester Post-office was an additional inducement to make for the city on the Dee, and early on a July morning of 1802, before the Lawson household was astir, the young gentleman bade a silent and secret farewell to the Manchester Grammar School, and launched on a career of

strange vicissitude and adventure. "I set off on foot," he says, "carrying a small parcel with some articles of dress under my arm, a favourite English poet in one pocket, and an odd volume, containing about one-half of *Canter's Euripides*, in the other."

Of course the news of her son's flight reached his mother some time before the truant could arrive at Chester on foot. On his arrival there, he managed to have the wrongly-delivered letter, with its enclosure, handed over to the postal authorities, and he despatched a note to one of his sisters asking her to meet him in the ruins of the near Priory which gave its name to her home. Instead of the sister, who was off in a post-chaise to the Lake country in search of her vanished brother, the "bronzed Bengal uncle" kept the appointment, and Master Tom was soon in the presence of his anxious and austere mother. Fortunately for him, the uncle was a man not only of the world, but of "even morbid activity," who rather sympathised with his nephew's preference of locomotion among the Welsh mountains to school and school-books. At his instance the mother consented that the young gentleman should be allowed a guinea a week to make a pedestrian tour in Wales. The uncle pleaded for a larger allowance, but the mother refused, urging, "most reasonably," De Quincey admitted in his maturer years, that an increase "would be only a proclamation to his two younger brothers that rebellion bore a premium, and that mutiny was the ready road to ease and comfort."

Behold the young De Quincey, then, just entering his eighteenth year, permitted to taste the sweets of perfect freedom amid the beautiful scenery of North Wales! For a few weeks he lived in lodgings at Bangor, the Bishop of which, as it happened, was Master of Brazenose, the very Oxford college to which De Quincey might have gone had

he remained at the Manchester Grammar School. His Bangor landlady had been in the Bishop's service, and in the course of condescending conversation with her, his lordship warned her to be careful to whom she let her lodgings, and hinted that her young lodger might be an adventurer. The good woman reported the conversation in a style too matter-of-fact for the taste of De Quincey, who left the house forthwith. In his autobiography he speculates extensively on the happy results that might have followed if he had written the good Bishop an expostulatory letter in Greek, which must have attracted the prelate's attention to the writer and his story, and perhaps have procured him his patronage then and there, and afterwards at Oxford. However, he did not write the Greek letter, and he quitted Bangor for Carnarvon and "Snowdonia," in which region, on his guinea a week, he led for some time a delightful and rambling life, thus, with the long-vanished and enviable tourist-aspects of the Principality during the first years of the century, pleasantly and characteristically described in the "Confessions":—

"There were already, even in these days of 1802, numerous inns, erected at reasonable distances from each other, for the accommodation of tourists, and no sort of disgrace attached in Wales, as too generally upon the great roads of England, to the pedestrian style of travelling. Indeed, the majority of those whom I met as fellow-tourists in the quiet little cottage-parlours of the Welsh posting-houses were pedestrian travellers. All the way from Shrewsbury, through Llangollen, Llanwrst, Conway, Bangor, then turning to the left at right angles through Carnarvon, and so on to Dolgelly (the chief town of Merionethshire), Tan-y-Bwlch, Harlech, Barmouth, and through the sweet solitudes of Cardiganshire, or turning back sharply towards the English border through the gorgeous wood scenery of Montgomeryshire—everywhere at intermitting distances of twelve to sixteen miles, I found the most comfortable inns. One feature, indeed, of repose in all this chain of solitary resting-houses, viz., the fact that none of them rose above two stories in height, was due to the modest scale on which the travelling system of the Principality had moulded itself in correspondence to the call of England, which

then (but be it remembered this *then* was in 1802, a year of peace) threw a very small proportion of her vast migratory population annually into this sequestered channel. No huge Babylonian centres of commerce towered into the clouds on these sweet sylvan routes; no hurricanes of haste, or fever-stricken armies of horses and flying chariots, tormented the echoes in these mountain recesses. And it has often struck me that a world-wearied man, who sought for the peace of monasteries separated from their gloomy captivity—peace and silence such as theirs, combined with the large liberty of Nature—could not do better than revolve amongst these modern inns in the five northern Welsh counties of Denbigh, Montgomery, Carnarvon, Merioneth, and Cardigan. Sleeping, for instance, and breakfasting at Carnarvon; then by an easy nine-mile walk, going forwards to dinner at Bangor; thence to Aber—nine miles—or to Llanberis; and so on for ever, accomplishing seventy to ninety or one hundred miles in a week. This, upon actual experiment, and for week after week, I found the most delightful of lives. Here was the eternal motion of winds and rivers, or of the Wandering Jew liberated from the persecution which compelled him to move, and turned his breezy freedom into a killing captivity. Happier life I cannot imagine than this vagrancy, if the weather were but tolerable, through endless successions of changing beauty, and towards evening a courteous welcome in a pretty rustic home, that, having all the luxuries of a fine hotel (in particular some luxuries that are almost sacred to Alpine regions), was at the same time liberated from the inevitable accompaniments of such hotels in great cities or at great travelling stations, viz., the tumult and the uproar.

“Life on this model was but too delightful; and to myself especially, that am never thoroughly in health unless when having pedestrian exercise to the extent of fifteen miles at the most, and eight to ten miles at the least. Living thus, a man earned his daily enjoyment. But what did it cost? About half-a-guinea a day, whilst my boyish allowance was not a third of this. The flagrant health—health boiling over in fiery rapture—which ran along side by side with exercise on this scale, whilst all the while from morning to night I was inhaling mountain air, soon passed into a hateful scourge”—presumably from the costly appetite thus produced. “Perquisites to servants and a bed would have absorbed the whole of my weekly guinea. My policy therefore was, if the autumnal air were warm enough, to save this expense of a bed and the chamber-maid by sleeping amongst ferns and furze upon a hill-side; and perhaps with a cloak of sufficient *weight* as well as compass, or an Arab’s burnoose, this would have been no great hardship. But then in the day-time what an oppressive burden to carry! So perhaps it was as well that I had no cloak at all. I did, however, for some weeks

try the plan of carrying a canvas tent, manufactured by myself, and not larger than an ordinary umbrella, but to pitch this securely I found difficult, and on windy nights it became a troublesome companion. As winter drew near, this bivouacking system became too dangerous to attempt. Still one may bivouack decently, barring rain and wind, up to the end of October. And I counted, on the whole, that in a fortnight I spent nine nights abroad."¹

Of congenial society De Quincey found no lack among the tourists who lingered in and about Snowdonia, and who were interested by the conversation of the polished, well-read, and reflective young gentleman. Indeed, during these rambles it was that De Quincey, brought into commune with all sorts of minds, developed and cultivated the singular colloquial powers for which he afterwards became famous. One of his temporary companions, a "Mr. De Haren," an accomplished young German, who had held a commission in the British navy, even gave him some lessons in German, and excited his curiosity respecting such great Germans as Kant and Jean Paul Richter, whose names he then heard for the first time. From the same associate he derived the humbler knowledge that there was an inn ten or twelve miles south of Dolgelly where the charge for "a really elegant dinner" was only sixpence, and the youthful philosopher took care to test the accuracy of the information. De Quincey says that he "alternately sailed upon the high-priced and the low-priced tack." By living in cottages he could, on three weeks expenditure, save two guineas out of his three, and spend the third where society and conversation were to be had. "In some families," he adds, "raised above dependence upon daily wages, when I performed any services in the way of letter-writing, I found it impracticable at times to force any money at all upon them." But winter was approaching, when bivouacking would be impracticable, and it would be difficult to eke out the weekly guinea

¹ *Confessions of an Opium-Eater*, p. 130-2.

so as to cover the expenses at inns where society and conversation were to be found. What was to be done? He was now accustomed to be his own master, and never seems to have thought of returning home. Suddenly the strange notion occurred to him that he would rush off to London and try to borrow £200 on the security of his "expectations." In four years more he was to attain his majority, and his little patrimony would be at his own disposal. He entered into elaborate calculations with himself—for however deficient in practical, De Quincey was always a master of theoretical, finance—to prove that he could live comfortably in London lodgings for £50 a year. Two friendly Welsh lawyers started him for the metropolis with a loan of twelve guineas. Reaching Shrewsbury on foot, he caught the Holyhead mail, and in eight and twenty hours the adventurous youth of seventeen was alone in the wilderness of the Great Babylon.

At ten o'clock on the morning of his arrival, De Quincey presented himself to a London usurer. When in Wales, he had, with some forethought, communicated by letter his wants and his expectations to several worthies of this class, and the money-lender to whom he first applied had, he says, verified certain of his statements. But this particular money-lender did not grant personal interviews, and referred him to one of his jackals, a broken-down attorney, who called himself Mr. Brown, and occupied a ramshackle house, almost bare of furniture, in Greek Street, Soho. Mr. Brown professed to give loans on personal security, but his own, in the non-financial sense of the words, was limited, since he lived in frequent fear of arrest. Brown, however, was a well-educated man, and loved knowledge and literature. This formed a bond of personal union between him and his juvenile acquaintance, and as matters turned out, very fortunately for the foolish De Quincey. The remaining guineas of the twelve, with the aid of which the young

gentleman exchanged Wales for London, disappeared in a few weeks. He might have been absolutely homeless, had not Brown given him gratuitous lodgings, without board, in the roomy and sparsely-tenanted mansion of Soho. Here he found for his chief companion a poor friendless girl of ten, who acted as a sort of servant to Mr. Brown during the day, and it was only during the day that this singular money-lender was visible, or invisible, in Greek Street. De Quincey's interviews with him and conversations on classical and other literary topics were chiefly at his breakfast, any occasionally remaining fragments of which meal were appropriated by the hungry and destitute youth. When the varied, but always disreputable business of his host's day began, the young gentleman took his walks abroad, only to return to sleep, on the floor, as it chanced, with a bundle of law-papers for a pillow, and the scantiest of discoverable bed-clothes. In his night-rambles, till it was time for him to take shelter in this strange home, De Quincey became familiar, innocently familiar, he says, with some of the class of "female peripatetics," as he styles them, whom he regarded as "simply sisters in calamity." With one of them, a girl scarcely sixteen, whom he knew only as Ann, "for many weeks he had walked at night, up and down Oxford Street, or had rested with her on steps or under the shelter of porticoes," when there befell the incident which, so long as the "Confessions of an Opium-Eater" are read, will keep alive the dim, sad memory of this poor Magdalen. Hers was otherwise the usual story, but however sternly moral and unsentimental or anti-sentimental, what reader of that unique book can forget De Quincey's record of this episode in their nocturnal wanderings, or has not been touched by the apostrophe with which it closes?—

"One night, when we were pacing slowly along Oxford Street, and after a day when I had felt unusually ill and faint, I requested her to

turn off with me into Soho Square. Thither we went; and we sat down on the steps of a house, which to this hour I never pass without a pang of grief, and an inner act of homage to the spirit of that unhappy girl, in memory of the noble act which she then performed. Suddenly, as we sat, I grew much worse. I had been leaning my head against her bosom, and all at once I sank from her arms, and fell backwards on the steps. From the sensations I then had, I felt an inner conviction of the liveliest kind, that, without some powerful and reviving stimulus, I should either have died on the spot, or should at least have sunk to a point of exhaustion from which all re-ascend under my friendless circumstances, would soon have become hopeless. Then it was in this crisis of my fate that my poor orphan-companion, who had herself met with little but injuries in this world, stretched out a saving hand to me. Uttering a cry of terror, but without a moment's delay, she ran off into Oxford Street, and in less time than could be imagined, returned to me with a glass of port wine and spices, that acted upon my empty stomach (which at that time would have rejected all solid food) with an instantaneous power of restoration; and for this glass the generous girl, without a murmur, paid out of her own humble purse, at a time, be it remembered, when she had scarcely wherewithal to purchase the bare necessaries of life, and when she could have no reason to expect that I should ever be able to reimburse her. O youthful benefactress! how often in succeeding years, standing in solitary places, and thinking of thee with grief of heart and perfect love, how often have I wished that as in ancient times the curse of a father was believed to have a supernatural power, and to pursue its object with a fatal necessity of self-fulfilment, even so the benediction of a heart oppressed with gratitude might have a like prerogative; might have power given it from above to chase, to haunt, to waylay, to pursue thee into the central darkness of a London brothel, or (if it were possible), even into the darkness of the grave, there to awaken thee with an authentic message of peace and forgiveness, and of final reconciliation!"¹

What a descent from the society of Lady Carbery and Lord Westport to that of London Magdalens and bankrupt attorneys,—or even from the inns and cottages of Snowdonia and bivouacking in the soft, pure summer-air, to vagrancy and semi-starvation in the purlicus of Soho! It was a change, too, worked by his own folly, and his wretchedness was continued by his own puerile obstinacy. He had but

¹ *Confessions of an Opium-Eater*, p. 171.

to write to his mother, or the bronzed Bengal uncle, and the prodigal would have been doubtless forgiven, or at least duly cared for. How he lived at all is a mystery, which he did not choose to clear up in the "Confessions;" probably he contrived to borrow a little from old friends or acquaintances at a distance, who were not known to his family, or likely to communicate with it. When he came in after years to record this miserable episode of his career, De Quincey expressed his own wonder that he had never thought of trying to gain a livelihood, say, by becoming a corrector of Greek proofs, or otherwise turning his talents and accomplishments to account, and well might he wonder. Borrowing on his "expectations" was the only expedient that occurred to him; and his last hope of success in this direction vanished soon after his misery reached its acme on the steps of that house in Soho Square. "A gentleman of his late Majesty's household," who had received hospitalities from the De Quincey family, met him, he says, in Albemarle Street, and challenged him on the strength of his family-likeness. De Quincey confessed who he was, and on receiving a pledge that he should not be betrayed to his guardians, gave his address in Greek Street. Next day came a bank-note for ten pounds. It so happened that at the same time a Jew usurer had satisfied himself as to the "expectations" of Thomas De Quincey, second son of Thomas Quincey of Manchester. But was the present applicant really the Thomas De Quincey who he pretended to be? De Quincey produced sundry letters in proof of his identity, among them several which, when in Wales, he had received from his young friend, Lord Altamont, as the whilom Lord Westport had now become. More to secure a business-connection with the heir to a peerage, than for the sake of the profit derivable from this particular transaction, the usurer offered to ad-

vance two or three hundred pounds on De Quincey's personal security, provided Lord Altamont would guarantee repayment on their joint-coming of age. With what remained of the ten pounds after satisfying the preliminary demands of the Jew and the Jew's representative, his host, Mr. Brown, De Quincey improved his shabby personal appearance, gave a guinea to Ann, and took coach for Eton, where he supposed Lord Altamont to be. On reaching Eton he found that Lord Altamont had migrated to Jesus College, Cambridge. De Quincey then bethought him of another young acquaintance of his at Eton, Lord Desart, on whom he called. Lord Desart received him kindly, and asked him to breakfast. The meal seemed "magnificent," and was the first plenteous one that he had tasted for months. The young nobleman heard his story, and after a legitimate hesitation to be mixed up with money-lenders, very good-naturedly promised his signature, "under certain conditions." De Quincey returned to London, but the Jews scrupled to accept Lord Desart's "conditions." Ann, too, was lost to him. She had seen him part of the way to the mail on the evening of his departure for Eton, promising to look for him on the fifth night after their parting, and every night afterwards until they did meet, at the corner of a street agreed on. De Quincey kept his appointment, but no Ann appeared then or any more. Every enquiry he made for her,—and he made many,—was altogether fruitless :—

"To this hour I have never heard a syllable about her. This, among such troubles as most men meet with in this life, has been my heaviest affliction. If she lived, doubtless we must have been sometimes in search of each other, at the very same moment, through the mighty labyrinths of London ; perhaps even within a few feet of each other—a barrier no wider, in a London street, often amounting in the end to a separation for eternity ! During some years I hoped that she *did* live ; and I suppose that, in the literal and unrhetoical use of the word *myriad*, I must, in my different visits to London, have looked into many myriads of female faces, in the hope of meeting Ann. I

should know her again amongst a thousand, and if seen but for a moment. Handsome she was not ; but she had a sweet expression of countenance, and a peculiarly graceful carriage of the head. I sought her, I have said, in hope. So it was for years ; but now I should fear to see her ; and her cough, which grieved me when I parted with her, is now my consolation. Now I wish to see her no longer, but think of her, more gladly, as one long since laid in the grave—in the grave, I would hope, of a Magdalen ; taken away before injuries and cruelty had blotted out and transfigured her ingenuous nature, or the brutalities of ruffians had completed the ruin they had begun.”¹

Hopeless as well as penniless, De Quincey, though he owns it not, gave in. His own account of what happened is brief, and vague as it is brief. “Suddenly at this crisis,” he says, “an opening was made, almost by accident, for reconciliation with my guardians. I quitted London in haste, and returned to the Priory !”

It was the summer of 1802 that De Quincey spent rambling in Wales, and the winter of 1802-3 vagabondising in London. By the April of 1803 he had returned to the Priory. How his mother and the bronzed Bengal uncle received the prodigal he does not say. But he hints that he was looked on—he a young man of nearly eighteen—as “a child in disgrace.” This was not a position which he cared to accept, and being at a disputatious age, with a great deal more of book-knowledge than either of them, he held his own rather too vigorously on all sorts of controverted topics against both his mother and uncle. One day, after about nine months of home, he took to criticising De Foe’s “Memoirs of a Cavalier,” and the criticism had a singular result. “My uncle, who had an old craze in behalf of the book, opposed me with asperity ; and in the course of what he said, under some movement of ill-temper, he asked me, in a way which I felt to be taunting, ‘How I could consent to waste my time as I did.’” This is the account given in the *Autobiographic Sketches* ; but

¹ *Confessions of an Opium-Eater*, p. 187.

in its first published form¹ the uncle is represented as saying that *he* would be ashamed to be tied to his mother's apron string. "Without any answering warmth, I explained that my guardians, having quarrelled with me, would not grant for my use anything beyond my school-allowance of £100 per annum. 'But was it not possible that even this sum might, by economy, be made to meet the necessities of the case?' I replied, 'that from what I had heard, very probably it was.' 'Would I undertake an Oxford life upon such terms?' 'Most gladly,' I said. Upon that opening, he spoke to my mother; and the result was, that within seven days from the above conversation I found myself entering that time-honoured University." In the original report² of his colloquy with his mother, she is heard telling him that his guardians would continue at the University his school-allowance of £100 a year. "She did not," she explained, "increase it out of her own purse, because his sisters were a heavy expense to her. However, he was free to pass in her house his vacations and any other time he pleased; and if he thought that a £100 a year would suffice for him at Oxford, he was welcome to it."

Among De Quincey's contributions to the Edinburgh magazine are several papers entitled "Oxford," which have not been reprinted (indeed, they were scarcely worth reprinting) in either of the English (or Scotch) editions of his collected works. They are written in De Quincey's most rambling and least instructive manner, and throw very little light on his university life and studies. But they do record a few incidents and anecdotes, which are the better worth reproducing that he has left this important section of his biography so dark. He arrived at Oxford late in the December of 1803, and the day after he sum-

¹ *Tait's Magazine* for January 1835.

² *Ib.*

moned "a conclave of friends," among them no doubt old school-fellows of the Manchester days, to discuss the question which college he should join. At last he fixed on Christ Church, and even had an interview with its Dean (Cyril Jackson) on the subject of his intentions. When it came to the point, however, it turned out that "the expenses of an Oxford Inn, with almost daily entertainments to young friends, had run away with the bulk of the fifty guineas brought with him to Oxford for preliminary expenses," and he had not enough left to provide what he calls the caution-money required at Christ Church. He was fain, therefore, to enter himself at Worcester, a college which charged in that way much less than Christ Church did. In spite of his elaborate calculations on paper to demonstrate that he could live on £100 a year at the University—he had once satisfied himself, it will be remembered, that he could live in London on £50 a year—De Quincey was soon, and literally, out at elbows. He was not dissipated or extravagant, but throughout life he was the worst of economists, and always, if left to himself, careless in his dress, infinitely preferring books to clothes when he had spare cash to spend on either. At last the shabbiness of his habiliments became so conspicuous, that an "official person" of his college sent him "a message of courteous remonstrance," by which he resolved to profit. He kept his resolution so badly, however, that one day he went to dine in hall without a waistcoat, a deficiency which he tried to conceal by buttoning up his coat to the neck, and pulling his academic gown closely round him! The absence of the waistcoat was none the less discovered, and poor De Quincey was doomed to hear an ironical dialogue proceed between two of his neighbours, one of whom gravely asked the other if he had seen the last *Gazette*, as it was understood that it contained an inter-

dict on waistcoats. The reply was in the affirmative, and added the expression of a hope that there would be a similar interdict on breeches, as they were still more difficult to pay for! It was not always, moreover, by economies of this odd kind that De Quincey, at Oxford, endeavoured to have some money in hand for books or other expenditure, which he preferred to the payment of a tailor's bill. In the "Confessions of an Opium Eater" he admits that eighteen months after entering at Worcester he negotiated with one of his old Jew friends in London a loan of £250, receiving about £150, and paying only seventeen and a half per cent. per annum on the whole sum! Of his studies at the University he says next to nothing, though he complains bitterly of the almost total ignorance and neglect of English literature, in his time, at Oxford. His first and last conversation with his tutor was held when he was reading Parmenides on his own account. "What have you been lately reading?" asked the tutor. "Paley," said the undergraduate, not caring to confess to Parmenides. "Paley," was the rejoinder—"an excellent author; but be on your guard as to his style—he is very vicious there."

