

# PERSONALIA

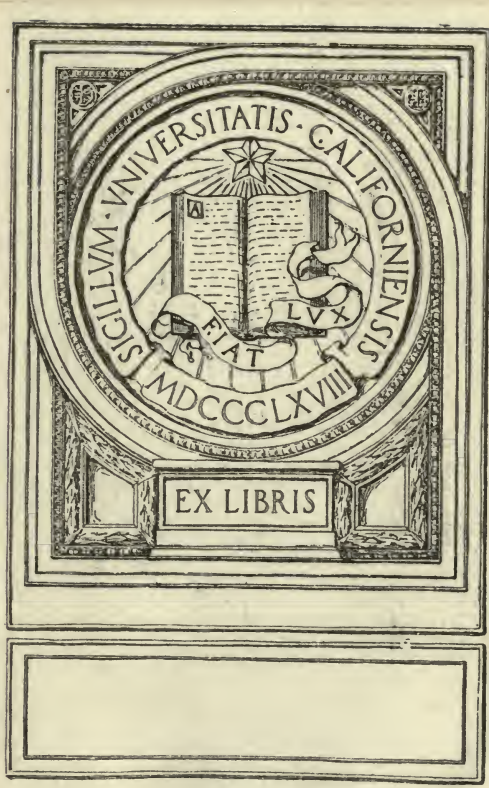


# SIGMA

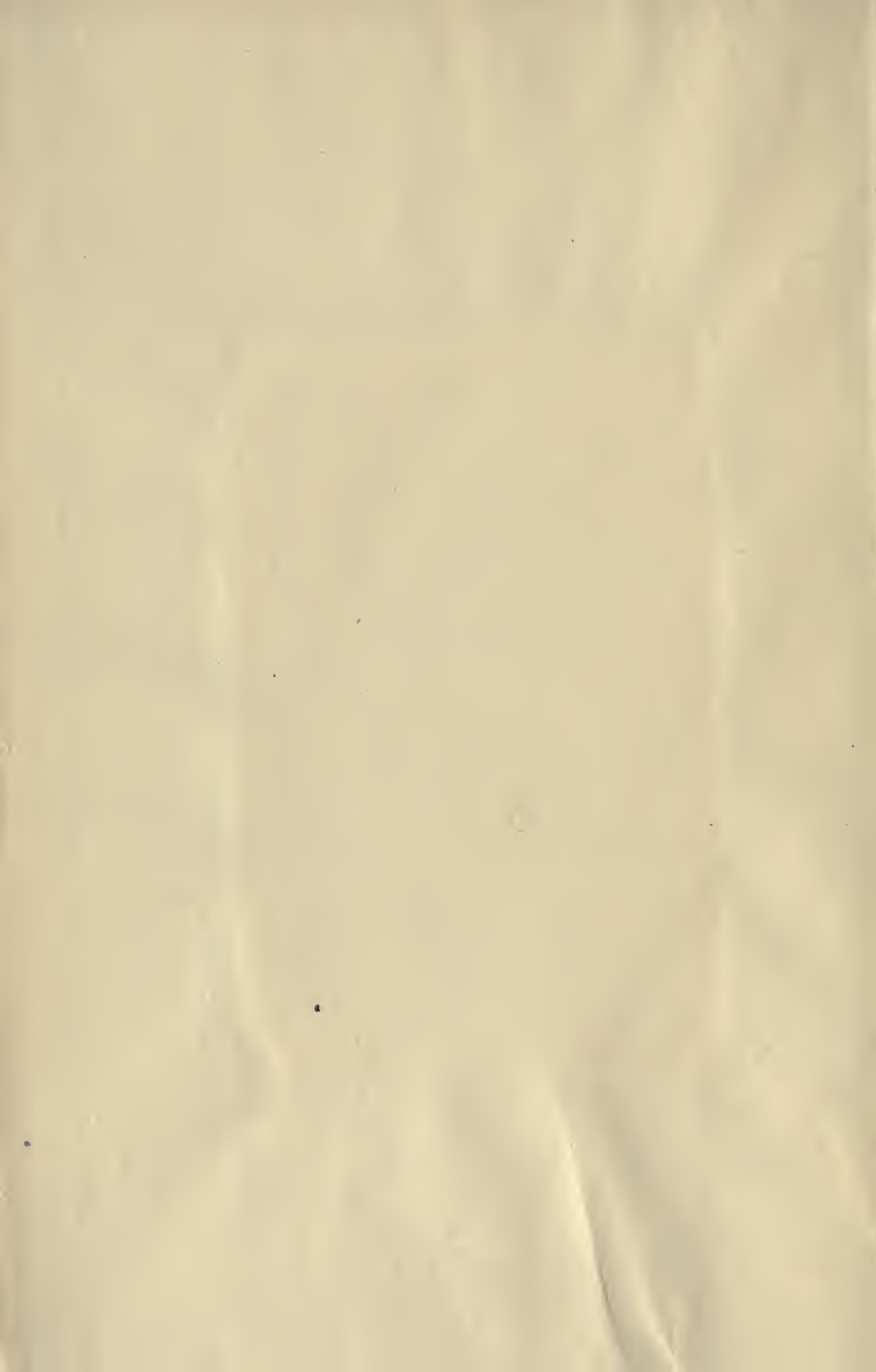
# The Hawthorns



I. M. ALLEN



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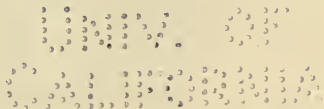


# PERSONALIA

## INTIMATE RECOLLECTIONS OF FAMOUS MEN

POLITICAL, LITERARY, ARTISTIC,  
SOCIAL, VARIOUS

BY  
"SIGMA"



NEW YORK  
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TO THE  
AUTHOR

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## PREFACE

THE author of "Peter Bell" in one of his most superior moods austerely dissociated himself from all those who "season their firesides with personal talk," and if in this "gossipy" age there are any who share the poet's antipathy they are earnestly counselled to avoid this little volume.

Nor is it intended for those eclectic individuals who perceive in every anecdote a "chestnut" and in every jest a "Joe Miller," but solely for such as may be fated to dwell beyond the radius of omniscience.

“ Majestic Homer on occasion nods  
Not always doth Olympus charm the Gods ;  
And from the sounding deep who will not turn  
— At times to hear the babble of the burn ? ”

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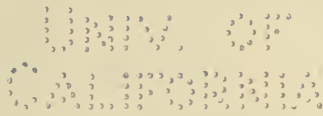
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I.

HARROW  
IN THE EARLY SIXTIES

*Lord Palmerston—Lord Russell—Lord Amberley—Bishop  
Colenso—Lord Brougham—Doctor Montagu Butler—  
Doctor Christopher Wordsworth—Sir Robert Peel—Bishop  