In default of autobiographic reminiscences of De Quincey's Oxford career, there may be quoted an interesting sketch of it, in a paper on his life and writings, which appeared in the *Quarterly Review* for July 1861. The reviewer was "indebted for the following particulars to the kindness of Dr. Cotton, Provost of Worcester College:—"

"Of his Oxford life he has left us few memorials. He appears to have resided there from 1803 to 1808; that is, from his eighteenth year to his twenty-third. But of his own obligations to that University he says not one syllable. Whether he read or whether he idled we are left to conjecture. And this is the more singular, because the two favourite

pursuits of De Quincey are also the studies most prized in the University of Oxford, namely, elegant scholarship and metaphysics. The modern examination-system was also introduced during these years, and we should have been glad to hear what De Quincey thought of the Reform, and what he heard said about it among older men than himself. But his Oxford life is an unwritten chapter of the *Autobiography*," except to the extent previously mentioned.

"It is curious, indeed, that it should be so; his career at Oxford having been, according to the testimony of contemporaries," as reproduced by the College dignitary aforesaid, "highly characteristic of the man, and one which nobody who took the public into his confidence so freely as De Quincey did need have shrunk from describing. He was admitted a member of Worcester College, and matriculated on the 17th of December 1803, and his name remained upon the College books for seven years, being removed from them on the 15th December 1810. During the period of his residence, he was generally known as a quiet and studious man. He did not frequent wine parties, though he did not abstain from wine; and he devoted himself principally to the society of a German named Schwartzburg, who is said to have taught him Hebrew. He was remarkable, even in those days, for his rare conversational powers, and for his extraordinary stock of information upon every subject that was started. There were men, it would appear, among his contemporaries who were capable of appreciating him, and they all agreed that De Quincey was a man of singular genius as well as the most varied talents. His knowledge of Latin and Greek was not confined to those few standard authors with which even good scholars are or were accustomed to content themselves. He was master of the ancient literature; of all of it, at least, which belongs to what is called pure literature. It appears that he brought this knowledge up to Oxford with him, and that his university studies were directed almost wholly to the ancient philosophy, varied by occasional excursions into German literature and metaphysics, which he loved to compare with those of Greece and Rome. His knowledge of all these subjects is said to have been really sound, and there can be no doubt that he was capable of reproducing it in the most brilliant and imposing forms. It was predicted, accordingly, by all who knew him, that he would pass a memorable examination; and so indeed he did, though the issue was a somewhat different one from what his admirers had anticipated. The class list had lately been instituted; and there seems no reason to doubt that, had De Quincey's mind been rather more regularly trained, he would have taken a first-class as easily as other men take a common degree. But his reading had

never been conducted upon that system which the Oxford examinations—essentially, and very properly, intended for men of average abilities—render almost incumbent upon every candidate for the highest honours. De Quincey seems to have felt that he was deficient in that perfect mastery of the minuter details of logic, ethics, and rhetoric, which the practice of the schools demanded. With the leading principles of the Aristotelian system he was evidently quite intimate. But he apparently distrusted his own fitness to undergo a searching oral examination in these subjects, for which a minute acquaintance with scientific terminology, and with the finest distinctions they involve, is thought to be essential. The event was unfortunate, though so agreeable to De Quincey's character that it might have been foreseen by his associates, as by one of them it really was. The important moment arrived, and De Quincey went through the first day's examination, which was conducted upon paper, and at that time consisted almost exclusively of scholarship, history, and whatever might be comprehended under the title of classical literature. On the evening of that day, Mr. Goodenough, of Christchurch, who was one of the examiners, went down to a gentleman then resident at Worcester College, and well acquainted with De Quincey, and said to him, 'You have sent us to-day the cleverest man I ever met with; if his *vivâ voce* examination to-morrow corresponds with what he has done in writing, he will carry everything before him.' To this his friend made answer that he feared De Quincey's *vivâ voce* would be comparatively imperfect, even if he presented himself for examination, which he rather doubted. The event justified his answer. That night De Quincey packed up his things and walked away from Oxford, never, as far as we can ascertain, to return to it. Whether this distrust of himself was well founded, or whether it arose from the depression by which his indulgence in opium was invariably followed, we cannot tell. So early even as his Oxford days, De Quincey, we are told, was incapable of steady application without large doses of opium. He had taken a large dose on the morning of his paper work, and the reaction that followed in the evening would, of course, aggravate his apprehensions of the morrow. Be that as it may, he fairly took to his heels, and so lost the chance, which, with every drawback, must have been an extremely good one, of figuring in the same class list with Sir Robert Peel, who passed his examination in Michaelmas 1808; which was, no doubt, the era of De Quincey's singular catastrophe."

Yes, already, only twenty-three, De Quincey had acquired

the fatal taste, if not as yet the fatal habit ; and thus, at the outset of his career, it helped whatever was defective in his character to destroy his university prospects. Had he taken his degree and not fallen a victim to opium, he would doubtless have gained a college-fellowship ; and, with his unambitious disposition and love of reading and reflection, he would, as the fellow of a college, have been one of the happiest of men. But, on the other hand, it is also true he might have been content to study, meditate, and talk all the days of his life ; and, without external stimulus to exertion, he might not have enriched the literature of his country with sixteen volumes of ingenious and interesting prose.

De Quincey introduced himself to opium the very year after his admission to Worcester College, and when he was only eighteen. The following is his own account of this cardinal event in his biography. From an early age he had been accustomed to wash his head in cold water at least once a day. Being suddenly seized with toothache, when in bed, and during one of his frequent flying undergraduate-visits from Oxford to London, he fancied that the attack might be due to a casual intermission of the practice. He jumped out of bed, plunged his head into a basin of cold water, and with wetted hair went to sleep. Next morning he awoke with "excruciating rheumatic pains" in head and face, which tormented him for weeks almost without cessation. While the attack was still plaguing him, he met accidentally a college acquaintance, who recommended him to try opium for relief, and De Quincey's fate was sealed. He bought and took some laudanum, "and in an hour, O heavens ! what a revulsion ! what a resurrection, from its lowest depths, of the inner spirit ! What an apocalypse of the world within me ! That my pains had vanished, was now a trifle in my eyes ; this negative effect was swallowed up in the immen-

sity of those positive effects which had opened before me, in the abyss of divine enjoyment thus suddenly revealed. Here was a panacea, a *φαρμακον νηπιειθες*, for all human woes; here was the secret of happiness, about which philosophers had disputed for so many ages, at once discovered; happiness might now be bought for a penny, and carried in the waistcoat pocket; portable ecstasies might be had corked up in a pint bottle; and peace of mind could be sent down by the mail."¹ These were the pleasures of opium-taking, and to De Quincey they seemed celestial. Its pains and agonies, its infernal punishments, were to come.

But this introduction to opium, though the most memorable, was not the only important episode of his college life. The year before that in which he quitted Oxford, he made the acquaintance of Coleridge, his admiration of whom and of Wordsworth had increased with time, and was not in the least diminished by his wide range of academic and other study at the university. In 1806 the young gentleman had attained his majority, and seems to have come into what of his patrimony survived the preliminary borrowings at Oxford from London Jews. Money for locomotion was in his possession, and in the Long Vacation of 1807 he visited the Bristol Hot Wells; perhaps because his mother, who certainly did settle for some time in that neighbourhood, had already migrated thither from Chester. At Bristol the young enthusiast heard with inexpressible joy that the great Coleridge was within forty miles of him, at the little town of Nether Stowey, among the Quantock Hills,—the guest of a Mr. Poole. "In that same hour" the eager hero-worshipper was on his way to Nether Stowey and his hero. When he arrived Coleridge was absent, but Mr. Poole received De Quincey kindly and hospitably, and started him on horseback to Bridgewater, whither the erratic and devious genius

¹ *Confessions of an Opium-Eater*, p. 195.

had been tracked As soon as he saw his idol, he knew that Coleridge was before him.

“I had received directions for finding out the house where Coleridge was visiting; and in riding down a main street of Bridgewater, I noticed a gate-way corresponding to the description given me. Under this was standing and gazing about him a man, whom I will describe. In height he might seem to be about five feet eight (he was in reality about an inch and a half taller, but his figure was of an order which adorns the height); his person was broad and full, and tended even to corpulence; his complexion was fair, though not what painters technically style fair, because it was associated with black hair; his eyes were large and soft in their expression; and it was from the peculiar appearance of haze or dreaminess which mixed with their light, that I recognised my object. This was Coleridge. I examined him steadfastly for a minute or more; and it struck me that he saw neither myself nor any other object in the street. He was in a deep reverie; for I had dismounted, made two or three trifling arrangements at an inn-door, and advanced close to him, before he had apparently become conscious of my presence. The sound of my voice, announcing my own name, first awoke him: he started, and for a moment seemed at a loss to understand my purpose or his own situation; for he repeated rapidly a number of words which had no relation to either of us. There was no *mauvaise honte* in his manner, but simple perplexity, and an apparent difficulty in recovering his position amongst day-light realities. The little scene over, he received me with a kindness of manner so marked that it might be called gracious. The hospitable family with whom he was domesticated was distinguished for their amiable manners and enlightened understandings: they were descendants from Chubb, the philosophic writer, and bore the same name. For Coleridge they all testified deep affection and esteem—sentiments in which the whole town of Bridgewater seemed to share; for, in the evening, when the heat of the day had declined, I walked out with him, and rarely, perhaps never, have I seen a person so much interrupted in one hour’s space as Coleridge, on this occasion, by the courteous attentions of young and old. All the people of station and weight in the place, and apparently all the ladies, were abroad to enjoy the lovely summer evening; and not a party passed without some mark of smiling recognition; and the majority stopping to make personal inquiries about his health, and to express their anxiety that he should make a lengthened stay among them. Certain I am, from the lively esteem expressed towards Coleridge at this time by the people of Bridgewater, that a very large subscription might, in that town, have

been raised to support him amongst them, in the character of a lecturer, or philosophical professor."¹

Facts very creditable to the Bridgewater of 1808, since, though Coleridge had his ardent admirers, the young De Quincey among them, the British reading public was then for the most part indifferent to him and his verse.

The philosopher was five and thirty, and the disciple two and twenty, at the time of this their first interview. The two were soon in the drawing-room of the house in which Coleridge was staying, and De Quincey received an invitation, which he gladly accepted, to remain to dinner. "That point being settled, Coleridge, like some great river, the Orellana or the St. Lawrence, that, having been checked and fretted by rocks or thwarting islands, suddenly recovers its volume of waters, and its mighty music, swept at once, as if returning to his natural business, into a continuous strain of eloquent dissertation, certainly the most novel, the most finely illustrated, and traversing the most spacious fields of thought, by transitions the most just and logical, that it was possible to conceive." For "about three hours" he continued to talk, "and in the course of this performance he had delivered many most striking aphorisms, embalming more weight of truth, and separately more deserving to be themselves embalmed than would easily be found in a month's course of select reading." Once only the conversation was briefly interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Coleridge, in whose face De Quincey discerned only "some prettiness of rather a common-place character," while in her husband's manner to her he detected a marital indifference, founded, he afterwards discovered, on nothing worse than the "want of sympathy" with which men of genius are apt to reproach their wives. At dinner "Coleridge talked," but "with effort," before a numerous company invited to hear

¹ *Works*, ii. 52.

him talk, and seemed to his vigilant young admirer "struggling with gloomy thoughts." The impression he produced on De Quincey was that of a blighted being, and the philosopher's own avowal confirmed the impression. "At night he entered into a spontaneous explanation of this unhappy over-clouding of his life, on occasion of my saying accidentally that a toothache had obliged me to take a few drops of laudanum. At what time, or on what motive, he had commenced the use of opium he did not say, but the peculiar emphasis of horror with which he warned me against forming a habit of the same kind, impressed upon my mind a feeling that he never hoped to liberate himself from the bondage," to which his listener had not himself yet completely succumbed. After this interesting day, De Quincey walked, to calm his excitement, forty miles back to Bristol through the pleasant summer night, musing in sorrowful admiration over the just-seen "sad spectacle of powers so majestic already besieged by decay." He enquired forthwith whether Coleridge's state of mind had not been caused or hurried forward by pecuniary embarrassments. On learning that his surmise was correct, the ardent and devoted young man "contrived that a particular service should be rendered to Mr. Coleridge a week after, through the hands of Mr. Cottle of Bristol" (the publisher of the first and valueless edition of the "Lyrical Ballads"), "which might have the effect of liberating his mind from anxiety for a year or two, and thus rendering his great powers disposable to their natural uses. That service was accepted by Coleridge. To save him any feelings of distress, all names were concealed; but in a letter written by him about fifteen years after that time, I found that he had become aware of all the circumstances, perhaps through some indiscretion of Mr. Cottle." £300 was the sum thus generously and delicately given by the hero-

worshipper of twenty-two, out of not at all ample means, from the purest and most disinterested of motives, to promote the happiness of a man of thirty-five, who, with industry but without opium, might have been earning a tolerable income. De Quincey's own financial laxity became in time considerable: let this munificence to Coleridge plead for him with the stern critic of his beggings and borrowings.

His other, and still more venerated idol, Wordsworth, the young De Quincey had not yet seen. They were, however, in a manner known to each other by correspondence. "As early as the spring of 1803," presumably just after the prodigal's return to the Priory from his winter of vagrancy in London, De Quincey had written to Wordsworth. No doubt the letter expressed that ardent admiration of his poetry which Wordsworth loved at all periods of his life, and which must have been doubly welcome at a time when he felt so deeply the neglect of the public and the contumely of the critics, as to place on the title-page of the second edition of the "Lyrical Ballads" the resentful epigraph, "*Quam nihil ad genium, Papiniane, tuum!*" Wordsworth sent his youthful admirer a long reply, which contained a standing-invitation to the poet's home. It was long before use was made of the invitation, but De Quincey's apparent neglect to act upon it was due to the veneration that he felt for the inviter. Awe was so blended with admiration of the poet that "the very image of Wordsworth, as I prefigured it to my own planet-struck eye, crushed my faculties as before Elijah and St. Paul." He actually made two long journeys from Oxford to the neighbourhood of Wordsworth's home, and then, from mere reverential dread, returned without having dared to venture into the presence of the idol:—

"Twice did I advance as far as the Lake of Coniston, which is about eight miles from the Church of Grasmere, and once I absolutely

went forwards from Coniston to the very gorge of Hammerscar, from which the whole vale of Grasmere suddenly breaks upon the view in a style of almost theatrical surprise, with its lovely valley stretching before the eye in the distance, the lake lying immediately below, with its solemn ark-like island of four and a half acres in size seemingly floating on its surface, and its exquisite outline on the opposite shore, revealing all its little bays and wild sylvan margin feathered to the edge with wild flowers and ferns. In one quarter, a little wood, stretching for about half a mile towards the outlet of the lake: more directly in opposition to the spectator, a few green fields; and beyond them, just two bow-shots from the water, a little white cottage gleaming from the midst of the trees, with a vast and seemingly never-ending series of ascents rising above it to the height of more than three thousand feet. That little cottage was Wordsworth's from the time of his marriage, and earlier; in fact, from the beginning of the century to the year 1808. Afterwards for many a year it was mine. Catching one hasty glimpse of this loveliest of landscapes, I retreated like a guilty thing, for fear I might be surprised by Wordsworth, and then returned faint-heartedly to Coniston and so to Oxford, *re infectâ.*"¹

A personal acquaintance with Wordsworth, however, soon followed that formed with Coleridge, and followed in a measure through it. A few weeks after De Quincey's visit to the philosopher at Bridgewater, Coleridge came with his wife and children to the Bristol Hot Wells, where De Quincey was staying, and the worshipper, in some respects a little disenchanted perhaps, but still a worshipper, was forthwith in the company of his hero. He found Coleridge in one of his usual perplexities. The sage had been engaged to deliver at the Royal Institution in London a winter-course of lectures, and was embarrassed how to convey his family to Keswick, where they were to find a home with his brother-in-law, Southey. The enthusiastic De Quincey at once offered to convey them to the Lakes "in a post-chaise," and Coleridge cheerfully assented. Besides De Quincey, the party consisted of Mrs. Coleridge and three children, Hartley, then nine, Derwent, eight, and

¹ *Works*, ii. 125.

the "beautiful" little Sara, five, who, in her reminiscences, has recorded the journey and the fact of De Quincey's escort. In due course they reached Grasmere (for *en route* to Southey Wordsworth was to be visited), and, after a shock of the old panic, De Quincey found himself inside the little white cottage which he knew by sight, and in the presence of the man whom in all the world he most wished and yet most feared to see. In an hour, however, he was at his ease, and chatting freely on poetry and things poetical with Wordsworth, dignified but affable—with his wife, "a tallish young woman, wearing the most winning expression of benignity upon her features,"—and with his sister, of "gipsy tan complexion," her eyes "wild and startling and hurried in their motion," her manner "warm and even hearty," springing from "excessive organic sensibility." In a day or two the Coleridges proceeded to Keswick, which, in the company of Wordsworth, De Quincey visited soon afterwards, and there he made the acquaintance of the admirable Southey. The Wordsworths seem to have taken to the scholarly and well-bred young gentleman, full of poetry, philosophy, and enthusiasm,—ready to listen as well as to talk. He remained for a week the guest of Wordsworth, and a partaker of the poet's modest hospitality, and then he returned to Oxford, carrying with him the best impression of his host. "The spiritual being whom I had anticipated," he says,—“for like Eloisa,

‘My fancy framed him of th’ angelic kind,
Some emanation of th’ all-beauteous mind,’—

this ideal creature had at length been seen—seen with fleshly eyes; and now, if he did not cease for years to wear something of a glory about his head, yet it was no longer as a being to be feared, it was as Raphael, the ‘affable’ angel, who conversed on the terms of man with man.”

Another year, and De Quincey was paying a second and a much longer visit to the Wordsworth-household, which had meanwhile migrated from the little white cottage to a larger abode, a mile off, in the vale of Grasmere. Flying from Oxford and the *vivâ voce* examination at the Michaelmas of 1808, De Quincey seems to have made for the poet's home, and to have remained under Wordsworth's roof until the February of the following year. The friendship of the Wordsworths for him must have been at this time fast and firm; and breaking loose, as he was, from Oxford, De Quincey decided on settling in their neighbourhood. "Upon Miss Wordsworth happening," he says himself, "to volunteer the task of furnishing for my use the cottage so recently occupied by her brother's family, I took it upon a seven years' lease."¹ The furnishing was consummated in the summer, and the following November, that of 1810, beheld the happy De Quincey the successor of Wordsworth as occupant of the cottage "smothered with roses," which had once been the goal of all his thoughts. Writing of the abode which has had two such tenants, and in which Wordsworth passed the first years of his married life and wrote much of his earlier verse, the poet's nephew and biographer says that "it still," *i.e.*, in 1851, "retains the form it wore then." It "stands," he continues, "on the right hand, by the side of the then coach-road from Ambleside to Keswick, as it enters Grasmere, or as that part of the village is called, Town End. The front of it faces the lake: behind it is a small plot of

¹ This statement and another which soon follows it respecting Miss Wordsworth's helpfulness, are made in the first form of the autobiography as published in *Tait's Magazine*, and are not to be found in the revised "Autobiographic Sketches" of the British editions of De Quincey's collected writings. In these, too, he suppressed mention of the long visit to Wordsworth in the winter of 1808-9.

orchard and garden-ground, in which there is a spring and rocks; the enclosure shelves upwards towards the woody side of the mountains above it.”¹ Miss Wordsworth sought out a suitable servant for the young bachelor, and doubtless both she and her sister-in-law were delighted at the prospect of securing for “William,” at only a mile’s distance, the companionship of so profound an admirer of his poetry, and so intellectual, accomplished, and appreciative a neighbour as this young gentleman of five and twenty. His books, a library of 5,000 volumes, were around him in the little cottage. He could have society or solitude, as he pleased. He could commune with all that is grandest and loveliest in nature, and with some of the most gifted of then living Englishmen. The Wordsworths were always near him; near him, too, was the accomplished and refined Charles Lloyd, the associate of Coleridge, Southey, and Charles Lamb in their early author-efforts,—and all the more interesting because “somewhat too Rousseauish.” Within easy reach was the noble-minded Southey. Much nearer was beautiful Elleray, the frequent home of the gifted, glowing, and large-hearted John Wilson. He and De Quincey had been contemporaries at Oxford, but it was Wordsworth, whom they both worshipped, that first made them known to each other, and thus originated a life-long intimacy.² On the banks of Windermere, too, lived a man of some intellectual and scientific distinction, and in point of mere rank a greater than any of these, the once-famous Dr. Watson, Bishop of Llandaff, who seldom or never went near his diocese,—the refuter of Tom Paine, yet who, in spite of his official orthodoxy, “talked openly, at his own table, as a Socinian; ridiculed the miracles of the New Testa-

¹ Christopher Wordsworth, *Memoir of William Wordsworth* (London, 1851), i. 156.