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Mr. Labouchere—Lord Clarendon and His Brothers—  
Lord Caledon—Lord Tweedmouth—Archbishop Davidson  
—Mr. Justice Ridley—Sir Francis Jeune—Sir Charles  
Hall—The Lord Advocate—I. D. Walker—C. F. Buller.*





## PERSONALIA

### I.

#### HARROW IN THE EARLY SIXTIES

**W**ITH the exception of its singular collapse under the headmastership of Doctor Christopher Wordsworth, of which more anon, Harrow has continuously prospered for upward of a century. But perhaps it attained its zenith during the second and more famous administration of Lord Palmerston, a statesman who, with a normal majority of little more than twenty, succeeded in investing the country with a prestige which it had not enjoyed since the days of Canning. The Prime Minister's position was unique, for save in name there was no opposition; the word "party" seemed to have been obliterated by that of "Palmerston," and any

#### 4. Harrow in the Early Sixties

attempt to displace the idol of the nation would have resulted in ignominious disaster.

Yet, strange to say, Lord Palmerston is nowadays but scantily appreciated. "He was in no sense a great man," I was severely assured not long ago, by an ultra-Liberal spinster, in response to a fervent eulogy of which I had perhaps rather imprudently delivered myself. "Well," I was stung into retorting, "if not great himself, he at least contrived to render the country great, which is much the same thing." My "advanced" neighbour (it was at dinner) took a sip of iced water and with a pitying shrug changed the subject.