² Mrs. Gordon’s *Christopher North*, ii. 89

ment, which he professed to explain as so many chemical tricks or cases of legerdemain; and certainly had as little of devotional feeling as any man that ever lived." This strange non-resident bishop of a bygone generation, impossible now, spent part of his days in grumbling that his country had done nothing more than give him five thousand a year with which to enjoy himself on the banks of beautiful Windermere; he was pompous withal, but nevertheless, De Quincey avers, "a joyous, jovial, and cordial host," "pleasant and even kind in his manners;" and "most hospitable in his reception of strangers, no matter of what party." There were many other residents in the Lake country, unknown to fame, but genial, hospitable, and cultivated, and De Quincey, when tired of his books or sated with the contemplation of nature, had ample society within reach, and could find listeners or talkers, as he wanted either. Coleridge left the Lakes about the time of De Quincey's settlement at Grasmere. He had gone thither in the winter of 1809 to be the guest of his very unlike friend, the frugal, temperate, and dignified Wordsworth. He seems to have remained there till about the close of the following year, in the late autumn of which De Quincey entered on the occupancy of the Grasmere cottage. During this his last sojourn among the Lakes, Coleridge was engaged in composing and superintending the publication (at Penrith) of his notable periodical, *The Friend*, an enterprise which De Quincey, himself not the most practical of men, pronounced to be "as a pecuniary speculation the least judicious both for its objects and means I have ever known." That done with, Coleridge winged his way London-wards from the Lake region, never to revisit it. So lax was the sage in all his ways, that the disenchantment of the disciple had been very rapid. If De Quincey continued to admire Coleridge the philosopher and poet, his

feeling soon became one nearly akin to contempt for Coleridge the man.

In his little nest at Grasmere—with occasional flights to London, to Wales, and to the south of England—thus placed, thus neighboured, and thus surrounded, De Quincey might have been a very happy man. All the conditions of his life, to a casual observer, must have seemed to realise the ideal of a young philosopher's existence. One thing only may have appeared wanting in that tranquil mountain-home, overlooking that placid lake—a wife, and she, too, came some nine years after he pitched his tent in the lovely valley. Early in 1817¹ he was married at the parish church of Grasmere, to “Miss Margaret Simpson,” whose “arms like Aurora’s,” whose “smiles like Hebe’s,” and still more, whose womanly devotion to him in pain and sorrow, brought on both of them by himself, the husband has celebrated in poetic and grateful prose. His poor wife’s miseries began almost with her wedding-day, if indeed they had not begun before. Four years prior to his marriage, he was attacked, he says, “by a most appalling irritation of the stomach,” and he flew for relief to more copious applications of the perilous anodyne with which he was already too familiar. Ever since his introduction to the pleasures of the fatal drug, he had indulged in occasional or even periodical opium-debauches. But with 1813, and the internal irritation aforesaid, he became a “regular and confirmed, no longer an intermittent, opium-eater.” Opium-eater he called himself, but strictly speaking he was a laudanum-taker. The crude opium requiring hours to produce its effects, and those of laudanum being much more speedy, he exchanged the solid for the liquid form of the drug, and thus made matters worse, since he swallowed a considerable amount of alcohol as well as of opium. In-

¹ 15th February. *Admission-Register of Manchester School, ubi supra.*

creasing his doses, as the reaction of torment after temporary relief became more intense, he at last arrived at a stage when eight thousand drops of laudanum were his daily ration! In this frightful bondage he seems to have lain enslaved at the time of his marriage, and to have remained for two years, during what ought to have been one of the happiest periods of his life. The newly-wedded wife had to play the part of nurse to the husband whose worst malady was of his own engendering. What she did and suffered for him then is shadowed forth in the affectionate and grateful apostrophe which he addressed to her in later years:—"Thou thoughtest not much to stoop to humble offices of kindness, and to servile ministrations of tenderest affection, to wipe away for years the unwholesome dews upon the forehead, or to refresh the lips, when parched and baked with fever; not even when thy own peaceful slumbers had by long sympathy become infected with the spectacle of my dread contest with phantoms and shadowy enemies, that oftentimes bade me 'sleep no more'—not even then didst thou utter a complaint or any murmur, nor withdraw thy angelic smiles, nor shrink from thy service of love." "For nearly two years," is his confession of his helplessness at this period, "I believe that I read nothing and studied nothing." Before he became the slave of opium, he had been a diligent student of Kant and of German philosophy, and after much meditation was constructing and elaborating a *magnum opus*, for which he borrowed the "title of an unfinished work of Spinoza's, viz., *De Emendatione Humanæ Intellectus*." But opium made all persistent and continuous intellectual exertion impossible. "In this state of imbecility, I had," he says, "turned my attention to political economy"—(what a compliment to the "dismal science!") and in 1818 he was fairly roused from his torpor by the perusal of Ricardo's "Elements," which came upon him

as an economic apocalypse, with the new "Doctrine of Rent" revealed in it. Some important truths, however, it seemed to him, had escaped even the eye of Ricardo. He began, accordingly, to dictate to his wife a "Prolegomena to all Future Systems of Political Economy," in which his own discovered truths were to be expressed or illustrated "briefly and elegantly by algebraic symbols." The work, with this high sounding title, was thus to have "barely reached the bulk of a pamphlet." His faithful wife acted as his amanuensis, and the treatise, no doubt substantially the same as that which he published many years afterwards as "The Logic of Political Economy," seems to have been almost ready for the press. But nothing came of it:—

"This exertion was but a momentary flash, as the sequel showed. Arrangements were made at a provincial press, about eighteen miles distant, for printing it," the Prolegomena. "An additional compositor was retained, for some days, on this account. The work was even twice advertised; and I was in a manner pledged to the fulfilment of my intention. But I had a preface to write, and a dedication, which I wished to make impressive, to Mr. Ricardo. I found myself quite unable to accomplish all this. The arrangements were countermanded, the compositor dismissed, and my 'Prolegomena' rested peacefully by the side of its elder and more dignified brother," the *De Emendatione*.

In after-years De Quincey tried, perhaps too successfully, to make opium-eating, or laudanum-taking, interesting and even poetic. He painted attractive pictures of his Westmoreland interior and of himself with a decanter of ruby-coloured laudanum before him, and a book of German metaphysics by its side. He amused himself and his readers with jocose accounts of the quantity that he could take, and he reproduced in vivid and impressive prose those wonderful and gorgeous dreams and visions of the night which the drug inspired. He pretended even that his addiction to opium had prevented him from falling a victim to pulmonary consumption. But in one brief passage he

has recorded the misery that he suffered, and against a great deal of fine writing about the raptures of opium let the following confession be weighed by any disposed even to dally with the thought of imitating De Quincey. It comes after the account of the break-down of the "Prolegomena to all Future Systems of Political Economy :"—

"In thus describing and illustrating my intellectual torpor, I use terms that apply, more or less, to every part of the years during which I was under the Circean spells of opium. But for misery and suffering, I might, indeed, be said to have existed in a dormant state. I seldom could prevail on myself to write a letter; an answer of a few words, to any that I received, was the utmost that I could accomplish; and often that not until the letter had lain for weeks, or even months, on my writing-table. Without the aid of M——"—Margaret, the poor wife—"my whole domestic economy, whatever became of political economy, must have gone into irretrievable confusion. I shall not afterwards allude to this part of the case; it is one, however, which the opium-eater will find in the end most oppressive and tormenting, from the sense of incapacity and feebleness, from the direct embarrassments incident to the neglect or procrastination of each day's appropriate labours, and from the remorse which must often exasperate the stings of these evils to a conscientious mind. The opium-eater loses none of his moral sensibilities or aspirations; he wishes and longs as earnestly as ever to realise what he believes possible, and feels to be exacted by duty; but his intellectual apprehension of what is possible infinitely outruns his power, not of execution only, but even of proposing or willing. He lies under a world's weight of incubus and nightmare; he lies in sight of all that he would fain perform, just as a man forcibly confined to his bed by the mortal languor of paralysis, who is compelled to witness injury or outrage offered to some object of his tenderest love—he would lay down his life if he might but rise and walk; but he is as powerless as an infant, and cannot so much as make an effort to move."¹

The man must surely have died, or gone mad, had he not paused in his headlong career. Efforts, supreme efforts, however, he seems to have made, and after occasional abstinence from opium, he found, on relapsing into its use, that not only were smaller doses effective, but that if he

¹ *Confessions of an Opium-Eater*, p. 256.

attempted to renew the old doses, he was punished by an irritation on the surface of the skin which became insupportable. Thus "in about four years," he says, "without any further efforts, my daily ration had fallen spontaneously from a varying quantity of eight, ten, or twelve thousand drops of laudanum to about three hundred." And it was high time that he should be in a state of body and mind to exert himself. To earn money by work was at last becoming a necessity for him. What his financial position was when he settled at Grasmere he has nowhere disclosed, but it is probable that for years he lived partly at least upon the principal of his little patrimony, and that after a decade or so it was nearly exhausted. Borrowed, no doubt, he had right and left in Westmoreland, as from his mother in the distance; and both Wordsworth's slender, and Wilson's for a time better-filled purse, occasionally contributed to keep the wolf from his door. But there was a limit to borrowing, or to other people's lending, and with 1815, Wilson's fine fortune collapsed. However careful the domestic arrangements of his wife, want began to stare De Quincey in the face, and children were growing up round his knees. He resolved to visit London in search of literary employment, leaving his family behind him in the cottage of which, through many vicissitudes of circumstance and changes of abode, he seems to have remained the nominal tenant until 1836. With a letter of introduction from Wordsworth to Talfourd, then a rising young barrister, combining literature with law, De Quincey came to town to write for money. "In 1821," he says, "I went up to London avowedly for the purpose of exercising my pen, as the one sole source then open to me for extricating myself from a special embarrassment, failing which case of dire necessity, I believe that I should never have written a line for the press."¹ He was now about thirty-six,

¹ Autobiography, in *Tail's Magazine* for December 1840. The state-

a late age at which to begin a literary career, and his only experiment in authorship had been the abortive Prolegomena. However, the attempt had to be made. As it happened there was just then an "opening" for him. About the time of his arrival in the great Babylon was established, or re-established, the *London Magazine*, a periodical of higher pretensions than the others of its class then published in England. Its projectors seem to have hoped, indeed, that it would be a southern rival of *Blackwood*, which Lockhart and De Quincey's friend, John Wilson, were making famous by the youthful exuberance of their differing talents. To the *London* of those years (with Tom Hood for its sub-editor), Charles Lamb contributed his charming Elia-essays, Hazlitt his vigorous and racy monologues, Allan Cunningham his Scottish tales and sketches, Carey, the translator of Dante, biographies of poets and criticisms on poetry, while the light and airy man-about-town department was in the hands of Janus Weathercock, the *nom-de-plume* of Wainwright, a lively coxcomb, who afterwards became famous and infamous by a career of poisoning, which sent him at last a convicted criminal to the antipodes. In short, the *London Magazine* was for those days a periodical of more than ordinary mark or promise, and De Quincey was rather fortunate in his introduction to it. His very first contribution was a success, since he began with the famous "Confessions of an Opium-Eater," the opening instalment of which appeared in the number for September 1821. Here, in his own peculiar style, full-formed—for, was he not a man of thirty-six?—tortuous, parenthetical, and episodical, but subtle, felicitous, rich, and sometimes finely-eloquent, he told much of the story which the reader has been listening to. His sojourn at the Manchester Grammar School, his Welsh ment does not reappear in the Autobiographic Sketches of the British editions of his collected writings.

rambles, his vagabond life in London, were recorded in detail ; but of his life at Grasmere only so much was hinted at as seemed necessary to illustrate the chronicle of his bondage to opium. An imaginative was added to the singular personal interest of these fragments of autobiography by the reproduction, in his own "impassioned prose," of dreams and visions of the night which had come to him when under the influence of opium, and these descriptions indicated that a writer had arisen capable of enriching English literature with a new poetic prose of great beauty and melody. Here are two of them, which follow each other in the "Confessions," and are excellent specimens of the whole ; the picturesqueness passing into pathos, of the first, the stormy orchestral march and tumult of the second being almost without a parallel in English prose :—

"I thought that it was a Sunday morning in May ; that it was Easter Sunday, and as yet very early in the morning. I was standing, as it seemed to me, at the door of my own cottage. Right before me lay the very scene which could really be commanded from that situation, but exalted, as was usual, and solemnised by the power of dreams. There were the same mountains, and the same lovely valley at their feet ; but the mountains were raised to more than Alpine height, and there was interspace far larger between them of savannahs and forest lawns ; the hedges were rich with white roses, and no living creature was to be seen, excepting that in the green churchyard there were cattle tranquilly reposing upon the verdant graves, and particularly round about the grave of a child whom I had once tenderly loved, just as I had really beheld them, a little before sunrise, in the same summer when that child died. I gazed upon the well-known scene, and I said to myself, 'It yet wants much of sunrise, and it is Easter Sunday, and that is the day on which they celebrate the first-fruits of resurrection. I will walk abroad ; old griefs shall be forgotten to-day, for the air is cool and still, and the hills are high and stretch away to heaven, and the churchyard is as verdant as the forest lawns, and the forest lawns are as quiet as the churchyard, and with the dew I can wash the fever from my forehead, and then I shall be unhappy no longer.' I turned, as if to open my garden gate, and immediately I saw upon the left a

scene far different, but which yet the power of dreams had reconciled into harmony. The scene was an oriental one, and there also it was Easter Sunday, and very early in the morning. And at a vast distance were visible, as a stain upon the horizon, the domes and cupolas of a great city—an image or faint abstraction, caught perhaps in childhood from some picture of Jerusalem. And not a bow-shot from me, upon a stone, shaded by Judean palms, there sat a woman; and I looked, and it was Ann! She fixed her eyes upon me earnestly, and I said to her at length, ‘So, then, I have found you at last.’ I waited, but she answered me not a word. Her face was the same as when I saw it last; the same, and yet, again, how different! Seventeen years ago, when the lamp-light of mighty London fell upon her face, as for the last time I kissed her lips (lips, Ann, that to me were not polluted!), her eyes were streaming with tears. The tears were now no longer seen. Sometimes she seemed altered—yet, again, sometimes *not* altered—and hardly older. Her looks were tranquil, but with unusual solemnity of expression, and I now gazed upon her with some awe. Suddenly her countenance grew dim, and, turning to the mountains, I perceived vapours rolling between us. In a moment all had vanished, thick darkness came on, and in the twinkling of an eye I was far away from mountains, and by lamp-light in London, walking again with Ann—just as we had walked, when both children, eighteen years before, along the endless terraces of Oxford Street.”

Almost without a pause the music changes, and from the orchestra peals forth this tempestuous and piercing strain:—

“Then suddenly would come a dream of far different character—a tumultuous dream—commencing with a music such as now I often heard in sleep—music of preparation and of awakening suspense. The undulations of fast-gathering tumults were like the opening of the Coronation Anthem, and, like *that*, gave the feeling of a multitudinous movement, of infinite cavalcades filing off, and the tread of innumerable armies. The morning was come of a mighty day—a day of crisis and of ultimate hope for human nature, then suffering mysterious eclipse, and labouring in some dread extremity. Somewhere, but I knew not where—somehow, but I knew not how—by some beings, but I knew not by whom—a battle, a strife, an agony was travelling through all its stages—was evolving itself, like the catastrophe of some mighty drama, with which my sympathy was the more insupportable from deepening confusion as to its local scene, its cause, its nature, and its

undecipherable issue. I (as is usual in dreams where, of necessity, we make ourselves central to every movement) had the power, and yet had not the power, to decide it. I had the power, if I could raise myself, to will it; and yet again had not the power, for the weight of twenty Atlantics was upon me, or the oppression of inexpiable guilt. 'Deeper than ever plummet sounded,' I lay inactive. Then, like a chorus, the passion deepened. Some greater interest was at stake, some mightier cause than ever yet the sword had pleaded or trumpet had proclaimed. Then came sudden alarms, hurrying to and fro, trepidations of innumerable fugitives, I knew not whether from the good cause or the bad; darkness and lights, tempest and human faces, and at last with the sense that all was lost, female forms, and the features that were worth all the world to me; and but a moment allowed, and clasped hands with heart-breaking partings; and then, everlasting farewells! and, with a sigh such as the caves of hell sighed when the incestuous mother uttered the abhorred name of Death, the sound was reverberated—everlasting farewells! and again, and yet again reverberated—everlasting farewells!

"And I awoke in struggles and cried aloud, 'I will sleep no more.'" ¹

So vivid a romance of reality and strange self-revelation as the "Confessions of an Opium-Eater," told in a style thus original and striking, at once made a sensation, and they were soon reprinted in a detached volume.² De Quincey might have been a small lion in the circle of London magaz-
inists, but neither his temperament, health, nor circumstances inclined him to play *that* part. According to a brief notice

¹ *Confessions of an Opium-Eater*, p. 270.

² The "Confessions" were so much talked of, indeed, that Maginn made their author sit for No. I. of the "Humbugs of the Age," a series of papers projected for a short-lived periodical, *The John Bull Magazine*. The notice of "The Opium-Eater" is in the number for July 1824. It is a ribald production, of which this description of De Quincey's person may suffice as a specimen:—"Conceive an animal about five feet high, propped on two trap-sticks, which have the size but not the delicate proportions of rolling-pins, with a comical sort of indescribable body, and a head of most portentous magnitude, &c., &c. As for the face, its grotesqueness and inanity is totally beyond the reach of the pen to describe. It is one in which George Cruikshank would revel;" &c., &c.

of him by the kind Barry Cornwall, who seems to have met him then at dinners given by the proprietors of the *London* to contributors, his face wore a rather peevish expression, and he did not contribute much to the cheerfulness of the company. The literary success of the "Confessions," however, made him a somewhat valued contributor, and for several years his pen was pretty busy for the *London Magazine*. His knowledge of German literature—a knowledge much rarer then than it afterwards became—was brought rather prominently into play. Among his contributions are translations from Kant and Jean Paul Richter, and, indeed, Richter's first introduction to the reading public of England was made by De Quincey. It has been said of De Quincey, by an enthusiastic admirer, that his "logic cuts like a razor; his imagination glows like a furnace," and certainly it is indicative of the range of his intellectual gifts and sympathies that in German literature he admired those two great but antipodal originalities, the severely logical Kant and the transcendently imaginative Richter. Curiously enough, too, one of his fellow-contributors to the *London Magazine* was the man who was to eclipse the intermittent and irregular De Quincey as an interpreter and expositor of German literature in general, and of Jean Paul Richter in particular, to the English public. This was Thomas Carlyle, some ten years De Quincey's junior, and who, like him, was just beginning a literary career, having decided not to enter the Scottish Kirk, for which he was bred. Carlyle, likewise, had been studying German literature, and was naturally attracted to a periodical in which certain sections of it were being elucidated, however fitfully, by a contributor of De Quincey's evident talent and accomplishment. Part I. of what became afterwards Carlyle's first book—his "Life of Schiller"—was printed in the *London Magazine* for October 1823, and the number for

the August of 1824 contained De Quincey's review of Carlyle's translation of Goethe's "Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship." It was a satirical review, making fun of the novel, and in a less degree of its translator. De Quincey's connection with the magazine lasted a year or so longer than Carlyle's, and closed at the end of 1825. Carlyle was tending towards Jeffrey and the *Edinburgh Review*; De Quincey towards John Wilson and *Blackwood's Magazine*.