Possibly she resented the irreverent manner in which Lord Palmerston was wont to treat the Cabinet rhetoric of her beau ideal, Mr. Gladstone, whom an unkind fate had forced upon him as Chancellor of the Exchequer. "Now, my lords and gentlemen, let us go to business," was certainly not a flattering reception of the excited harangues

with which, in the rôle of "reformer-general," the right honorable gentleman used to deluge his colleagues after every Parliamentary recess. But to a premier whose foreign policy had placed England on a pinnacle, the "parochial mind" was naturally somewhat exasperating, and the "rises" which he took out of his didactic subordinate rankled even more deeply than the shafts of Lord Beaconsfield in later years. But of Lord Palmerston's persiflage I shall have more to say under another heading; for the present I will merely dwell on the effects of his renown upon his old school. The fact that the great and popular Premier was a Harrow man naturally influenced the British paterfamilias not a little, and many a boy who would otherwise have been sent to royal Eton was consigned to the humbler, if little less famous, foundation of John Lyon, yeoman. Certainly the school itself was not insensible to the "Palmerston" halo, and it was a sight to kindle even the sluggish blood

of the fourth form when the jaunty old horseman on the knowing white hack trotted into the town straight from the House of Commons, where, with scarcely an interval, he had occupied a seat for nearly sixty years.

It was difficult to realize that one in every respect so essentially modern had actually stood for the University of Cambridge on the death of Pitt, was already out of his teens at the battle of Trafalgar, and (to us Harrovians, perhaps, more marvelous than all) had left Harrow before Byron came. Yet so lightly did his years sit upon him that an hour or so later he would be seen briskly trotting back to London, bound once more for the treasury bench, which he would only forsake in the small hours for one of his historic gatherings at Cambridge House. Brave, buoyant old Pam! Right well is he portrayed by that noble line in "Maud":

"One of the simple great ones gone  
— Who could rule and dared not lie."

We have had many statesmen since, some of them good and true, but he was the last of the old stalwart breed that made the name of England the proudest in the universe.

The mantle of Lord Palmerston's popularity did not fall on his successor, for only a year or two later it was my lot to hear "Johnny Russell" hissed as he descended the school steps on speech-day. The cause was not far to seek. Coerced by Mr. Gladstone, he had already taken the first step in that downward career which Lord Palmerston had always predicted would follow his own disappearance from the helm. "After me," he used to say, "Gladstone will have it all his own way, and then, mark my words, there will be the very devil." Regrettable as this demonstration against Lord Russell was, it only reflected the prevalent feeling that a strong and intrepid ruler had been replaced by palterers and experimentalists. In his earlier days Lord Russell may have rendered useful service to his party, but it is question-

able whether without his lineage and connection he would have ever soared above an under-secretaryship. Petty-minded and unsympathetic as a leader, and not too loyal as a colleague, he passed out of the political world with a damaged reputation which time has not tended to repair. What Queen Victoria, the most indulgent of judges, thought of him, her letter to Lord Aberdeen, recently made public, only too plainly shows. It consigns him to a pillory from which not all the efforts of Whig piety can succeed in extricating him.

Lord Russell, though himself an old "Westminster," had three sons at Harrow, the eldest of whom, the eccentric Lord Amberley, sat at one time for Leeds, where he discoursed to his constituents on political and social questions with a startling frankness which savored more of Tom Paine than of the "alumnus" of a great Whig family. One of his addresses of a peculiarly audacious character received the unenviable distinction

of being censured by his former school's debating society, which carried unanimously the following sententious resolution: "That the speech of Lord Amberley at Leeds is a disgrace to the school at which he was educated." But it had, I fear, very little effect on the patrician Socialist, who, but for a premature death, would have probably gone down to posterity as a second Citizen Stanhope. Among his many antipathies was a rooted repugnance to the ceremonial of "grace before meat," and if compelled by a cruel fate to offer the hospitality of lunch to a clerical neighbor, he has been known to pay an advance visit to the dining-room and to cut into a leg of mutton in order to convey the impression that lunch had already begun.