By 1825 De Quincey was a man of forty, and some five and thirty years of life lay before him. But of his biography during this considerable period of his existence there are only the scantiest traces discoverable. His professed autobiographic sketches close with his settlement at Grasmere, and his autobiographic indications in the "Confessions of an Opium-Eater," go no further, of course, than the time of its composition, and his arrival in London in 1821, to become at thirty-six an author by profession,—he who had never before earned a farthing, and had lived only to enjoy books and talk, nature and opium. The keynote of much of the second section of his life is struck in the following passage of a letter to John Wilson, written in the February of 1825, and which explains itself only too distinctly:—

. . . "As to myself,—though I have written not as one who labours under much depression of mind,—the fact is, I *do* so. At this time calamity presses upon me with a heavy hand; I am quite free of opium; but it has left the liver, which is the Achilles' heel of almost every human fabric, subject to affections which are tremendous for the weight of wretchedness attached to them. To fence with these with the one hand, and with the other to maintain the war with the wretched business of hack-author, with all its horrible degradations, is more than I am able to bear. At this moment I have not a place to hide my head in. Something I meditate,—I know not what,—'Itaque e conspectu omnium abiit.' With a good publisher, and leisure to premeditate what I write, I might yet liberate myself, after which, having paid

everybody, I would slink into some dark corner—educate my children—and show my face in the world no more.

“If you should ever have occasion to write to me, it will be best to address your letter either ‘to the care of Mrs. De Quincey, Rydal Nab, Westmoreland’ (Fox Ghyll is sold, and will be given up in a few days), or ‘to the care of M. D. Hill, Esq., 11 King’s Bench Walk, Temple,’—but for the present I think rather to the latter,—for else suspicions will arise that I am in Westmoreland, which, if I were not, might be serviceable to me; but, if, as I am in hopes of accomplishing sooner or later, I should be, might defeat my purpose.”

Yes, much of De Quincey’s life was to be spent in flying from creditors and out-manceuvring bailiffs, with “nowhere to hide his head in,” tormented by physical agony, the only relief from which was through a return to the use of the fatal drug, the cause of all, or of most of his woe, while, with a wife and children dependent on him, he, the thinker and refined scholar, had to toil as a “hack-author.” There are some glimpses of him in 1825 and the preceding year, given by Charles Knight, which confirm the truth of the picture of himself in that sad letter to Wilson. *Knight’s Quarterly Magazine*, to which the young Macaulay, Praed, John Moultrie, and Derwent Coleridge contributed, was then in course of appearing, and its publisher and editor was in communication with De Quincey:—

“When the fifth number of the Magazine was published, in July 1824, I had become acquainted with Mr. De Quincey, and he had contributed a paper translated, as he purported, from the German of Laun, called ‘The Incognito.’ It was a very lively and pleasant paper; but as to the strict fidelity of the translation I might have had considerable doubts. He could not go about this sort of work without improving all he touched. In November he was engaged upon a translation of ‘Walladmor,’ which some Curl of Germany advertised as the translation of a suppressed work of Sir Walter Scott. Messrs. Taylor and Hessey put the German hoax into the hands of De Quincey to be retranslated. I saw him groaning over his uncongenial labour, by which he eventually got very little. It was projected to appear in three volumes.

He despairingly wrote to me, 'After weeding out the forests of rubbish, I believe it will make only one decent volume.'¹

This was a pretty task for a man of genius to be engaged in, and one who had been, or was to be, quizzing "Wilhelm Meister." De Quincey, however, quizzed himself about it, and when sorely pressed for a paper of literary reminiscences, told frankly and jocosely the story of his share in the evolution of the English Walladmor.² But worse is what follows:—

"At that time he was direly beset with visitations more terrible than the normal poverty of authors. A little before I knew him, he had come one morning to my friend Hill, wet and shivering, having slept under a hay-rick in the Hampstead fields. I have a letter from him of this period, in which he says, 'Anxiety, long-continued with me, of late years—in consequence of my opium-shattering,'—(*sic*) 'seizes on some frail part about the stomach, and produces a specific complaint, which very soon abolishes all power of thinking at all.'²

The acquaintance between Knight and De Quincey ripened quickly into intimacy. The publisher became the host of the author, and to this we owe the following traits and anecdotes of De Quincey in 1825:—

"De Quincey, vast as were his acquirements, intuitive as was his appreciation of character and the motives of human actions, unembarrassed as was his demeanour, pleasant and even mirthful his table-talk, was as helpless in every position of responsibility as when he nightly paced 'stony-hearted Oxford Street' looking for the lost one. He was constantly beset by idle fears and vain imaginings. His sensitiveness was so extreme, in combination with the almost ultra-courtesy of a gentleman, that he hesitated to trouble a servant with any personal requests without a long prefatory apology. My family were in the country in the summer of 1825, when he was staying at my house in Pall Mall East. A friend or two had met him at dinner, and I had walked part of the way home with one of them. When I returned, I tapped at his chamber-door to bid him good-night. He was sitting at the open window, habited as a prize-fighter when he enters the ring.

¹ Charles Knight's *Passages of a Working Life*, i. 326.

² The paper is reprinted in *Works*, xvi. p. 255. ³ Knight, p. 327.

'You will take cold,' I exclaimed. 'Where is your shirt?' 'I have not a shirt; my shirts are unwashed.' 'But why not tell the servant to send them to the laundress?' 'Ah! how could I presume to do that in Mrs. Knight's absence?'

"One more illustration of the eccentricity of De Quincey. I had been to Windsor. On my return I was told that De Quincey had taken his box away, leaving word that he was gone home. I knew that he was waiting for a remittance from his mother, which would satisfy some clamorous creditors, and enable him to rejoin his family at Grasmere. Two or three days after, I heard that he was still in town. I obtained a clue to his hiding-place, and found him in a miserable lodging on the Surrey side of Waterloo Bridge. He had received a large draft on a London banker at twenty-one days' sight. He summoned courage to go to Lombard Street, and was astonished to learn that he could not obtain the amount till the draft became due. A man of less sensitive feelings would have returned to Pall Mall East, and have there waited securely and comfortably till I came. How to frame his apology to our trusty domestic was the difficulty that sent him into the den where I found him. He produced the draft to me from out of his Bible, which he thought was the best hiding-place. 'Come to me to-morrow morning and I will give you the cash.' 'What! how? Can such a thing be possible? Can the amount be got before the draft is due?' 'Never fear; come you, and then get home as fast as you can.'"¹

So the mother was still alive, and her purse was still at the command of her unpractical and impecunious son.

De Quincey doubtless returned to Westmoreland, but whether or not, he certainly set to work again. His connection with the *London* ended, as has been said, with the close of 1825, but in the following year he opened another, and a long one, with a much more famous and successful periodical, *Blackwood's Magazine*. In the December of 1825, John Gibson Lockhart took leave of Edinburgh, and came to London to edit the *Quarterly Review*. With his departure, the friendly Wilson became the presiding spirit of the northern magazine, and as often as De Quincey chose to work and to write, he was pretty sure to find a customer in *Blackwood*. In 1826, he began in it a "Gallery of

¹ Knight, i. 327.

German Prose Classics," and if this closed with Kant and Lessing, for many years afterwards he was among its occasional contributors. To Edinburgh De Quincey began to gravitate, chiefly because in Edinburgh was the friendly Wilson. According to a passage about to be quoted, he was there during 1827-9, and in the last of these years traces of his pen are to be found in a short-lived and forgotten periodical, the *Edinburgh Literary Gazette*. But in the summer of 1829 he was certainly in Westmoreland, and at least temporarily prosperous, and even joyous. He had not forgotten his old and hospitable friend, Charles Knight, and to this remembrance we owe another and a decidedly curious glimpse of De Quincey defying and making game of his creditors—triumphant over fortune, for the time, and revelling in the bucolic products of his beloved Grasmere:—

"I occasionally," says Charles Knight, "had a warm-hearted letter from him; but our correspondence, after a year or two, had ceased. I was delighted at its renewal, in July 1829, when he wrote me the most pressing invitation from Mrs. De Quincey and himself to come with my wife and children to visit them. He had quitted his home on the Lakes in 1827, to remain in Edinburgh for two years, writing, but separated for the greater part of the time from his family. Wonderfully characteristic are some passages of this letter. 'Well, by good management and better luck, I contrived early in this present year to silence *mes Anglais* (as the French do, or did use, to entitle creditors). This odious race of people were silenced, I say, or nearly so; no insolent dun has raised his disgusting voice against me since Candlemas 1829. They now speak softly, and as if butter would not melt in their mouths; and I have so well planted my fire-engines, for extinguishing this horrid description of nuisance, that if by chance any one should smoulder a little too much (flame out none durst for shame), him I shall souse and drench forthwith into quietness.' Whilst 'this great operation,'" Charles Knight adds, "was in progress, he had been negotiating for the purchase of a rich farm-house, 'flowing with milk and honey, with mighty barns and spacious pastures,' in the vicinity of his cottage at Grasmere. 'Purchasing,' you say, what the devil?

Don't swear, my dear friend ; you know there is such a thing as buying a thing and yet not paying for it, or, at least, paying only the annual interest. Well, that is what, *I* do, can do, and will do. For, hear, finally, that the thing is done.' To this farm of Rydal Hay," Charles Knight continues, "from which he had written to me, were we to be welcomed. Mighty was the temptation, but mightier the difficulty in the days before railways. 'And now, my friend, think what a glorious El Dorado of milk, and butter, and cream-cheese, and all other dairy products, supposing that you like those things, I can offer you, morning, noon, and night. You may absolutely bathe in new milk, or even in cream, and you *shall* bathe if you like it. I know that you care not much about luxuries for the dinner-table, else, though our luxuries are few and simple, I could offer you some temptations,—mountain lamb equal to Welsh ; char famous to the antipodes ; trout and pike from the very lake within twenty-five feet of our door ; bread, such as you have never presumed to dream of, made of our own wheat, not doctored and separated by the usual miller's process into fine insipid flour, and coarse, that is, merely dirty-looking white, but all ground down together,—which is the sole receipt (*experto crede*) for having rich, lustrous, red-brown, ambrosial bread ; new potatoes, of celestial earthiness and raciness, which, with us, last to October ; and finally, milk, milk, milk,—cream, cream, cream (hear it, thou benighted Londoner !), in which you must and shall bathe.'"¹ And not a word about the supply of laudanum !

But this idyllic felicity was probably only transient. To John Wilson—to Edinburgh and literary work there—De Quincey kept gravitating, gravitating, and at last he settled down in the neighbourhood of both the friend and the city. He was certainly living in Edinburgh about 1832-3, *meipso teste*. For the writer of this sketch, then a very small boy indeed, and living at the western extremity of the Queen Street of the Modern Athens, remembers being, in that region, and in what must have been one of those years, the accidental playfellow of two other and also very small boys, flaxen-haired, fair-complexioned, with angelic looks and English accent, who told him that their name was De Quincey. Their papa, they said, lived in

¹ Knight, i. 340.

an adjacent street, and was "an author"—a statement which struck their small auditor with admiring wonder, little thinking that he would one day write, however imperfectly, the life of that very "author." In fact, De Quincey was then composing, for money merely, his "Klosterheim a Masque," a "sensational" story of those days, and published in 1832 by an Edinburgh firm. The angelic-looking little boys soon and suddenly vanished in the train, no doubt, of their migratory father. He was given to disappearing, it has been seen, without as well as with cause, and even John Wilson sometimes knew not of his whereabouts. "From 1809," writes Wilson's daughter, "when he," De Quincey, "was his," Wilson's, "companion in pedestrian rambles and the sharer of his purse, till the hour of his death, their friendship remained unbroken, though sometimes, in his strange career, months or years would elapse without my father seeing or hearing of him." When he did reappear, however, he was given to making amends for his absence. Probably it was not far off the very period of his biography now reached that befell what Wilson's daughter and biographer thus pleasantly narrates—and her picture of the English Opium-eater under the roof of Christopher North is well worth reproducing :—

"I remember him coming to Gloucester Place," an Edinburgh abode of Wilson's, "one stormy night. He remained hour after hour in vain expectation that the waters would assuage and the hurly-burly cease. There was nothing for it but that our visitor should remain all night. The Professor ordered a room to be prepared for him, and they found each other such good company that this accidental detention was prolonged, without further difficulty, for the greater part of a year. During this visit some of his eccentricities did not escape observation. For example, he rarely appeared at the family meals, preferring to dine in his own room, at his own hour, not unfrequently turning night into day. His tastes were very simple, though a little troublesome, at least to the servant who prepared his repast. Coffee, boiled rice and milk, and a piece of mutton from the loin, were the materials that invariably

formed his diet. The cook, who had an audience with him daily, received her instructions in silent awe, quite overpowered by his manner, for had he been addressing a duchess he could scarcely have spoken with more deference. He would couch his request in such terms as these: 'Owing to dyspepsia afflicting my system, and the possibility of any additional disarrangement of the stomach taking place, consequences incalculably distressing would arise, so much so, indeed, as to increase nervous irritation, and prevent me from attending to matters of overwhelming importance, if you do not remember to cut the mutton in a diagonal rather than in a longitudinal form.' The cook, a Scotch-woman, had great reverence for Mr. De Quincey as a man of genius; but after one of these interviews, her patience was pretty well exhausted, and she would say, 'Weel, I never heard the like o' that in a' my days; the bodie has an awfu' sicht o' words. If it had been my ain maister that was wanting his dinner, he would ha' ordered a hale tablefu' wi' little mair than a waff o' his haun, and here's a' this claver aboot a bit mutton nae bigger than a prin. Mr. De Quinshey would mak' a gran' preacher, though I'm thinking a hantle o' the folk wouldna ken what he was driving at.' Betty's observations were made with considerable self-satisfaction, as she considered her insight of Mr. De Quincey's character by no means slight, and many was the quaint remark she made, sometimes hitting upon a truth that entitled her to that shrewd sort of discrimination by no means uncommon in the humble ranks of Scottish life. But these little meals were not the only indulgences that, when not properly attended to, brought trouble to Mr. De Quincey. Regularity in doses of opium were even of greater consequence. An ounce of laudanum *per diem* prostrated animal life in the early part of the day. It was no unfrequent sight to find him in his room, lying upon the rug in front of the fire, his head resting upon a book, with his arms crossed over his breast, plunged in profound slumber. For several hours he would lie in this state, until the effects of the torpor had passed away. The time when he was most brilliant was generally towards the early morning hours, and then more than once, in order to show him off, my father arranged his supper parties so that, sitting till three or four in the morning, he brought Mr. De Quincey to that point at which, in charm and power of conversation, he was so truly wonderful."¹

Wilson himself knew De Quincey's conversational powers from of old, and from 1830 onwards the English Opium-eater figures occasionally in the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, his subtle

¹ Mrs. Gordon's *Christopher North*, ii. 155, &c.

talk, linked sweetness long drawn out, signally contrasting with the rough, homely vigour, and broad humour of the Ettrick Shepherd's vernacular utterances.

In 1834, established partly on the basis of a prior periodical, appeared *Tait's Magazine*, Radical as *Blackwood* was Tory, and which, at subsequent stages of its career, owed much to the patronage of the Anti-Corn-Law League and of Lancashire Radicalism. It was edited by a clever and appreciative woman, Mrs. Johnstone, herself an authoress of some little note, and De Quincey formed a connection with it. Probably he was then living in or about Edinburgh, and his old fame as the author of the "Confessions of an Opium-Eater" was kept alive there by his contributions to *Blackwood*, and by the colloquial powers which he displayed, though very fitfully, one can fancy, in the literary circles of the Modern Athens, where, as has been seen, Wilson made up parties to enjoy his discursive talk and voice of silvery tone. His first contributions to *Tait* were what he entitled "Sketches of Life and Manners from the Autobiography of an English Opium-Eater," whom everybody knew to be Thomas De Quincey. They seem, particularly when he came to record his personal reminiscences of men like Wordsworth and Coleridge, then risen into renown, to have attracted much attention in all parts of the English-speaking world, especially in the United States. Between 1825 and 1849 he contributed some fifty papers to *Blackwood*, and between 1834 and 1841 about as many to *Tait*, with which, in 1845, he resumed a connection that had lapsed for some years. If he began professional authorship late in his career, all the greater were the stores of reading, reflection, and reminiscence which he brought to it. Regard being had to the life he led, and the laudanum he took, the quantity of more or less thoughtful writing which he produced is marvellous.

While contributing to *Tait* and to *Blackwood*, he also wrote in 1838-9, and for the seventh edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (published by an Edinburgh firm), critical biographies of Shakespeare and Pope, Goethe and Schiller. That on Shakespeare he "re-composed three times over." And in 1844 appeared his almost solitary book, the "Logic of Political Economy," probably based, as already conjectured, on the tractate which he had prepared for the press more than a quarter of a century before, during a lucid interval of opium-prostration, in the Grasmere cottage. The tenancy of that cottage he surrendered in 1836; latterly, he lived in another abode of the same kind, "Mavis Bush," at pretty Lasswade, some seven miles from Edinburgh, the village in which Sir Walter Scott passed several happy years of early married life. But before thus settling at Lasswade, where his domestic economy was skilfully and affectionately presided over by one of his daughters, his life in and about Edinburgh was of the most irregular kind, and varied by flights further afield to escape from creditors. In the May of 1843 (the year before De Quincey showed himself such a master of the "Logic of Political Economy," while ignorant how to manage his own economics) Charles Knight crossed the Tweed to investigate the problem, "Did Shakespeare visit Scotland?" He sought out his old friend and found him sadly fallen; not now defying duns, not now commanding the pastoral wealth of a farm of his own. "From some information," says Knight, "Professor Wilson gave me, I found out De Quincey, who was in hiding in Glasgow. He looked better than he had done twelve years before, but he had a beard a foot long, (an unusual appendage to the face of an Englishman twenty years ago,) the cultivation of which, he said, was necessary to his health:" perhaps he fancied that it helped to disguise him. "Nothing could exceed the affec-

tion with which he received me. It was the last time I saw him.”¹ Here, again, is a sketch of him and his mode of existence, taken in those years by his friend John Hill Burton, the historian of Scotland, and which is perfect in its completeness and finish. Mr. Burton is describing the race of book-hunters, and book-collectors, and bibliophiles. No portrait in all his gallery is more lovingly or accurately done than this of De Quincey,—“Thomas Papaverius;” Thomas of the opium-yielding Poppy.

“The next slide of the lantern is to represent a quite peculiar and abnormal case. It introduces a strangely fragile, unsubstantial, and puerile figure, wherein, however, resided one of the most potent and original spirits that ever frequented a tenement of clay. He shall be called, on account of associations that may or may not be found out, Thomas Papaverius. But how to make palpable to the ordinary human being one so signally divested of all the material and common characteristics of his race, yet so nobly endowed with its rarer and loftier attributes, almost paralyzes the pen at the very beginning.

“In what mood and shape shall he be brought forward? Shall it be as first we met him at the table of Lucullus, whereto he was seduced by the false pretence that he would there meet with one who entertained novel and anarchical opinions regarding the Golden Ass of Apuleius? No one speaks of waiting dinner for him. He will come and depart at his own sweet will, neither burdened with punctualities nor burdening others by exacting them. The festivities of the afternoon are far on when a commotion is heard in the hall as if some dog or other stray animal had forced its way in. The instinct of a friendly guest tells him of the arrival—he opens the door and fetches in the little stranger. What can it be? a street boy of some sort? His costume, in fact, is a boy’s duffle great-coat, very threadbare, with a hole in it, and buttoned tight to the chin, where it meets the fragments of a particular belcher handkerchief; on his feet are list-shoes, covered with snow, for it is a stormy winter night; and the trousers—some one suggests that they are inner linen-garments blackened with writing ink, but that Papaverius never would have been at the trouble so to disguise them. What can be the theory of such a costume? The simplest thing in the world—it consisted of the fragments of apparel nearest at hand. Had chance thrown to him a court single-breasted coat, with

¹ Knight, ii. 306.

a bishop's apron, a kilt, and top-boots, in them he would have made his entry.

“The first impression that a boy has appeared vanishes instantly. Though in one of the sweetest and most genial of his essays he shows how every man retains so much in him of the child he originally was—and he himself retained a great deal of that primitive simplicity—it was buried within the depths of his heart—not visible externally. On the contrary, on one occasion when he corrected an erroneous reference to an event as being a century old, by saying that he recollected its occurrence, one felt almost a surprise at the necessary limitation in his age, so old did he appear with his arched brow loaded with thought, and the countless little wrinkles which engrained his skin gathering thickly round the curiously expressive and subtle lips. These lips are speedily opened by some casual remark, and presently the flood of talk passes first from them, free, clear, and continuous—never rising into declamation, never losing a certain mellow earnestness, and all consisting of sentences as exquisitely jointed together as if they were destined to challenge the criticism of the remotest posterity. Still the hours stride over each other, and still flows on the stream of gentle rhetoric, as if it were *labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ævum*. It is now far into the night, and slight hints and suggestions are propagated about separation and home-going. The topic starts new ideas on the progress of civilisation, the effect of habit on men in all ages, and the power of the domestic affections. Descending from generals to the special, he could testify to the inconvenience of late hours; for was it not the other night that, coming to what was, or what he believed to be, his own door, he knocked and knocked, but the old woman within either couldn't or wouldn't hear him, so he scrambled over a wall, and having taken his repose in a furrow, was able to testify to the extreme unpleasantness of such a couch? The predial groove might indeed nourish kindly the infant seeds and shoots of the peculiar vegetable to which it was appropriated, but was not a comfortable place of repose for adult man.

“Shall I try another sketch of him, when, travel-stained and foot-sore, he glided in on us one night like a shadow, the child by the fire gazing on him with round eyes of astonishment, and suggesting that he should get a penny and go home—a proposal which he subjected to some philosophical criticism very far wide of its practical tenor? How far he had wandered since he had last refreshed himself, or even whether he had eaten food that day, were matters on which there was no getting articulate utterance from him. Though his costume was muddy, however, and his communications about the material wants of life very hazy, the ideas which he had stored up during his wandering

poured themselves forth as clear and sparkling, both in logic and language, as the purest fountain that springs from a Highland rock.

“How that wearied little worn body was to be refreshed was a difficult problem: soft food disagreed with him: the hard he could not eat. Suggestions pointed at length to the solution of that vegetable unguent to which he had given a sort of lustre, and it might be supposed that there were some fifty cases of acute toothache to be treated in the house that night. How many drops? Drops! nonsense. If the wine-glasses of the establishment were not beyond the ordinary normal size, there was no risk—and so the weary is at rest for a time.”

After an account of him and his odd careless ways in a library, Mr. Burton goes on to indicate how entirely he stood apart among his fellows—“divested of the ordinary characteristics of social man—of those characteristics without which the human race, as a body, could not get on or exist.”

“For instance, those who knew him a little might call him a loose man in money matters; those who knew him closer laughed at the idea of coupling any notion of pecuniary or other like responsibility with his nature. You might as well attack the character of the nightingale, which may have nipped up your five-pound note and torn it to shreds to serve as nest-building material. Only immediate craving necessities could ever extract from him an acknowledgment of the common vulgar agencies by which men subsist in civilized society; and only while the necessity lasted did the acknowledgment exist. Take just one example, which will render this clearer than any generalities. He arrives very late at a friend's door; and on gaining admission—a process in which he often endured impediments—he represents, with his usual silver voice, and measured rhetoric, the absolute necessity of his being then and there invested with a sum of money in the current coin of the realm—the amount limited, from the nature of his necessities, which he very freely states, to seven shillings and sixpence. Discovering, or fancying he discovers, signs that his eloquence is likely to be unproductive, he is fortunately reminded that should there be any difficulty in connection with security for the repayment of the loan, he is at that moment in possession of a document, which he is prepared to deposit with the lender—a document calculated, he cannot doubt, to remove any feeling of anxiety which the most prudent person could experience in the circumstances. After a rummage in his pockets, which develops miscellaneous and varied, but as yet by no means valuable,

possessions, he at last comes to the object of his search, a crumpled bit of paper, and spreads it out,—a fifty pound bank-note! The friend who knew him well was of opinion that had he, on delivering over the seven shillings and sixpence, received the bank-note, he never would have heard anything more of the transaction from the other party. It was also his opinion that before coming to a personal friend, the owner of the note had made several efforts to raise money on it among persons who might take a purely business view of such transactions; but the lateness of the hour and something in the appearance of the thing altogether, had induced these mercenaries to forget their cunning and decline the transaction.

“He stretched, till it broke, the proverb, *Bis dat qui citò dat*. His giving was quick enough on the rare occasions when he had wherewithal to give, but then the act was final, and could not be repeated. If he suffered in his own person from this peculiarity, he suffered still more in his sympathies, for he was full of them to all breathing creatures, and, like poor Goldy, it was agony to him to hear the beggar’s cry of distress, and to hear it without the means of assuaging it, though in a departed fifty pounds there were doubtless the elements for appeasing many a street wail. All sums of money were measured by him through the common standard of immediate use; and with more solemn pomp of diction than he applied to the bank-note. Might he inform you that, with the gentleman opposite, to whom he had hitherto been entirely a stranger, but who happened to be nearest to him at the time when the exigency occurred to him, he had just succeeded in negotiating a loan of ‘twopence’? He was, and is, a great authority in political economy. I have known great anatomists and physiologists as careless of their health as he was of his purse, whence I have inferred that something more than a knowledge of the abstract truths of political economy is necessary to keep some men from pecuniary imprudence, and that something more than a knowledge of the received principles of physiology is necessary to bring others into a course of perfect sobriety and general obedience to the laws of health.

“Peace be with his gentle and kindly spirit, now for some time separated from its grotesque and humble tenement of clay. It is both right and pleasant to say that the characteristics here spoken of were not those of his latter days. In these he was tended by affectionate hands; and I have always thought it a wonderful instance of the power of domestic care and management that through the ministrations of a devoted offspring, this strange being was so cared for, that those who came in contact with him then, and then only, might have admired him as the patriarchal head of an agreeable and elegant household.”¹

¹ *The Book-Hunter*, p. 30, &c.

Tait's Magazine died in or about 1859, and even before John Wilson's death in 1854, ceased what had become an intermittent connection of De Quincey with *Blackwood*. His latest contributions to it were the *Suspiria de Profundis*—dream-soliloquies in “impassioned prose.” During the closing years of his life, however, he wrote a good deal in an Edinburgh periodical, *Hogg's Instructor*, a title afterwards exchanged for one both less prosaic and more ambitious, *Titan*. Although with the exception of “Klosterheim” and the “Logic of Political Economy,” no book of his had been published since his early “Confessions of an Opium-Eater,” and many of his contributions to periodicals were anonymous, yet his name and peculiar merits had gradually become known both at home and in the United States, a circumstance partly due, doubtless, to the fact that his papers in *Tait* were always printed as “by the English Opium-Eater,” or “by Thomas De Quincey.” In the United States, the interest taken in his writings was so considerable that, in 1851, a Boston firm began the attempt to republish them in a collective form. One of the members of the firm, whether then in the Old Country on other business or not, paid a visit to De Quincey at Lasswade in that year, possibly to confer with him respecting the American edition, and on the aid to be expected from him in the difficult task of extricating his papers from the periodicals of thirty years.¹ He welcomed the American

¹ De Quincey seems to have done little or nothing for this American edition, in which will be found his autobiographic papers just as they appeared in *Tait*. “It was,” says the writer in the *Atlantic Monthly*, “no uncommon thing for him to forget his own writings. In one case it is known that for a long time he persisted in disowning his production. His American editor—a fact which is little known—selected from among the mass of periodical writings in the various magazines for which De Quincey wrote, those which, having no other clue to guide him than their peculiar style, he judged to have proceeded from De

publisher cordially at Lasswade, and a slight account of the visit was afterwards given in an American magazine. Such was the seclusion in which he then lived, that "Mr. T.," no doubt Mr. Ticknor of Ticknor & Fields, the Boston firm aforesaid, "found but one person in Edinburgh who could inform him definitely as to De Quincey's whereabouts." When it was discovered, and De Quincey communicated with, he wrote thus, giving the topography of his abode and offering his conveyance to the American visitor: "The Dalkeith railway, from the Waverley Station, brings you to Esk Bank . . . precisely two and three-quarter miles from Mavis Bush,¹ the name of our cottage. Close to us, and the most noticeable object for guiding your enquiries, is Mr. Annandale's paper mills." Though sixty-six, De Quincey was still a good pedestrian, and the note

Quincey's pen. In one instance, as to the "Traditions of the Rabbins," after considerable examination, he still hesitated, and finally wrote to De Quincey, to set himself right. The latter disowned the essay; he had forgotten it. Mr. T., however, after another examination, concluded that, notwithstanding De Quincey's denial of the fact, he *must* have written it; accordingly, at his own risk, he published it. Afterwards De Quincey owned up, and ever after that referred all disputed cases of this nature to his Boston publishers." Did he really "own up," or simply succumb to the importunity of his friendly American editor? It has since been proved that "The Traditions of the Rabbins" was not De Quincey's. The settlement of the point is due to Mr. Richard Garnett of the British Museum, a scholar and a poet, and to whose great courtesy and extensive knowledge of books all inquiring visitors to the Museum Reading-Room, of which he is superintendent, are much indebted. From the evidence of style, Mr. Garnett (a nephew, by the way, of a former editor, for many years, of the *Manchester Guardian*), satisfied himself that the paper could not have been written by De Quincey. Mr. Garnett corresponded on the subject with the publishers of *Blackwood's Magazine*, in which the "Traditions of the Rabbins" originally appeared, and on referring to their registers, they ascertained that beyond a doubt the late Dr. Croly was the author of the disputed paper. See the *Athenæum* for June 28, 1873.

¹ A pretty name for a rural cottage; "mavis" is Scotch for thrush.

expressed his willingness, if it did not rain, to meet the visitor, "at your hotel in Edinburgh, any time after 11 A.M., and walk out the whole distance, seven miles from the Scott monument." On his arrival, Mr. T. found his host awaiting him at the door of the cottage, and was received "with a certain boyish awkwardness of manner, but with a most urban-like courtesy and affability." If "business" was talked of, nothing is said of it, and the American was delighted with his host's conversation :—

"When, however, it was absolutely necessary to be going, De Quincey forthwith insisted on accompanying his guest. What then was to be done? Ominously the sky looked down upon them, momentarily threatening a storm. No resource was there but to give the man his way, and accept his offer of companionship for a short distance, painfully conscious though you are of the fact, that every step taken forward must, during the same August night, be retraced by the weary-looking old man at your side, who now lacks barely four years of life's average allotment. Thus you move on; and the heavens move on their hurricane by nearer approaches, warnings of which propagate themselves all around you in every sound of the wind and every rustle of the forest leaves. Meanwhile, there is no rest to the silvery vocal utterances of your companion; every object by the way furnishes a ready topic for conversation. Just now you are passing an antiquated old mansion, and your guide stops to tell you that in this house may have been committed most strange and horrible murders, that, in spite of the tempestuous mutterings heard on every side, ought now and here to be specially and solemnly memorialized by human relation. A woman passes by, a perfect stranger, but De Quincey steps entirely out of the road to one side, takes off his hat, and in the most reverent attitude awaits her passage, and you, poor astonished mortal that you are, lest you should yourself seem scandalously uncourteous, are compelled to do likewise. In this incident, we see what infinite majesty invested the very semblance of humanity in De Quincey's thoughts. . . .

"Onward you proceed, one, two, three miles, and you can endure no longer the thought that your friend shall go on further, increasing thus at every step the burden of his journey back. You have reached the Esk-bank, and the bridge which spans the stream; the storm so long threatened begins now to let loose its rage against all unsheltered mortals. Here De Quincey consents to bid you good-bye—to you his last good-bye; and as here you leave him, so is he for ever enshrined in your

thoughts, together with the primal mysteries of night, and of storm, of human tragedies, and of the most pathetic human tenderness!"¹

The issue of the American edition of De Quincey's writings naturally led to an English, or a Scotch, enterprise of the same kind, and in 1853 the proprietor of *Hogg's Instructor* began the publication of an edition in fourteen volumes, all but the very last of which seem to have been produced under De Quincey's supervision. In preparing or revising this edition, it has been seen, he both excised and modified statements, which had been made in his autobiographic sketches contributed to *Tait*, and some whole papers, such as those entitled "Oxford," he suppressed. The issue of this first Edinburgh edition was not completed until 1860, and De Quincey died in the December of 1859. His youngest daughter, who had presided over his modest establishment at Lasswade during his later years, and had made his life settled and comfortable, tended him during his last illness, being joined towards its close by her sister, "the wife of Mr. Robert Craig of Ireland." A third daughter, also married, and the wife of Colonel Baird Smith, a distinguished officer of Engineers, was with her husband in India. Of De Quincey's last days and hours, an account was sent by one of the daughters then with him to a friend in the United States, and extracts from it are given in the following narrative furnished to the American magazine already quoted from:—

"During the last few days of his life, De Quincey wandered much, mixing up real and imaginary, or apparently imaginary things. He complained one night that his feet were hot and tired. His daughter arranged the blankets around them, saying, 'Is that better, papa?' when he answered, 'Yes, my love, I think it is. You know, my dear girl, these are the feet that Christ washed.'

"Everything seemed to connect itself in his mind with little children. He aroused one day, and said suddenly, 'You must know, my dear,

¹ *Atlantic Monthly* for September 1863, § Thomas De Quincey.

the Edinburgh cabmen are the most brutal set of fellows under the sun. I must tell you that I and the little children were all invited to supper with Jesus Christ. So, as you see, it was a great honour. I thought I must buy new clothes for the little ones, and—would you believe it possible?—when I went out with the children, the wretches laughed at their new dresses.’

“Of my brothers he often spoke, both those that are dead and those that are alive, as if they were his own brothers. One night he said, when I entered the room,

“‘Is that you, Horace?’¹

“‘No, papa.’

“‘Oh, I see! I thought you were Horace; for he was talking to me just now, and I suppose has just left the room.’

“Speaking of his father one day, suddenly and without introduction, he exclaimed, ‘There is one thing I deeply regret, that I did not know my dear father better; for, I am sure, a better, kinder, or juster man could never have existed.’

“When death seemed approaching, the physician recommended that a telegram should be sent to the eldest daughter, who resided in Ireland, but he forbade any mention of this fact to the patient. De Quincey seemed to have a prophetic feeling that she was on her way to him, saying, ‘Has M. got to that town yet that we stopped at when we went to Ireland? How many hours will it be before she can be here? Let me see,—there are eight hours before I can see her, and three added to that.’ His daughter came sooner than the family expected; but the time tallied very nearly with the computation he had made. On the morning his daughter arrived occurred the first intimation his family had seen that the hand of death was laid upon him. He had passed a quiet, but rather sleepless night, appearing much the same, yet more than ordinarily loving. After greeting his child, he said, ‘And how does mamma’s little girl like her leaving her?’ ‘Oh, they were very glad for me to come to grandpapa, and they sent you this kiss, which they did of their own accord.’ He seemed much pleased. It was evidence that M. presented herself to him as the mother of children, the constant theme of his wanderings. Once, when his daughter quitted the room, he said, ‘They are all leaving me but my *dear* little children.’ I heard him call one day, distinctly, ‘Florence! Florence! Florence! Flor-

¹ “Horace,” who had entered the navy, was at this time dead. Of De Quincey’s two then surviving sons (doubtless the writer’s playmates of more than five-and-twenty years before), one was in the Indian army; the other and elder, John Francis, was a physician, and settled in Brazil, where he died.

ence !' and again, 'my dear, dear mother !' and to the last he called us 'my love,' and it sounded like no other sound ever uttered. I never heard such pathos as there was in it, and in every tone of his voice. It gave me an idea of a love that passeth all understanding.

"During the next night he was thought dying, but he lingered on and on till half-past nine the next morning. He told me something about to-morrow morning, and something about sunshine ; but the thought that he was talking about what he would never see drove the exact idea out of my head, though I am sure it was morning in another world he was talking of.

"There was an extraordinary appearance of youth about him, both for some time before and after death. He looked like a boy of fourteen, and very beautiful. We did not like to let in the morning light, and the candle was burning at nine o'clock, when the post brought the following letter, which my sister and myself glanced over by the candle-light, just as we were listening to his decreasing breath. At the moment it did not strike me with the astonishment, at such an extraordinary coincidence, that when we came to read it afterwards it did :—

' BRIGHTON, *December 7, 1859.*

' MY DEAR DE QUINCEY,—Before I quit this world, I most ardently desire to see your handwriting. In early life, that is, more than sixty years ago, we were school-fellows together, and mutually attached ; nay, I remember a boyish paper (*The Observer*) in which we were engaged. Yours has been a brilliant literary career, mine far from brilliant, but I hope not unuseful as a theological student. It seems a pity we should not once more recognize one another before quitting the stage. I have often read your works, and never without remembering the promise of your talents in Winkfield. My life has been almost a domestic tragedy. I have four children in lunatic asylums. Thank God, it is now drawing to a close ; but it would cheer the evening of my days to receive a line from you, for I am, with much sincerity, your old and attached friend,

E. H. G.'

"I do not remember the name of G., but the name of Edward constantly recurred in his wanderings.

"Half an hour after the reading of that letter we heard those last pathetic sighs, so terrible from their very softness, and saw the poor, worn-out garment laid aside. Just before he died, he looked around the room, and said very tenderly to the nurse, the physician, and his daughters, who were present, 'Thank you all—thank you all !' Sensible thus, to the very last, of kindness, he breathed out his life in

simple thanks, swayed even in death by the spirit of profound courtesy that had ruled his life."¹

So ends the simple and touching record of the closing days and hours of this unique Lancashire Worthy. It was on the 8th of December 1859, that De Quincey died, in his seventy-fifth year. He was buried in the graveyard of St. Cuthbert's, Edinburgh, where a tombstone with a brief inscription marks the place of his interment. In person he was "a slender little man, with small, clearly-chiselled features, and a remarkably high square forehead."

¹ *Atlantic Monthly* for September 1863.

XIX.

*SAMUEL BAMFORD.**

VERY different from the childhood of Thomas De Quincey was that of Samuel Bamford, last of our Lancashire Worthies. He was the son of a hand-loom weaver at Middleton, who figures in his earliest reminiscences of home as "pale, stooping, and attenuated, probably from scanty fare as well as repeated visitations of sickness." Bamford's father had in his youth, however, been stalwart and strong, one of the best pugilists in Middleton; until, visited by religious impressions, he forswore lax courses and became a Methodist. The elder Bamford seems to have been no ordinary man. He was a reader, and, in his own way, a thinker. He played and sang; he composed both music and verse. His wife, too, was a superior woman, and their son might reckon himself fortunate in his parents.

Samuel Bamford was born at Middleton on the 28th of February 1788. The year after came the first French Revolution, followed by a depression of trade which brought scarcity into the Bamford household. The political effects of that great event were felt even in remote Middleton. Bamford's father became what would now be called a

* Bamford's *Writings, facsim, &c., &c.*

Radical, and what was then called a Jacobin. He formed one of a little knot of Middletonians who met at each other's houses to talk politics and indulge in dreams of parliamentary reform. He wrote a People's Anthem, "God Save the Poor," which his son has printed, and in which deliverance from "placemen" and taxation was prayed for. Samuel was thus born and bred a Radical, and in times when Radicalism could not even be called popular. Among his earliest remembrances was that of the rabble at Middleton-wakes, flinging stones and firing off pistols at a lay-figure in a cart,—supposed to represent Tom Paine,—amid such cries as "Deawn wi' a' th' Jacobins." Other and pleasanter reminiscences were those of Middleton before it was modernised by the factory system. The Irk was then a crystal stream, in the neighbourhood of woods, and pastures, and green fields, which long since have been devoured by brick and mortar, and have ceased to be the haunts of the fairies and "boggarts," with tales of whose doings the little Sam's childish imagination was fed. It was a different nourishment that it received when having been taught to read by his father at the loom, he made the acquaintance of the "Pilgrim's Progress," and heard it expounded by his parents, whose dreary lot in this life deepened the attractions of the goal reached at last by the much-suffering Christian and his wife.