Lord Russell was not the only celebrity in those days who received the honor of sibilation at "speaker," for I remember its being accorded to that rashly investigating divine, Bishop Colenso, the boys in this instance again giving rough-and-ready expres-

sion to the prevalent animus against the over-critical prelate. Poor Colenso, who had once been a Harrow master, evidently felt the indignity keenly, but he bore it with the quiet courage which he displayed throughout the long crusade against him, and made many of us, I think, feel somewhat ashamed of our savagery. The couplets which were concocted about Colenso's biblical exploits were legion, though I remember none of any particular piquancy. The following was perhaps the most pointed, though the sneer in the second line at his mathematical acquirements was quite misplaced, as he had been second wrangler:

“There once was a Bishop Colenso  
Who counted from one up to ten, so  
He found the Levitical  
Books to eyes critical  
Unmathematical,  
And he's gone out to tell the black men so!”

The allusion to speech-day recalls a curious incident in connection with a very different man, Lord Brougham. As every



one knows, he retained his extraordinary mental and bodily vigour almost to the last, and when in his eighty-sixth year or thereabouts, eagerly availed himself of an invitation from the headmaster to be one of the distinguished visitors on speech-day. As a compliment to the veteran orator, one of the monitors was told off to recite a "purple patch" from some perfervid speech on which it was known that he particularly prided himself. This attention greatly flattered Lord Brougham's vanity, which had not diminished with the march of time, and at the conclusion of the recital, depositing a very seedy-looking hat on his chair, he sprang to his feet and vehemently applauded the interpreter of his bygone eloquence. But unfortunately on resuming his seat he forgot that it was occupied by his hat, upon which he sank, with very disastrous consequences. Of this, however, the expectant crowd of boys in the school-yard knew nothing, and when at the end of the speeches the head

of the school called from the top of the steps for "three cheers for Lord Brougham," we were convulsed to see them acknowledged by an individual in rusty black with an "old clo'," broken-crowned hat almost resting on a nose the shape of which has since been emulated by Ally Sloper!

But Lord Brougham's adventures did not end there. Evidently highly gratified with his reception, he passed on to the headmaster's house, where, with the *élite* of the visitors, he was bidden to lunch. There, however, his self-esteem encountered a rude shock, for the policeman, stationed at the door to keep off "loafers" and other undesirable company, sternly asked the dilapidated-looking old person his business. "I am invited here to lunch," growled out the indignant guest. "Gammon!" curtly responded the guardian of the peace. "I am Lord Brougham!" was the furious rejoinder; "let me pass!" "Bah!" contemptuously retorted the bobby; "you wants me to

believe that, do yer? Move on!" At this critical juncture the old lord, inarticulate with rage, was fortunately espied by another eminent guest, who, taking in the situation at a glance, succeeded in allaying the suspicions of the policeman. It would have been interesting, by the way, if on that particular speech-day Lord Palmerston had also been present. How he would have enjoyed the joke, though there had been a time when he and his Whig colleagues had found Brougham no joking matter. The actual reason of the ex-Chancellor's ostracism by the Whigs in 1834 will, I suppose, like the authorship of "Junius's Letters" and the cause of Lord Byron's separation, remain a secret for all time. A political Suwaroff must doubtless be an unpleasant colleague; still, his abilities were sorely needed by the Whig Government, and all his intractability and escapades would probably have been condoned had not his colleagues been possessed of strong evidence that he designed by some traitorous

*coup d'état* to trip them up by the heels and force himself into the foremost place. Lord Melbourne's laugh never quite recovered its gaiety after the famous interview in which he broke to Lord Brougham the astounding news that he was not to return to the woolsack. The tableau has only one parallel—when Lord Wellesley was informed by "that cunning fellow, my brother Arthur," that he had proposed himself and not the more intellectual Marquis as head of the Government in succession to Lord Goderich. They never spoke again. That the great Viceroy who had been as a father to the young Captain of Foot should be supplanted by him for the blue ribbon of politics was an offense which the elder brother's outraged vanity could never forgive.

Many of Lord Brougham's amazing exploits can only be accounted for by temporary mental derangement, and I have been assured on first-rate authority that at one time during his official career he was actually under

restraint for the whole of the long vacation. His vanity was certainly of the type that borders on dementia, and any one who reads the egregious egotism and self-eulogy that characterize his correspondence with Macvey Napier must find it difficult to associate them with proper mental equilibrium.