In Sam's sixth year, however, the Bamford household was visited by a gleam of sunshine, the precursor of happier times. One day, a stranger made an unexpected appearance, on a welcome errand, in the cottage of the Middleton muslin-weaver. He was a churchwarden of Manchester, and came to offer the elder Bamford the superintendence of the manufacturing operations performed by some of the pauper inmates of the workhouse there. The offer was gladly accepted, and Sam's father

gave such satisfaction that he was soon appointed Governor, or Master, of the Workhouse, with his wife for Mistress. The Bamfords now exchanged penury for comfort, and Sam, cottage-life in quiet Middleton for the bustle of a populous workhouse in busy Manchester. The father and mother were indefatigable in the discharge of their duties, but small-pox broke out and carried off two of their little ones. Then came an outbreak of fever which prostrated Sam, and was fatal to his mother. Sent to Middleton to recover, he was on his return to the workhouse placed at the Manchester Grammar School. Till then he had been fonder of play than of books, but at this school his dormant faculties were awakened. He became the head boy of the first English class, spending his spare pence on story-books and ballads, and acquiring what he learned to feel to be the "blessed habit of reading." But when the time came for passing into a higher class, and for being taught Latin, the father stopped the way. "Latin," he said, "was of no use to any but boys destined for one of the professions," and Sam's school progress was arrested by the paternal fiat. In after years Bamford looked back with regret to his father's prohibition. If allowed to learn Latin, "I should not," he said, "have stopped short of the university, I think."

Meanwhile, the father had married again, expecting that his second wife would, like his first, become Mistress of the Workhouse. But the post was given to a former female functionary. The Master and she first quarrelled with each other, and then with the controlling authorities, who at last discharged both of them. His father and step-mother were afterwards appointed Master and Mistress of Salford Workhouse, but in the interval, seemingly, Sam and a brother were sent to an uncle at Middleton, a weaver, to learn his trade. Sam's progress in learning at the

Middleton Grammar School was marred by his aunt, who kept him at the bobbin-wheel till he was transferred to a loom. He was now a lad of fourteen or fifteen, and had already fallen in love with a little Middleton lass, the "Mima" of his "Early Days," and of whom more hereafter. From Middleton he returned to Manchester to live with a sister, and to become warehouseman to a Mr. Spencer. He had to sweep the rooms, light the fire, and fodder his master's horse, only doing a little business proper when his employer was out; his wages were six shillings a week. Here he had glimpses of the proceedings of a Scotch firm, then in its infancy, but which afterwards became famous in more than one way. "Opposite to our warehouse," he says, "was the establishment of Messrs. Grant & Brothers, who had just opened a warehouse in Manchester. They soon showed their English neighbours the way to do business; they were indefatigably on the alert for customers; and whilst other tradesmen stood at the doors bowing to country buyers—for it was not then the custom to stop them and ask them in—the Grants with quick eyes were on the look-out, and seldom permitted a stranger to pass without offering him the inspection of their 'stock of unequalled prints, at the lowest prices.' Whilst others looked coldly on, they were often successful in making a sale, and thus, by means of an innovation on the old form of trading, they, notwithstanding some ludicrous mistakes in their solicitations, soon established a good connection, and laid the foundation of their subsequent extraordinary and deserved popularity"¹—as The Brothers Cheeryble and otherwise.

From this warehouse the young man passed to another belonging to a Bury firm. The manager of its business in Manchester, a Mr. W——, was a bit of a dandy, who

¹ *Early Days*, p. 189.

initiated the new warehouseman into the art and mystery of making blacking and boot-top liquid, and taught him to be a dexterous boot-cleaner. Partly from pride, partly because his services in this department were never rewarded with anything more substantial than thanks, Bamford at last rebelled against such an addition to his normal duties. The rebellion was successful; nevertheless, when the business came into the hands of Mr. W——, the services of the rebel were retained. Bamford still kept up the "blessed habit of reading," and was now a student of Pope's *Iliad*, of Milton's poems, and of Shakespeare's plays. But the temptations of Manchester were too much for him, and there supervening an unfortunate love affair, in which Mima was for the time forgotten, he contracted other habits, not at all blessed. "He was ripening," he admits, "into a graceless young scoundrel," when he suddenly resolved to return to Middleton, where the weaving trade was prosperous, and to work at the loom in the house of an old acquaintance. At Manchester Mima had reappeared on the scene, and she was at Middleton when he went back to it. But in his new home and employment Bamford went from bad to worse. A connection with a Yorkshire lass rendered him amenable to the parish authorities, and he sacrificed at the shrine of Bacchus as well as at that of Venus. He became "strangely unsettled," and having again left Middleton, he chanced to see in the streets of Manchester bills intimating that young men were wanted for the coasting-trade between South Shields and London. He engaged himself forthwith, and took farewell of Mima, who was "almost broken-hearted," and of his worthy father, still at the Salford Workhouse, who, he says, "went down upon his knees, and prayed earnestly that God would recall me from sin." Reaching South Shields with his companions, mostly factory lads, he engaged

to serve on board for three years at £20 per annum, and embarked in the brig *Eneas*, bound for London with a cargo of coals.

The ex-weaver and ex-warehouseman, a tall, stalwart young fellow of eighteen or so, seems to have taken to his new vocation, and he thought himself rewarded when, at the end of his first trip, the *Eneas* made its way up the Thames through an avenue of shipping, and at last mighty London burst on him. The first day allowed on shore was spent in seeing such of the sights of London as could be seen on a Sunday, and the young sailor before the mast of the South Shields collier was soon in Westminster Abbey gazing at the memorials of favourite poets. Bamford appears to have become a good and expert sailor, but after half a dozen or so trips between South Shields and London, he grew tired of the life and resolved to run away. He took his measures with some precaution, and one summer day, leaving the brig in the Thames, he soon found himself, with seven shillings in his pocket, on the great North Road, with Manchester for his goal, and his feet for conveyance. Sleeping in outhouses or in hayfields, once (at Leicester) selling his woollen drawers for sixpence, occasionally helped by good Samaritans, and encountering by the way all sorts of odd acquaintances and adventures, the pedestrian, footsore and faint, at last reached Manchester, and was welcomed by his father and his friends, Mima among them, there and at Middleton.

Bamford's nautical experiences and the privations experienced on his journey had a sobering effect on him. He returned to his old calling, and found employment in a warehouse in Peel Street belonging to Hoole, Wilkinson, & Gartside, a firm of calico-printers at Chorley. Here his duties were more responsible than they had been in former similar situations, and he discharged them steadily

and successfully. His mind may have been powerfully affected by Cobbett's prose and Burns's poetry, with both of which he now first became acquainted ; but he worked on persistently, and his wages were raised from 18s. to 20s. a week. He spent his leisure hours no longer at taverns, but in reading and writing, seeing himself in print for the first time when *Harrop's Manchester Mercury* published some verses of his, "The Snowdrop," evidently suggested by Burns's "Daisy ;" and, best of all, he married Mima, his faithful and affectionate wife for many, many years. After a little, he purchased looms of his own, bespoke work for himself and wife, and returned to Middleton with a joyous sense of emancipation, and of being his own master. The pair had plenty of employment, and were as happy as possible. Why this sort of life did not last is left unexplained. "Afterwards," says Bamford, rather too concisely, "we went to reside with my wife's uncle and aunt, she assisting the old people in the house and shop, and I, on the recommendation of Mr. Hoole"—of the firm in whose employment he had been a warehouseman—"taking the situation of putter-out to weavers at Middleton for Messrs. Dickens & Wilde. Subsequently, for a short time I was engaged in the bookselling or publication line of business"—an episode of which we could have wished to know more—"and in 1816 I was member of a committee of parliamentary reformers, and Secretary to the Hampden Club at Middleton."

Yes ; with the restoration of peace after the victory of Waterloo came agricultural and commercial distress, and a widespread agitation for parliamentary reform. In the November of 1816 Cobbett began a cheap issue of his "Political Register," which was thus brought within the reach of the multitude, and, with Henry Hunt's oratory, gave a great impetus to the new or reawakened move-

ment, one directed in London by Sir Francis Burdett, Lord Cochrane, afterwards Earl of Dundonald, and the simple-minded Major Cartwright, brother of the inventor of the power-loom. Hampden Clubs for the promotion of parliamentary reform were formed throughout the land, and were regarded by the Government with suspicion and alarm. Spies were employed to watch and report on the proceedings of the reformers, and some of them, pretending to be friendly to the movement, seem to have instigated the more ignorant and reckless of the working-class politicians to violent courses or dangerous designs. What is now called Manhood Suffrage, with electoral districts and annual parliaments, formed the chief demands of the reformers. If parliamentary reform could be procured, everything, they were satisfied, would be put to rights; and Bamford and his friends did not trouble themselves, in the meantime, about the details of the legislation which was to follow the triumph of the cause. The Hampden Club of Middleton, with its active and enthusiastic secretary, soon became prominent, and the secretary himself was sent to London, early in 1817, to represent it at a convocation of delegates summoned from all parts of the country to arrange the preliminaries of a Reform Bill to be introduced in the House of Commons. Bamford's last sight of the metropolis had been when he ran away from the South Shields collier. He now revisited London on a political mission, and found himself somebody. At a meeting of the delegates he ventured to oppose even Cobbett, who wished to substitute Household for Manhood Suffrage, and Bamford carried his point. He saw, heard, and was brought into contact with Hunt and Cobbett, the proud and cold Sir Francis Burdett, and the cordial and unaffected Lord Cochrane. He visited the haunts of working-class politicians, and was struck by the folly and rashness of some

of their artisan leaders. On his return to Middleton, and while supporting parliamentary reform with unabated enthusiasm, he lifted up his voice against the silly project of the "Blanketeers" to march to London, each carrying a blanket for his nightly bivouac on the road; and in after years he recorded with complacency the fact, that not a man from Middleton joined the expedition, which turned out an ignominious failure. Bamford's sagacity and goodness of heart made him recoil alike from rash and from wicked enterprises. While his honest zeal kept him faithful to the cause, he became more and more painfully aware that among its promoters there were men capable of any atrocity. With the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act (March 1816), and the passing of a bill to restrain seditious meetings—measures sanctioned by a Parliament terrified at the magnitude of the new political organisation, at the language used and the treasonable enterprises said to be contemplated by some of its leaders—the more desperate spirits among the Lancashire working-class reformers became uncontrollable. Bamford was actually asked to join in an incendiary night-attack, which was to make "a Moscow of Manchester," and he at once and indignantly refused his co-operation to what he denounced as "unlawful, inhuman, cowardly." Not long afterwards he was asked by another reformer to join in a plot for the assassination of the Ministers, and again and at once he indignantly refused participation in such villainy. But, with schemes like these afloat, and spies busily informing against the innocent as well as the guilty, it is little wonder if Bamford became "suspect," though he had carefully avoided attending any of the secret meetings, which were frequented by too many of his associates. In the March of 1817, he, with his friend, "Dr." Healey, a vain, scattered-brained medical quack,

and five others, were arrested (29th March 1817), and, after a day's detention in the Salford New Bailey, were conveyed to London to be examined before the Privy Council on a charge of high treason. Their first experience as political prisoners on leaving the Salford gaol in the charge of two Queen's messengers was not a disagreeable one. An excellent breakfast was given them at Disley, which Healey enjoyed so much as to declare, that if "this was being a state-prisoner, he wished he had been one five years before!" In London they were placed in Cold Bath Fields prison, and were treated with great consideration by its officials, and, indeed, by all the persons in authority with whom they were brought into contact. After several examinations before the Privy Council, Bamford was set free with a kindly warning from Lord Sidmouth, at that time Home Secretary. Bamford's demeanour, at once manly and respectful, had evidently impressed the Privy Council. During one of his examinations, he harangued them on the necessity for reform, but it was evident that he had nothing of the dangerous conspirator about him. "Mr. Bamford, I wish you well, I assure you I wish you well," were the Home Secretary's parting words to him, "and I hope this is the last time I shall ever see you on an occasion like the present." Of the sojourn at Cold Bath Fields Bamford says: "So far as diet was concerned, we lived more like gentlemen than prisoners." Just before leaving London for home, he was asked to luncheon by one of the Queen's messengers who had convoyed him from the North, and who, besides the luncheon, gave him "a handsome present of clothes."

On returning to Middleton, he seems to have published the "Account of the Arrest and Imprisonment of Samuel Bamford on suspicion of High Treason," written by himself, a thin octavo, which bears the imprint "Manchester

1817," and which tells the story also of his London experiences. He had formed some resolutions during his imprisonment to forswear meddling with politics, but they did not long survive his return to Lancashire.

"I now went to work," he says, "my wife weaving beside me, and my little girl, now become doubly dear, attending school or going short errands for her mother. Why was I not content? why was not my soul filled and thankful? what would I more? what could mortal enjoy beyond a sufficiency to satisfy hunger and thirst—apparel to make him warm and decent—a home for shelter and repose, and the society of those he loved? All these I had, and still was craving—craving for something for the nation, for some good for every person, forgetting all the time to appreciate and to husband the blessings I had on every side around me, and, like some honest enthusiasts of the present day, supervising the affairs of the nation, to the great neglect of my own. . . . But it was not with us then as it is now, and we have that excuse to plead. We had none to direct or oppose us, except a strong-handed Government, whose politics were as much hated as their power was dreaded. We had not any of our own rank with whom to advise for the better; no man of other days who had gone through the ordeal of experience, and whose judgment might have directed our self-devotion, and have instructed us that before the reform we sought could be obtained and profited by, there must be another, a deeper reform, emerging from our hearts, and first blessing our households by the production of every good we could possibly accomplish in our humble sphere;—informing us also, and confirming it by all history, that governments might change from the despotic to the anarchical, when, as surely as death, would come the despotic again, and that no redemption for the masses could exist save one that should arise from their own knowledge and virtue; that king-tyranny and mob-tyranny (the worst of all) might alternately bear sway, and that no barrier could be interposed save the self-knowledge and self-control of a reformed people. . . .

"In the absence, therefore, of such wholesome monition, in the ardour also and levity of youth, and impelled by a sincere and disinterested wish to deserve the gratitude of my working fellow-countrymen, it is scarcely to be wondered at that I soon forgot whatever merely prudent reflections my better sense had whispered to me whilst in durance, and that, with a strong though discreetly tempered zeal, I determined to go forward in the cause of parliamentary reform.

"And so, as it were, like another *Crusoe*, I lay with my little boat in still water, waiting for the first breeze to carry me again to the billows."

The breeze soon began to blow. With the year that followed that of Bamford's return to Middleton, Habeas Corpus was restored and the agitation for parliamentary reform recommenced. While avoiding plots, plotters, and secret assemblages, Bamford was soon, oratorically and otherwise, a prominent politician in his own district. He spoke at public meetings. He wrote a "Lancashire Hymn" of reform, "originally intended for being sung to one of the finest of trumpet-strains, at a meeting in Middleton of perhaps two thousand people;" but the intention was not carried out, some brother reformers to whom the hymn was submitted not caring to have it sung. Their "insusceptibility," wrote the disappointed poet long afterwards, "could not find any charm in music," and to them "no sounds were so fascinating as their own voices uttering interminable harangues."

With the beginning of 1819, moreover, Henry Hunt appeared in Lancashire. Bamford was still a zealous believer in him, and with nine picked men from Middleton formed a bodyguard to protect the demagogue from anti-reforming insult. It was resolved that a monster meeting of reformers should be held in the coming August. In order that they might not this time be jeered at as a chaotic mob, those who were to take part in it were drilled during the months which preceded the gathering. Old soldiers of the line or of the militia gave their assistance, and Bamford was active in organising the Middleton contingent. The original object of the meeting, which was first fixed for the 9th of August, was to elect a "legislatorial attorney" for Manchester, then unrepresented in parliament. A meeting for this purpose was, however, declared to be illegal, and it was arranged that it should be held, on the 19th of August, simply to petition for parliamentary reform. On the morning of that day the Middleton men were formed into a hollow square, and were addressed by Bamford, who earnestly admonished them to be peaceable, and not to oppose even violence by violence.

No weapons were carried, and only a few aged and infirm members of the procession kept their sticks. A band played, and a hundred or two young women, mostly wives (Bamford's own among them), led the way towards the too famous field of Peterloo. The story of the rest of that unhappy day is well known, and need not be retold. Hunt was arrested on the hustings, and Bamford a week or so later. After another visit to the Salford New Bailey, he found himself in Lancaster gaol. His sojourn here, too, was not an unpleasant one. "We were all," he says, "young men and full of life and spirits. We chatted, sang, told stories, had hopping and leaping matches, and walked in the yard." When the trial came, for a misdemeanour (the Government gave up a first intention of prosecuting for high treason), the accused "traversed" to the next assizes. Bamford was liberated on bail, which was partly found him by an ardent and generous reforming baronet, Sir Charles Wolseley, who in July had been chosen "legislatorial attorney" for Birmingham. Ultimately, at the request of Hunt, who had, says Bamford, "a horror of Lancashire juries and Lancashire gaols," the scene of the trial was transferred to York, where it was to come off at the spring assizes of 1820.

Early in the year of Peterloo, Bamford had published a small collection of his verse. It was "printed at the *Observer* Office" (Manchester), with the title, "The Weaver Boy; or, Miscellaneous Poetry. By Samuel Bamford." The slender contents were varied, verses hurling defiance at oppressors alternating with peaceful effusions inspired by love and the beauties of nature. There was a prose preface dated "Middleton, February 17, 1819," in which Bamford pleaded his position in life as an excuse for the shortcomings of his poetry, and spoke of his attachment to "liberty." An "N.B." contained the intimation:—

“The author intends printing a pamphlet similar to this once a fortnight or once a month, as circumstances permit, until the best of his productions have all appeared.” But “circumstances,” seemingly, did not permit the author to fulfil his intention. On his return to Middleton from Lancaster gaol, however, came Bamford’s introduction to the press. There was an inquest being held at Oldham (presumably on one of the victims of Peterloo), to report the proceedings at which—such was the interest excited in the metropolis by the Lancashire reform movement—Barnes had been sent down from the *Times*, and a certain Irish Peter Finnerty from the *Morning Chronicle*. The reporters were ordered out of court by the coroner, but Bamford was allowed to remain and take notes, because, he urged, they might be of use to him at his coming trial at York. Finnerty persuaded him to allow his notes to be sent to the *Morning Chronicle*, and suggested that Bamford might obtain employment on that journal. The kind Sir Charles Wolseley encouraged the suggestion, and invited Finnerty and Bamford to Wolseley Hall. After a visit which Bamford found rather unsatisfactory—for while the Irish reporter enjoyed himself in the parlour with Sir Charles, the Lancashire weaver was relegated to the society of the housekeeper, the lady’s maid, and the French cook—the ill-matched pair proceeded in a gig towards London. Finnerty made himself so little agreeable that at Oxford Bamford parted company with him, and wended his way on foot to London. When he called at Peter’s house, he was summarily dismissed, after a walk round the square, with a “Good morning, Bamford. I shall be seeing you in town some of these days ;” and so ended the hope of a connection with the *Morning Chronicle*. Bamford’s expenditure on the joint-section of their trip was not reimbursed by the Irish reporter, and he had come to his last shilling. At this crisis Hunt’s solicitor, who had

seen a good deal of him in Lancashire, and recognised his worth, offered him employment as a copying-clerk. But a day of the employment, supervening on previous sufferings, prostrated Bamford. Fortunately a fund had been raised in London for the relief of the sufferers by Peterloo, and a timely donation of £10 from it enabled him to return home, rather disgusted with journalism and journalists. His disenchantment with his political leader was completed by the vanity and selfishness which Hunt displayed during the trial at York, which began on the 16th of March 1820. Bamford defended himself with temper and ability. Scarlett, who conducted the prosecution for the Crown, complimented him both on the manner and the matter of his defence, and he produced witnesses to prove his pacific demeanour and advice on the day of Peterloo. The presiding judge, Mr. Justice Bayley, summed up strongly in his favour, laying stress on the admonition against violence which he had given to the Middleton column, on its peaceable and almost festive aspect during the march, on the absence of weapons from its ranks, and the fact that many of the men were followed by their female belongings, which showed that they had no intention of committing a breach of the peace. The jury, however, found all the defendants guilty of a seditious misdemeanour. They were ordered to renew their recognisances, and appear for judgment in the Court of King's Bench in London at the ensuing Easter term.