Of the Harrow masters at this period, three eventually became notable figures: the headmaster, Mr. Westcott, and Mr. Farrar. Probably, as master of Trinity, Doctor Butler occupies a far more congenial position than if he adorned the episcopal bench; at the same time, it is somewhat surprising that he should never have been given the opportunity of refusing a miter. His predecessor, Doctor Vaughan, was three times offered a bishopric, and in all fairness it must be acknowledged that Doctor Butler's services to the school, if from various circumstances less conspicuous, were fully as valuable. Doctor Vaughan had one signal advantage: he succeeded a headmaster under whose

*régime* Harrow was actually reduced to less than seventy boys, while Doctor Butler had to follow an administrator who converted a period of unprecedented disaster into one of glowing prosperity. How Doctor Wordsworth came to fail so signally it is very difficult to determine, but doubtless there were various contributing causes. One, a very curious one, was suggested to me many years ago by an old Harrovian at whose house I was taken to dine by some friends with whom I was staying in the country. I chanced to mention Harrow, and finding that he had been there under Wordsworth, I asked if he could assign any specific reason for the *débâcle* of that period. He explained that, although Wordsworth was certainly not fitted for the post, that circumstance did not wholly account for the mischief; the principal cause, he maintained, must be looked for elsewhere. Among the boys then at Harrow was the late Sir Robert Peel, the brilliant but strangely

unballasted son of the great statesman. At school, as in his maturer days, Peel was not too conspicuous for obedience to discipline, and being "sent up" for some iterated defiance of rules, he was informed by the headmaster that but for his father being so illustrious a Harrovian he would have been sent away on the spot; as it was, he would have to leave at the end of the quarter, a punishment which the boys euphemistically described as being "advised." Under all the circumstances, this was an act of clemency which certainly deserved parental appreciation, but, according to my informant, Sir Robert, with characteristic sensitiveness, resented bitterly what he persisted in regarding as a personal affront to himself, and so far from recognizing Wordsworth's lenity, he vehemently denounced him to every ministerial colleague or private acquaintance who either had sons at Harrow or was intending to send them there. Such an attitude on the part of an all-powerful Prime Minister

(as Peel then was) could only have one result. Some boys were removed prematurely, others who were about to enter were sent elsewhere, and the run on the credit of the school, already somewhat impaired by Wordsworth's lack of qualifications, set in so steadily that when Vaughan arrived on the scene there was only a shabby residuum of sixty-nine boys, which the new headmaster seriously thought of sweeping out in order to start entirely afresh. I cannot, of course, vouch for the accuracy of this statement, but it was made to me in all seriousness by a man of undoubted position and veracity, and in view of Sir Robert Peel's extreme sensibility to anything that affected the reputation of himself and his family it seems by no means improbable. It should be clearly understood that there was nothing disgraceful in the culprit's offense, but though not heinous in the eyes of the world, it was necessarily so in those of the headmaster, who had no option but to visit it with a drastic penalty.



Doctor Wordsworth's inaptitude as a school disciplinarian was hereditary, for I recollect his son, the present Bishop of Salisbury, taking my form at Harrow as *locum tenens* for the regular master and presenting a deplorable picture of helpless uncontrol. Under his very nose every sort of impromptu recreation might be seen in full progress, including even games of *écarté*, while in a remoter part of the room a fight proceeded furtively between two sitting combatants. All the time the temporary instructor's gaze was rivetted on his Virgil, the construer's voice being scarcely audible above the growing babel. I narrated this experience to one of the Bishop's clergy not long ago. "Who would have thought it?" he murmured wistfully. "Things are very different now. He rules the diocese with a rod of iron."

A schoolboy, at all events before he attains monitorial rank, mostly considers it *de rigueur* to disparage his headmaster, and Doctor Butler in his early days earned a

certain amount of unpopularity by an irritating edict against the use of side trousers pockets which procured for us a good deal of Etonian "chaff" at the annual match. But his dignity, courtesy and sense of justice were, on the whole, properly appreciated, while any boy under the shadow of bereavement might always be sure of his ready and warm-hearted sympathy. Himself a most distinguished Harrovian as both scholar and athlete, he had keenly at heart the fame and honor of the school, which has abundant reason to regard his headmastership as one of its halcyon epochs. Had Lord Palmerston been in office when Doctor Butler retired, his services would assuredly have received some more adequate recognition than a second-rate deanery; but such Harrovians as were then in the Government had presumably not sufficient influence with the dispenser of preferments, though curiously enough two of Doctor Butler's pupils—the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Worcester—have, with in some re-

spects fewer qualifications (as they will themselves be the first to admit), been accorded the rank that was withheld from him. As Nelson used to remark under similar circumstances, "Such things are"; but in the Church, perhaps more than in any other profession, we are continually reminded that "the race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong."

"Billy" Westcott, as he was irreverently nicknamed, was more fortunate, and his profound ecclesiastical learning no doubt amply justified his promotion to episcopal rank; but if forty years ago any one had ventured to predict to a Harrow boy that "Billy" would be Bishop of Durham and Doctor Butler put off with the deanery of Gloucester, the forecast would have been received with compassionate derision.

At Mr. Westcott's was a boy who was also destined to play a conspicuous yet very different part in the religious world, though at that time his future sphere was probably

not suspected even by himself. This was the late Marquis of Bute, who was probably the most solitary creature in the whole school, not from any exclusiveness arising from his rank, but owing to an excessive shyness which he retained more or less in after life. His one frailty was a weakness for jam, and his absorbing passion, books. At that time he wrote rather promising English verse, by dint of which he gained the school prize for a poem on Edward the Black Prince, but he apparently abandoned verse-writing in his maturer days. None, at least, was ever given to the public. In spite of his high rank and splendid prospects, he seemed as friendless in the outer world as at school, for no one, I believe, ever came to visit him except once an old nurse whom he brought into the fourth-form room at "Bill" and showed the various classic names cut on the panels. Yet not half a dozen years afterward this lonely, almost neglected youth was selected by an ex-Prime

Minister as the model for the principal figure in one of the most renowned novels of the century. The excellent qualities that marked his subsequent career were to some extent due to the influence of one of the under masters, good old John Smith, a man of sterling character, if of few attainments, to whom many a boy has incurred a lifelong debt of gratitude. Honest, God-fearing, single-minded, he was in the school a power for good the value of which was at the time never properly estimated; and to him might well be applied the beautiful words of Thackeray that "when he went to heaven the angels must have turned out and presented arms."

The late Dean of Canterbury was another Harrow master who was regarded as certain of a bishopric, though he, too, was compelled to content himself with a minor distinction. At the time of which I am writing he was doomed, intellectually speaking, to penal servitude with the third "shell," a form within measurable distance of the

lowest in the school. This ordeal not unnaturally accentuated the picturesque melancholy that was always his characteristic, but to even the most gifted it is not permissible to ascend the scholastic ladder at a single bound, and with the prestige of "Eric" and the Cambridge prize poem comparatively fresh upon him he might very well have confronted his fate with more philosophic fortitude. Mr. Farrar presided over one of the snugest of the small houses, where he maintained excellent if somewhat sentimental relations with his pupils, whose pleasant lot was enviously regarded by the inmates of certain more Spartan establishments. His melodiously delivered sermons, always founded on some more or less poetical text, were distinctly popular, romantic imagery and literary quotations being more acceptable even to the dullest schoolboy than dry homilies on doctrine or aggressive platitudes on morals! In due course Mr. Farrar migrated to a "large

house," which, however, was only regarded as a stepping-stone to a more important sphere, for the headmastership of Haileybury becoming vacant very shortly after his promotion, he offered himself as a candidate for the post. The contest practically lay between himself and another Harrow master, Mr. Bradby, who, although entering the lists almost at the eleventh hour, succeeded in beating Mr. Farrar by a single vote. The disappointment was, under the circumstances, particularly acute, and hardly compensated for even by his subsequent election to the mastership of Marlborough. But in the meantime he had by no means confined himself to scholastic pursuits. His books on "Language" had already secured for him the fellowship of the Royal Society, as well as a "Friday evening" lectureship at the Royal Institution, an appointment always eagerly coveted by scientific and literary aspirants. He had also formed many important literary friendships, of which perhaps the most notable was that

of Matthew Arnold, then a resident at Harrow. The contrast between the virile arch-foe of Philistinism and his somewhat emotional neighbor was curious and at times comical. Well do I recall on a certain occasion the great critic's expression of half-contemptuous amusement at one of Mr. Farrar's jeremiads over the miseries of his chosen lot, which concluded with the following pathetic climax: "As I was returning from chapel just now I asked a small new boy, with whom I was walking, what he intended to be, and the boy, by way, I suppose, of ingratiating himself, replied, 'A Harrow master.' 'My boy,' I rejoined, 'you had far better break stones on that road.'" Inasmuch as the reverend martyr must at that time have been making out of this inferior alternative to road-making some thousands a year, the dictum did not sound convincing, and I am afraid there was just a tinge of good-humored mockery in the laugh with which Matthew Arnold greeted it.