When the time approached for his appearance in London, Bamford prepared to foot it to his destination. With £3 from the Manchester relief fund, he bought a pair of strong shoes and two pairs of hose, and set forth from Middleton. His departure was almost unnoticed; the contribution of the Middleton reformers to the expenses of his journey amounted to the sum of one shilling, and he started full of sad reflections on the contrast between the joyous march to

Peterloo and the neglected loneliness in which he was entering on his present expedition. He had a pleasant walk of it, however, and one diversified by agreeable as well as odd adventures on the road. But with his arrival in London his money was once more nearly gone. In the hope of raising a few pounds, he tried publisher after publisher with his MS. poems, but none of them would look at his manuscript, few of them at himself, and one bibliopole added insult to injury by advising him to "return home and remain at his loom." "To be sure," he says, "the booksellers were not entirely blamable; my appearance was, no doubt, somewhat against me. My clothes and shoes were covered with dust, my linen soiled, and my features brown and weathered like leather, which circumstances, in combination with my stature and gaunt appearance, made me an object not of the most agreeable or poetical cast. Still, I thought, these booksellers must be very owls at mid-day, not to conceive the possibility of finding good ore under a rude exterior like mine. And then I bethought me, and comforted myself therewith, inasmuch as others had trodden the same weary road before me, of Otway, and Savage, and Chatterton, and of the great son of learning, as ungainly as myself—Samuel the lexicographer—and I might have added of Crabbe, and others of later date, but their names had not then caught my ear." Poor Bamford had need of whatever philosophy he could muster, when seeking a night's shelter, and being told that eighteenpence was the price of a bed, he could produce only one and fivepence, his last coins, which, however, were accepted as sufficient. He had called on Orator Hunt, who gave him one meal of bread, butter, and corn-coffee, and the invitation, passing disagreeably from precision to vagueness, "Come tomorrow, come any time." In this emergency, Bamford bethought him of a baker on the Surrey side of the river,

who had been kind to him during his last visit to London. He resolved to call on him—at the worst it would be only one disappointment more. The baker received him cordially, and soon discovering his plight, behaved to him like a good Samaritan, satisfying his immediate wants, physical and pecuniary, and inviting him to take all his meals there. About the same time came another donation of £10 from the relief fund, and Bamford went up for judgment. It was about the time of the trial of Thistlewood and his associates in the Cato Street conspiracy to assassinate the Ministers, and Themis did not just then incline to mercy's side. Perhaps Bamford scarcely improved matters when, in a manly speech, and after declaring that he had preached peace and order to the Middleton men on the day of Peterloo, he added, that he would never again give the same advice until every drop of blood shed on that day had been amply atoned for. He and several others, his old associate Healey among them, were sentenced to one year's imprisonment in Lincoln gaol; Hunt to two years and a half in that of Ilchester.

Bamford's imprisonment at Lincoln was preceded by a short detention in the King's Bench with Orator Hunt and company. On the very evening of his arrival there, he was joined by Sir Charles Wolseley, who had been sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment in Abingdon gaol for attending a reform meeting at Stockport. Through the kindness of Sir Charles, and still more of his Middleton friends, roused at last to sympathetic action, Bamford found himself pretty comfortable financially during his incarceration at Lincoln, where the governor of the gaol and the visiting magistrates seem to have done their utmost to make his stay as pleasant as it could be under the circumstances. All along, indeed, Bamford's imprisonments were far less disagreeable episodes of his career than might be

supposed. At Lincoln, it is true, he had a rather severe pulmonary attack, but this arose, according to his own admission, from his habit of lying on the grass in the open air, and taking a nap after he had been heated playing at football, and other athletic games in the prison-yard. During his illness he received, by permission of the authorities, a visit from his wife, who was allowed a room in the prison, and by this incident hangs a tale. After she had gone home again, Orator Hunt wrote to him from Ilchester gaol, strongly advising him to urge on the authorities a request for a second visit from his dear Jemima, and even offered to subscribe handsomely for her maintenance at Lincoln. This seemingly friendly interest in Bamford's happiness turned out to be inspired by motives the most purely selfish. When Jemima did arrive on a second visit to her husband, Hunt's munificence dwindled to next to nothing, and his wrath was great that his own suggestion should have been carried out, while he himself was not allowed at Ilchester the company of his mistress, a favour which he thought would have been granted as a corollary from Mrs. Bamford's visit to her husband at Lincoln. "Surely," says Bamford, "there is some difference between being permitted to have one's own wife with one, and being permitted to have another man's wife with one, in a prison." There was an angry correspondence on the subject between Bamford and the "Orator," in which Hunt cuts a very shabby figure, and the conduct of Healey, too, was of a kind to give Bamford an additional disgust for some of the Reformers with whom he had been most closely associated. At last came the hour of Bamford's deliverance, not merely from Lincoln gaol, but from associating and co-operating with the Hunts and Healeys. He took a friendly farewell of the prison authorities, from the governor to the turnkey, and in the company of his faithful wife set forth on a pedestrian

journey to Middleton. With blistered feet, but thankful hearts, they reached once more their Lancashire home, and Bamford now thought less of avenging the blood shed at Peterloo, or of reforming the state, than of earning an honest living and leading a peaceful life.

When Bamford settled down again at Middleton, the kind Sir Charles Wolseley supplied him with a small sum of money "to commence making goods on his own account." "This," he says, speaking of himself in the third person, "he found he could not do and compete with the large manufacturer without the dishonest means of purchasing cheap remnants of weavers' material and working them into his own goods. This he would not do." Probably he returned to the loom. The next occurrence of any interest in his biography was in 1826, when he prevented a contemplated raid of machine-breakers who had planned the destruction of the steam-loom of Heywood, Rochdale, and Middleton. In the same year he became a Lancashire correspondent of the *Morning Herald*, in which afterwards appeared, suggested by the death of Canning, his rather striking poem, "The Pass of Death." "By this time," he says, "he had 'ceased to be a weaver,'" and was even "regarded as an alien by his class," presumably because he had opposed machine-breaking and formed a connection with a London Tory paper. In 1832 he was appointed constable of Middleton, in discharging the duties of which post he offended the local Radicals. In 1839, when physical-force Chartism was dangerously active, the man who had once been suspected of high treason and imprisoned for sedition was a leader of special constables at Middleton, and a champion of law and order! Not long afterwards he went to reside in a "cottage at Charlestown, in the township of Blackley," where he "memorialised the Postmaster-General for a receiving-office for letters," and

he was successful in his application. Meanwhile, he had set his pen in motion to admonish and warn the physical-force Chartists. He made a verse-translation (not a very happy one) of Béranger's *La Lyonnaise*, suggested by the Lyons insurrection of 1834. Béranger's lyric is scarcely that of a peacemaker, but Bamford added to his metrical version of it a prose homily of his own, reminding the Chartists of the fate of the Lyons' insurgents, and predicting that any attempt of theirs to use physical force would only be repressed and sternly punished. The prose-and-verse pamphlet was inscribed to Ebenezer Elliott, and addressed "to the handloom weavers of Lancashire, and to the persons styled Chartists." It seems to have been published by subscription, and to have had a considerable sale. It was at this time, when the rise and growth of Chartism recalled to him the wild and stormy Radicalism of twenty years before, that the thought of writing reminiscences of those days of enthusiasm and suffering occurred to him. He was further incited to attempt something of the kind, because the Manchester newspapers, for which he seems to have acted as a local reporter of occurrences in his own district, so modified their arrangements just then as to give him more leisure than before, and, he adds, "fewer means for enjoying it." He began to write the book, and unable to find in Manchester or elsewhere any one who would risk the cost of publishing it, he resolved to publish it himself. He went over to Heywood,—the town,—and commissioned a printer to work off 500 impressions of the first sheet, with covers for them. Bamford folded the sheets, his wife covered them, and then going about among his friends and the subscribers to the translation of *La Lyonnaise*, the author-publisher soon found the whole impression disposed of. Sheet after sheet was thus printed and disposed of, Bamford composing one while selling that just

printed. This task of at once writing and distributing, Bamford says, he found to be a "serious employment." Much of the book was mentally composed while he was abroad on his hawking expeditions, and written down at night, or when the weather kept him at home. Success, however, did attend the primitive publishing-process. The first sheet was printed in the November of 1839, and in the July of 1840, Bamford found the sale so considerable as to warrant him in having 1,200 copies of each new sheet worked off, while the earlier sheets were being reprinted. When the whole at last appeared as a book in bound volumes, the metropolitan press began to notice it. It reached a third edition in 1843, and in the October of 1844 the *Quarterly Review* itself devoted a long, and on the whole a friendly, article to the "Passages in the Life of a Radical," giving a good many characteristic extracts from it. Scarlett, who had conducted the prosecution against Bamford and the other accused at York, was now Lord Abinger, and was much interested by the work, the demeanour of the author of which he well remembered. He introduced it to the notice of appreciative men of rank. The late Earl of Ellesmere, then Lord Francis Egerton, wrote graciously about it to his humble brother of the pen, and a late (the third) Lord Ashburton, the friend of several of the most distinguished men of letters of his time, sent him (so Bamford once intimated to the writer of this memoir) a present of £100. Bamford had much reason, therefore, to be satisfied with the reception of his book, though, when telling its story in a supplementary chapter to the later editions of the "Passages," he made the remark, that whatever encouragement was bestowed on him by others, he received little from the "Liberal" M.P.s of his own county. Here is the closing passage of the article in the Tory *Quarterly*:—

“Of Mr. Bamford’s poetry we have read only the few specimens in this autobiography, and we are forced to acknowledge that, judging by them, the London booksellers acted prudently in declining his advances. . . . But his prose, surely, is remarkable. With a sufficient spice of the prevailing exaggeration, and here and there a laughable touch of the bathos, his language is on the whole clear, lively, nervous,—worthy of the man. That such English should be at the command of one who, it must be supposed, seldom conversed during his prime except in the dialect of Doctor Healey, is a fact which may well give pause to many of those whose ‘houses are like museums.’ But the great lesson is to be drawn from the incidents themselves of his story—the small incidents especially—and the feelings and reflections which these are seen to have excited in the narrator. No kindness, no mark or token of human sympathy and good-will, appears ever to have been thrown away upon Bamford. He was betrayed by youthful vanity into unhappy and all but fatal delusions and transgressions; he still, according to our view, labours under the misfortune of a false political creed. But he never was, never could have been, at heart a *Radical*. We see no traces in him of anything like a cold-rooted aversion for the grand institutions of England. There are, we sincerely believe, among the more intelligent of his class, few, very few, whose minds would not be found open to salutary impressions on the subjects as to which they have been most generally led astray, were they but approached and dealt with by their superiors in worldly gifts with a little more of that frankness and confidence which made Samuel Bamford take leave of the Lincoln magistrates ‘with tears in his eyes.’ He admits in his closing chapter that things are in this respect mended since 1820, and surely his book ought to accelerate the improvement which it acknowledges.”

The success of the “*Passages*” no doubt encouraged Bamford to his other literary ventures. In 1843 he published a volume of “*Poems*,” and in 1844 his prose “*Walks in South Lancashire*.” These are descriptions of the homes, the life, and manners of the working classes of his district, sometimes made sombre by the manufacturing distress prevalent when he wrote several of them, and by laments over the passing away of the “good old times.” But this occasional gloom is relieved by the geniality of the writer, and his determination to look at the good as well as the

bad side of things. The Anti-Corn Law League was then in full career, and Bamford sympathised with its object, though he does not seem ever to have taken a personal part in its operations. In more than one of the didactic passages of the "Walks" he rebukes the Chartists for their opposition to Corn Law Repeal. "We won't have cheap bread unless we have the whole Charter also;" this, he tells them, is equivalent to saying, "We won't have to-day's dinner until to-morrow's breakfast is ready." But for "Friend Acreland" he has a word of monition as well as for the misguided Chartist. "Be just towards them," the working classes, "in respect of their civil rights, and fear not." "You need not hesitate; they will never be like a French mob. There is more of an aristocratic spirit in the commonalty of England than in any other people; there is indeed too much of it. They are as regularly stratified as are the rocks of our island, and they won't be disrupted except by great and long-continued ill-usage." Or leaving what are now obsolete politics, let us quote (all the more readily because the book itself is "out of print") a passage descriptive of the South Lancashire scenery, with which Bamford was most familiar. Whatever can contribute to make the picture pleasant is detected with an eye of eager vigilance, and made the most of by the loving painter. There may be a monotony of flatness from Liverpool to Manchester, but it is far otherwise, Bamford opines, from Manchester to Todmorden:—

"Take a sheet of stiffened paper, crumple it up in your hand, then just distend it again, and you will have a pretty fair specimen of the surface of the northern part of South Lancashire. The hills are chiefly masses of valuable stone and coal; on the north, some heath lands overlap them, but their sides are often brilliant with a herbage that yields the best of milk and butter, whilst, of all the valleys, you shall traverse none where a stream of water does not run at your side, blab-

ling all manner of imaginary tidings, and asking unthought of and unanswerable questions. To be sure, during six days out of the seven, the brooks and lowland waters are often turgid and discoloured with the refuse of manufactures, but steal along one of these quiet dells on a Sunday morning, go over the shallows where the loaches used to lie basking, and look into the deeps, and quiet pools, and shady spots, where the trout were wont to be found; creep under the owlers, and through the hazels, when their golden blossoms are hung in the sun; go plashing among the willows, and over the hippin-stones, and along the gravel-beds, where the pebbles lie as white as hail turned to stone;—go maundering, solitary, and thoughtful, for an hour or two, amid these lonely haunts, and you shall confess that our county is not reft of all its poetry, its fairy dells, and its witching scenes.

“Then the meadows and fields spread fair and green between the towns. Clean, sleek milk-kine are there, licking up the white clover and tender grass. Small farms are indicated by the many well-built and close-roofed homesteads, contiguous to which are patches of potatoes, corn, and winter food for cattle. A farmer’s man is never met with here whose cheek does not show that he lives far above want, and that, if he dines not on delicacies, he feeds on rude plenty.

“The smoke of the towns and manufactories is somewhat annoying certainly, and at times it detracts considerably from the ideality of the landscape; but, bad as it is, it might have been a great deal worse; for we may observe that the smoke only goes one way at one time; that the winds do not divide and scatter it over all the land; it sails far away in streams, towards the north, east, west, or south, and all the remainder of sky, and hill, and vale, are pure and cloudless.

“From the top of one of the moor-edges, Old Rinkle, for instance, on a clear day, with the wind from the south-west, we may perceive that the spaces between the large towns of Bury, Bolton, Manchester, Stockport, Ashton, Oldham, Rochdale, Middleton, and Heywood, are dotted with villages and groups of dwellings, and white detached houses and manufactories, presenting an appearance somewhat like that of a vast city scattered amongst meads and pastures, and belts of woodland, over which, at times, volumes of black furnace-clouds go trailing their long wreaths on the wind.

“Such is the appearance of the country to the east and south of where we stand (Old Rinkle); whilst the aspect of that to the west and north is more strongly marked by nature, being ridged with high moorland-hills, dark and bleak, and furrowed by deep valleys and precipitous dells, which are swept by brooks and mill-streams, and enlivened by nooks of evergreen pasture, and groups of cottages and far-detached

dwellings. Here also is generally found the eternal money-making mill, the heart-work, the life-organ, the bread-finder, and the deformity of the place."

Four or five years after the completed publication of the "Walks," Bamford set to work on another instalment of his autobiography. This was the little volume of "Early Days," which has been summarised in the opening pages of the present memoir, and which was published, or issued, in 1849. The "Passages from the Life of a Radical" contained little more than his autobiography from 1816 to 1821; the "Early Days" filled the blank for the previous period; and the rather meagre "Reminiscences" given in an edition of his "Poems," which appeared in 1864, tell, though very briefly, and sometimes very vaguely, the chief incidents in his career between his thirty-third and his seventy-sixth year. When the volume of "Early Days" was issued, Bamford had reached his sixty-second year. He was hale and vigorous, but old age was advancing on him, and there seemed nothing before him but the everlasting trudge, trudge,—tramp, tramp,—day after day, year after year, with the wallet containing his own books, to be offered to those who would, and, alas! too often—who would not, buy them. An old Reforming friend or admirer, Mr. John Wood, was then Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, and, with or without solicitation, he offered Bamford a small berth in his department. It was a "certainty," and Bamford, accepting the offer, found himself a warehouseman once more, though this time it was in the "warehouse department" of his Sovereign's Board of Inland Revenue. From the warehouse department he was transferred to that of newspaper and pamphlet registration; and to this period of his career belong the following brief reminiscences of him:—

"I had known Bamford for several years previously in Manchester,"

writes a friend, "and had visited him occasionally at his snug cottage in the Boggart Old Clough, a picturesque dell some three miles from Manchester, and near the old village of Blackley. These were chiefly occasions when, in the Manchester circle to which I belonged, little parties were made up to pay him an afternoon visit, especially if there had come from London any stranger who cared to know Bamford and whom Bamford might care to know. His hospitality was simple and homely, but profuse, and his kindly little wife, the Mima of his autobiography, with her tea and cakes, looked and was a gem of a hostess. Bamford himself, erect and sturdy, with original opinions on most questions,—courteous, but holding his own whatever might be the fame and position of any of his guests, it was impossible not to respect and admire, and nobody came away from that humble cottage without the feeling that here abode a true and genuine man. I saw more of him, however, afterwards in London, where we had many a pleasant little chat and symposium. If I remember rightly, he lodged, when he first came to London, somewhere in the Hampstead Road. His lodgings were much better furnished than his homely cottage in the Boggart Old Clough had been, and his salary was an ample one for a couple of his and his wife's modest wants and habits. It was easy to see, however, that they felt like fish out of water, and missed their old Lancashire haunts, neighbours, and friends. Bamford was not a man much given to grumbling or complaining, but he owned to a dislike of his occupation and companions at Somerset House. His fellow *employés*, he gave me to understand, were young and underbred Cockneys, who laughed at his Lancashire accent and phraseology, and were it not for the salary, he was ready any day to take himself back to the old county. But the thought of his wife and his unprovided-for old age restrained him."

While in the newspaper and pamphlet registration department of Somerset House, Bamford came into collision with its head, and refusing—the sturdy and downright Lancashire man—"certainly," he admits, "in a not respectful manner"—to apologise for something he had said—he was transferred to the Voucher Office in the City. After one or two changes more, he found himself serving Her Majesty in making out a catalogue of more than 20,000 volumes of accounts, some of them of very ancient date, and all of which, he seems to have thought, might,

without much detriment to the nation, have been sold for waste paper. As he toiled at his uncongenial task, Bamford even took the liberty of wondering at what he boldly opined to be the "fatuity" which had for centuries accumulated and stored this mountain of useless rubbish. His friend and patron, Mr. Wood, died in the sixth year of his servitude, and when a seventh had been completed, he resolved, at all hazards, to break his chains, return to Lancashire, and spend his last days in his native county and the neighbourhood of his old haunts. In the April of 1858 he resigned his situation in the Inland Revenue Office, and persisted in resigning, though one of the Commissioners, Sir Alexander Duff Gordon, pressed him to reconsider his resolve, and kindly hinted that, if he would remain, the "Department" might find other and more congenial occupation for him than that of cataloguing old and worthless account-books. In the June of 1858, *ætat.* 70, he returned to Lancashire, and settled near Manchester, at Moston, Harpurhey. He had hopes of obtaining a provision for old age by memorialising the Government to compensate him for past and wrongful imprisonments, but the upshot of all his efforts in this direction was a donation of £50 from the Royal Bounty Fund. Meanwhile, he endeavoured to eke out an income by giving readings and recitations from his own and from others' writings, and in 1864 he published a new edition of his "Poems," adding to them the later autobiographical indications already referred to. His closing years might have been harassed by penury had not his friends exerted themselves on behalf of the aged Lancashire Worthy, and raised for him a fund, delicately administered, which made him comfortable for the rest of his life. His faithful Jemima, who was about his own age, died in the October of 1862. He survived her nearly

ten years ; and of Bamford at home during the last decade of his existence there has been preserved this interesting sketch :—

“ In his younger days Bamford must have been a very fine and powerful man, for there are yet remaining many traces of it in the tall, broad-shouldered, straight-limbed old veteran of eighty. But let us enter his cottage, where he is always delighted to see his friends, for the failing of his eyesight has deprived him of the pleasure of reading, consequently he has to depend now upon those who drop in to see him for information as to passing events, as well as for readings from his favourite authors. The first sight that attracts the visitor beyond the poet himself, is the vacant arm-chair placed opposite to where he sits, with the word ‘Mima’ carved in Old English capitals upon the back. No one attempts to occupy this seat uninvited, and very few obtain the honour, for it is held sacred to the memory of his dead wife.

“ Hanging on one side of his fireplace is a reduced cast of the face of Napoleon Bonaparte, taken after his death. On this Bamford appears to set great store ; there is little doubt that it really is a reduction from the original mask ; and the old man is very particular in pointing out—what certainly must strike everybody that carefully examines it—the idea of death that the small rough moulding conveys. . . .

“ There is also in the cottage a caseful of carefully selected books, poetry principally, of one of which the old man is very proud—a presentation copy of Tennyson’s poems sent him by the Laureate. This has also a little history connected with it. Bamford for a long time was puzzled to know why Tennyson should single him out for such a favour, but it appears that at a literary meeting Bamford recited the ‘Dream of Fair Women,’ and in a conversation afterwards expressed himself very strongly in praise of Tennyson generally, and of this poem in particular. The late Mrs. Gaskell was one of the company, and she kindly informed the Laureate of Bamford’s estimate of this poem, and the result was that this copy was sent down to the old man with the poet’s autograph.

“ But the chief attraction in the house is the poet himself, seated in his chair, which is similar to the vacant one, and has the word ‘Sam’ cut in the back of it. He has latterly allowed his hair to grow at its pleasure, and it now hangs in long silver bars about his shoulders ; his beard and moustaches, white as snow, have also attained a great length, covering a goodly part of his ample chest ; his straight lower limbs are enclosed in a pair of drab gaiters, and on his head, in the house, he wears constantly a peculiar square cloth cap, which, with his long

flowing locks and his beard, quite gives him the appearance of an old Druid.

“We have frequently watched him admiringly when speaking either about the history of Wales, which he considers the finest poetical mine in the three kingdoms, or of the ancient Romans and their roadmaking propensities—particularly the road they made from Manchester to York, which he traced with great enthusiasm :—‘Bi th’ owd church, along th’ Millgate, then bi th’ river Irk along bi Newtown, up Collyhurst Road, and along Rochdale Road to Valentine Brow, but not deawn. Keep up a little past wheer th’ Romish chapel’s built into Blackley; up th’ chapel soide, through Crab and Crab Head, past Lichford Ho, to Alkington,’ &c. Or of the division of the Saxon Heptarchy, on which old Sam holds very peculiar views. He says that Hollinwood and Newton Heath belonged to a different kingdom than Middleton and Rochdale, and supports his argument philologically. ‘Neaw if yo’ll notice a Middleton chap pronounce the word wheat, he coo’s it whee’at, but a Hollinwood mon would co th’ same word wet or whet.’ Very many other instances he gives in a very dogmatic sort of way, which it is just as well to receive without questioning, unless you desire to see the deep-set eyes illumined with a light calculated to dispel all opposition on favourite topics of his own.

“Many of our Bennett Street friends, living now in the immediate neighbourhood of the old man, have kindly read to him extracts from those later publications of Tennyson which he is, on account of his failing eyesight, unable to read for himself. The ‘Idylls of the King’ have been read to him in this way, to his great delight; for the Laureate, in treating of Arthur and his Round Table, is treading on that ground which Bamford looks upon as essentially poetical and almost holy. It was no less a treat to the reader; for the old poet went with him heart and soul into the achievements of Arthur’s knights, frequently interrupting, and desiring to hear over again some passage of great beauty, or noticing Tennyson’s introduction of some old Saxon word like ‘liefer,’ which is in common use at present amongst Lancashire country people, and altogether showing a considerable power of poetical criticism. On these occasions the hard, deep-lined face becomes expressive of deep internal feeling, and the eye, so mild and serene before, becomes fired with poetic fancies, which his tongue falters in expressing. . . .

“One little matter we must not omit to mention in reference to Old Sam, and that is, his great love for the company of little children, for whom, in the winter-time, when he is unable to go outside, he provides all kinds of sweatmeats and cakes, which he doles out daily to his little visitors; and in the summer we have many, many times seen him surrounded by his young friends at the tail of the fruit-waggon, buying,

and giving direct to the good 'childer,' but not forgetting 'th' bad uns,' their share being only temporarily withheld. On these occasions some such conversation as the following would be heard passing between the old man and the children :—

“ ‘Here, Dan, what was that row tha was makin' this mornin', when tha wur havin' thi face weshed?’

“ ‘Eawr Jane, Mester Bamford, put some soap i' mi een.’

“ ‘Ay, well, tha wur loike to skroik then, for sure; here's thi orange. And thee, Jem; I wur watchin' thee feight t'other morn, when it wur rainin'. I saw thee through the chamber window. Aw'm goin' to have no feighters here. What wur it o' about?’

“ ‘Well, he knocked eawr Mally down i' th' slutch, and gan me a beawster a' th' side o' th' yed. An' aw'll warm him agean, that aw will.’

“ ‘Here's thi orange. Tha perhaps did quite reet to leather him. When tha sees him next time, tell him that aw want him.’

“ ‘And so on, till all the company were served, both bad and good.’”¹

Bamford had been bedridden for eighteen months, but retained all his mental faculties before his death, at Moston, on the 13th of March 1872, just as he was entering his eighty-fifth year. Something like a public funeral was given him when, a week after his death, on a Saturday afternoon, his remains were laid beside those of his wife, in the burial-ground adjoining the parish church of his native Middleton. Round the grave were strewn—a sight that would have rejoiced the old man—primroses, lilies, and sprigs of holly. Thronging crowds from Manchester, Oldham, Bury, Rochdale, from all the surrounding country, assembled to do him honour in death. The ministering clergyman, the rector of the parish, so far infringed on precedent as to deliver from the pulpit, before the funeral service, an address on the merits of the venerable Radical; and seldom in Lancashire has there been anything of the kind more genuine than the tribute then paid by men of all classes and parties to the manly, sterling, and genial worth which disappeared with Samuel Bamford.

¹ *Manchester City News* of January 10, 1874.

APPENDIX.



NOTE ON THE CHEVALIER TOWNELEY AND HUDIBRAS.

(Page 256-58.)

IN the second volume of the new edition (1872-76) of Whitaker's Whalley (p. 547, *note*), there is printed for the first time the following letter from Charles Towneley (of the Marbles), giving some account of his uncle the Chevalier Towneley, and of the French version of Hudibras. This rather interesting letter is dated "30th September 1800," and it is stated, "was bound up with Dr. Whitaker's copy of the 3d edition" of his History of Whalley. It confirms, as will be seen, the theory broached in the text respecting the origin of the French version of Hudibras:—

"My late uncle," Charles Towneley writes, "was about the year 1715, entered of Gray's Inn, and filled the place of clerk under Mr. Salkeld, succeeding therein the late Lord Chancellor Hardwick. He soon quitted that employ, and entered into the French service, which at that time the subjects of England were allowed to do. In 1748, he was admitted into the military order of Knights of St. Louis. He fixed his abode in Paris about thirty years. He there frequented some of the Rendezvous of the Literati, who are accustomed in that city to assemble in a social manner in the evenings at the houses of antiquated ladies of fashion, who were opulent and polite, and who gained respect by

seeing such company. Literature was the prevailing topic of conversation, mingled with wit and the amusements of social intercourse. On the publication of Voltaire's 'Thoughts on the poem of Hudibras,' every real or pretended man of letters chattered on the subject of Hudibras, which was praised by some and vilified by others. My uncle, being almost an adorer of that famous work, was irritated, and for the vindication of his favourite and for the amusement of one of these societies, Madame Dublay's, I think, produced to them a translation of about sixty or one hundred verses from some chosen passage. They excited great surprise and pleasure in the company, and invitations to bring them more. He occasionally amused himself and his friends in that manner, without having the least thought of completing the translation. After a year or two, Mr. Needham, the naturalist, and friend of Buffon, entreated my uncle to fill up the chasms which he had omitted, and at length obtained the donation of the manuscript, with reluctant permission from my uncle to publish it, but without a name. My uncle wrote a short preface, or rather an apology for the attempt, signed The Translator, and Mr. Needham compiled explanatory notes for the assistance of the French readers. My uncle was born at Townley," the old spelling of the place and name, now converted into Towneley,—“ 1697, and died at Chiswick, 1782.”

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so far from a saint that Mr. Tom Taylor has recently brought him on the stage, there is not much difficulty in producing a book of varied interest. There are many kinds of bookmaking; and Mr. Espinasse's deserves to be classed as one wholly unobjectionable. Eschewing all attempts at originality in his comments, he has, so far as we have observed, been careful as to correctness in his facts. Thus, as he has evidently been a diligent reader of a considerable range of authorities, he has produced a very readable volume, in which it is satisfactory to meet with nothing that is offensive, little that is tedious, and much that is interesting. In these days of ready-made biography, it is refreshing to find a writer, whose sketches are obviously designed for popular reading, abstain from empty phrases and forcibly-feeble flights of rhetoric. . . . We shall, we hope, be pardoned for having called particular attention among Mr. Espinasse's sketches to one descriptive of so calm and unpretending a life as that of John Byrom. There are other figures recalled by this book on which it would be pleasant to dwell. Hugh Oldham, the founder of the Manchester Grammar School, and Humphrey Chetham, the founder of the Chetham Hospital, and, by a bequest of money, the originator of the fine library belonging to that institution, are not forgotten among those who have in their generation done as good service to their native city as the builder of the biggest warehouse which ever eclipsed all its predecessors, in order to be eclipsed in its turn. The authors of the manufacturing industry and commercial prosperity of the county of course claim their share in any list of Lancashire Worthies; and the history of the Bridgewater Canal, as well as a long narrative of 'Arkwright's Case,' may be once more read in Mr. Espinasse's pages. He has also found room for a curious sketch of the life of 'the first member for Manchester,' Charles Worsley, who was one of Oliver Cromwell's major-generals, and, if the very probable conjecture of the Dean of Westminster be correct, is the solitary regicide whose remains at this day continue to repose in Westminster Abbey. A hero of a different kind, likewise buried in Westminster Abbey, is Barton Booth, the actor who performed the part of Cato on the famous night of the production of Addison's tragedy. Mr. Espinasse's book is therefore sufficiently full of variety, and may be safely recommended to readers in and out of Lancashire, who like their history in small slices."—*Saturday Review*.

"A valuable contribution to literature, and certainly ought to take its place on the shelves of every Lancashire Library."—*The Inquirer*.

"Mr. Espinasse has not attempted to exhaust his subject. His volume comprises only thirteen lives, and whether it is to be regarded as a complete work or as a first series, is not stated. We hope that its

reception by the public may be such as to induce its author to continue his labours. Mr. Espinasse writes with a care and sobriety which form an agreeable contrast to the provincial vulgarity which sometimes marks the biographer of county worthies. There is no disposition to exalt persons because they were connected with Lancashire, but an evident desire to ascertain the exact facts of each case. He also shows a laudable anxiety to give credit to each writer from whom he quotes."—*Academy*.

"A painstaking, entertaining, and well-written production."—*Bookseller*.

"With a freer and finer literary touch, the author of the 'Life of Voltaire' has done for the Worthies of Lancashire what Dr. Lonsdale has done for the Worthies of Cumberland. Mr. Espinasse is evidently accustomed to literary and antiquarian research, and has a keen eye for local humours, as they are called, and special types of character. The county on which he has chosen to exercise these gifts is one in all respects worthy of consideration. There is scarcely a department of intellectual or moral enterprise in which Lancashire has not sent a man to the front. True, she has been stronger in the more masculine, if less refined, pursuits of science and industrial improvement than in literature and art; but even in these Mr. Espinasse adduces ample evidence that the facilities for producing first-rate work have not been wanting, but have been deflected into more absorbing channels. . . . Lancashire appears in his pages, if sometimes an 'arida nutrix,' at all times a 'nutrix leonum,' and the reader gazes on this portrait and on that with divided feelings—now recognising the slow rise of worth by poverty depressed—now seeing craft and boldness win the day—now finding that genius and patience have had their reward deferred till after their forthputter's death. In this respect Mr. Espinasse's work is a much healthier one than 'Smiles's Self-Help,' which seems written to apotheosise mere 'success,' taking no account of the noble failures of which all history is full. His 'Lancashire Worthies,' in fact, are an excellent study for youth, teaching how to bear the clouds and how to enjoy the sunshine of fortune. The sketches of the First and of the Seventh Earl of Derby are exceedingly interesting, apart from, but still more in connection with, the political career of their last two descendants; while the lives of the 'great' Duke of Bridgewater, of John Kay and James Hargreaves, and lastly of Richard Arkwright, are admirable specimens of industrial biography. Our medical readers will be interested in the sketch of John Byrom; and readers of every degree will find much to entertain and little less to instruct in each chapter of 'Lancashire Worthies.' Would that every English county had as effective a bio-

grapher as Mr. Espinasse; would that every English county deserved it like Lancashire."—*The Lancet*.

"An infinite amount of patient industry and indefatigable research has been well expended on the work, and we are grateful to the author for the useful and entertaining volume that he has produced. . . . We can recommend 'Lancashire Worthies' as a very valuable and interesting book."—*Court Circular*.

"A valuable contribution to Lancashire Biography."—Colonel Fishwick's *Lancashire Library* (London, 1875).

"In a volume, certainly not too large for its subject, Mr. Espinasse has given us sketches of the lives of some famous Lancashire men. As often as possible Mr. Espinasse lets these men tell their own story, or at least makes their friends and contemporaries perform the office of biographer. His part of the task has been mainly that of selection and condensation, and it has been done with his habitual care. His 'originality' is chiefly to be found in his painstaking industry. He has read much and judiciously for each life, and he has furnished us in most cases with materials for the twofold study of the man in the epoch and of the epoch in the man. This holds true more particularly of the longer lives: in some few the account has been limited by the want of trustworthy sources of information, and the author has been able to do little more than tell us that our curiosity cannot be satisfied. But, when he writes most copiously, Mr. Espinasse is never tedious, and in the sketches of his more considerable personages he seems to have hit the exact mean between brevity and diffusiveness. In this respect he would be a useful model for many biographers who, like the novelists, whatever the littleness of their subject, feel bound to produce a big book. . . . Enough has been said to show the interesting character of the book. Mr. Espinasse almost invariably makes the best use of the limited space at his command. He tries to show us something of every side of his subject, and we are enabled to see his characters in domestic as well as in public life. The sketches of Lancashire and especially of Manchester manners, and in each of the four centuries immediately preceding our own, are among the most entertaining parts of a volume in which there is not one dull page."—*Manchester Guardian*.

"The title of this book, though quite pertinent to the subject of its biographical sketches, is nevertheless to a certain extent misleading. It will probably suggest to many readers a collection of biographies compiled after a well-known and often employed model. But it would be a mistake to judge Mr. Espinasse's interesting book by the standards of these monuments of industry without investigation. In 'Lancashire

Worthies' we have a series of valuable and carefully-written memoirs, some of which approach to historical importance, and instead of being content with the opinions and inferences of previous writers, Mr. Espinasse has in all possible cases made a careful examination of original documents as well as of the published writings of previous authors, and the lists of books consulted indicate the judiciousness and extent of his surveys. . . . We have not attempted to give an adequate idea of the extent of interest suggested by this volume, but possibly we have said enough to induce those of our readers who are interested in the great deeds of men who have helped to make the county famous to read for themselves. Many of them will probably agree with us that there is no reason why Mr. Espinasse should not give us a volume of 'Modern Worthies.'"—*Manchester Examiner and Times*.

"Lancashire men are justly proud of their native county. Leaving London out of the question, and perhaps also excepting Devonshire, no other county has produced so many remarkable men or so many men who have exercised an influence upon the history of the nation. At the present time the influence of the county is, it must be admitted, mainly derived from its commercial and manufacturing importance. In the past, however, men from Lancashire were in every walk of life engaged in what Mr. Carlyle calls 'making history.' It was a happy thought therefore of Mr. Espinasse to pick out a baker's dozen of these worthies and to tell the stories of their lives. Possibly there is not much in these biographies which may not be found in a printed form elsewhere, but the greater part of the matter of which they are composed is inaccessible to the general reader. To him it will be a boon of no small magnitude and value to have so much scattered information brought into a convenient form, and told with all that grace of style of which Mr. Espinasse is so consummate a master. . . . His book may be safely and cordially recommended, and will, we have no doubt, be gratefully received in many thousands of patriotic Lancashire houses during the present season."—*Manchester Courier*.

"The history of Lancashire industry, in a popular as distinguished from a technical form, has yet to be written, but a beginning has been successfully made in the volume of biography just issued. Mr. Francis Espinasse in two of the chapters of his 'Lancashire Worthies' has told, in an attractive and readable way, the story of the rise of the cotton-manufacture in England during the eighteenth century. The vicissitudes and trials in the lives of the early pioneers give to the narrative some of the main elements of romance, and the small beginnings from which the trade had its origin, and the primitive surroundings in the midst of which it grew and gathered strength, present a startling con-

trast to the gigantic expansion of the present day. Mr. Espinasse, in his record of the careers of Kay, Hargreaves, and Arkwright, and in his endeavours to discover the rightful claims and merits of each, has threaded his way through conflicting evidence with wonderful industry and patience."—*Manchester City News*.

"Eminently readable and instructive."—*Liverpool Albion*.

"A gallery which includes such portraits as those of John Bradford, Jeremiah Horrocks, Humphrey Chetham, Booth the Player, John Byrom, John Collier ('Tim Bobbin'), the 'great' Duke of Bridgewater, James Hargreaves, and Richard Arkwright, must have a special charm for Lancashire readers. In the volume before us there is no pretence of doing anything beyond telling the simple history of the 'Worthies' comprised within its pages. Not one word of preface, and but few words of comment, have been added by the pen of the compiler. He has found profuse and interesting incident in the lives of his subjects, and has noted it down in such a pleasant vein that we could quote from it by the column without wearying the reader."—*Liverpool Mercury*.

"This is a pleasant, well-written, readable book, abounding with valuable information, and full of interest to the people of Lancashire. The 'Worthies,' or eminent men, whose memoirs are here briefly and tersely chronicled, embrace a wide range of character and pursuits, and have claims of various descriptions to be enrolled in such a distinguished category. . . . Mr. Espinasse has done his work carefully and well. Abundant research has been bestowed upon the collection of the materials, and his authorities are quoted and acknowledged to the fullest extent. The materials when obtained have been skilfully arranged; and the biographer writes with ease and elegance in most passages, but, where necessary, with freedom and force as well. His style is perspicuous, and his diction equally commendable, both being lucid rather than ornate. There is a vast quantity of material of the same description to work upon before the list of even Lancashire Worthies can be exhausted, and we hope that some day Mr. Espinasse will give us some further gleanings from the same fertile field."—*Liverpool Courier*.

"Mr. Francis Espinasse has written a volume of Lancashire biographies, which fairly deserves to be placed, as a piece of literary workmanship, on a level with the very best of its kind. In his hands the almost lost art of compilation is revived with wonderful skill, force, and effectiveness. Apart altogether from the subject of his narrative, it is simply a delight to watch how the narrative is put together; to note how the abundant materials are handled and set in orderly array; and

to observe how the author threads his way through dry and musty records, and, by sheer power of the literary art, breathes into them the breath of life. The result is a book that is at once singularly accurate in its details, picturesque and eminently readable as a narration, and effective in its final impression. The story of each life is not only pleasantly conveyed to the mind of the reader as he progresses through it, but it leaves an indelible impress upon his memory. You know at the end everything that can be known, and which is at the same time material to an adequate apprehension of the career and character of the subject under review, and all this in the briefest possible space consistent with the nature of the materials. The tireless industry which has gone to the making of such a result will be obvious to any one who considers for a moment the wide range of 'authorities' consulted and collated during the process. The French author, M. Bastiat, wrote a brochure on political economy, which he entitled, 'What is Seen and what is not Seen.' We should be inclined to say of Mr. Espinasse's volume, that what is not seen of the labour and skill which he contributed to its production is far in excess of what is seen; and in this, it seems to us, consists the first and most essential merit of the art of compilation. The author, with infinite trouble, extracts the dross, and casts it away; the reader receives the ore only, but in a setting which enhances its value, and gives it permanent worth. . . . We have now said sufficient to indicate the merits of this contribution to biographical literature. The interest of its materials, as we have already observed, transcends the limits of the county to whose worthies it is devoted, and the grace and picturesqueness of its style, its historical and anecdotal lore, and the thorough soundness and honesty of the workmanship, ought to secure for the volume a wide circle of readers."—*Yorkshire Post*.

"All Lancashire men who interest themselves in local literature and antiquities will find the 'Worthies' an exquisite *bonne-bouche*."—*Glasgow News*.

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