But a disposition to fall out with the ordinances of Fate, even when not altogether adverse, was always a characteristic of the good Dean. A friend of mine, one of his old pupils, met him on the Folkestone pier a day or two after his acceptance of a Westminster canonry and genially tendered his congratulations. "Don't congratulate me, don't congratulate me," murmured the new Canon with sonorous dejection and a wistful glance at the waves of the Channel. "H'm!" piped the famous master of Balliol on being told of the incident; "I must say I like a man to take his promotion cheerfully." But this is an attribute which was unfortunately denied to Doctor Farrar. His quarrel with his publishers is a matter of Paternoster Row notoriety. He agreed to become our lord's biographer for a stipulated sum, which, considering he was comparatively untried as an ecclesiastical historian, was by no means illiberal. The work, written rather in "special correspondent" style, proved

a signal success, in recognition of which the publishers bestowed an honorarium represented, I believe, by something like four figures. But the author characteristically evinced supreme dissatisfaction, and likewise characteristically ventilated his wrongs in the columns of *The Times* with a hurricane of uncomplimentary epithets at the expense of the unhappy publishers. Not content with this form of protest, he imported his indignation into the social circle by setting before his friends at a dinner party a pudding ostentatiously deficient in any kind of condiment, which was defined in the menu as "Publishers' Pudding"—a painfully elaborated jest which, needless to say, such of his guests as were given to good living regarded with tempered appreciation.

Again, his non-attainment of the deanery of Westminster after Stanley's death was a source of much ill-concealed disappointment, while his preferment to Canterbury was accepted with a profusion of sighs and plain-

tive dissatisfaction. Still, in spite of his foibles (it would be hardly fair to call them defects), Doctor Farrar deserves to be memorable not only as a high-minded and sympathetic schoolmaster, but also as an ecclesiastical orator whose eloquence, if a trifle too ornate, has not been equalled since the days of Archbishop Magee. . Had he been born a quarter of a century earlier and identified himself more decidedly with church politics, he would have been a dangerous rival to Wilberforce, who in general acquirements was certainly his inferior.

This section must not close without a word or two about the Harrovians of the early sixties who have since come prominently before the world. Perhaps the most notable among them is Lord George Hamilton, known at Harrow as "Squash" Hamilton to distinguish him from his cousin W. A. Baillie Hamilton, who was a member of the same house and went by the nickname of "Wab," a euphonious sobriquet for which he was

indebted to his initials. Lord George, though like all his family well endowed with abilities, did not at Harrow give much promise of becoming a secretary of State before he was forty. But public-school "form" is very seldom to be trusted as an index of future success. When we attempt to trace the career of the mere prize-winning prodigy, he is only too often to be found in the ranks of the utterly undistinguished; a briefless barrister, a country clergyman or a humdrum government official; while, given certain indispensable conditions, the unpromising idler who rarely soars above the last five places in his form, and leaves school with less knowledge of classics and of his country's history than might be claimed by many an aspiring artisan, is often revealed in after-life invested with cabinet rank and charged with the destinies of half an empire. But in order to achieve success of this kind at least three contributing factors are indispensable: family influence, good natural

abilities, and the incentive of ambition. Of the three, the first is probably the most important, and it is no disparagement to the late Secretary for India to affirm that without family influence it is highly improbable that he would have become a prominent minister of the Crown. He began life as an ensign in a crack regiment of foot, but when in 1868 a Conservative candidate was required for the important constituency of Middlesex, Mr. Disraeli, with whom the Abercorn family had always been prime favorites—he gave its chief a dukedom and subsequently immortalized a daughter of the house in the pages of “Lothair”—perceiving in Lord George the type of young politician which always strongly appealed to his imagination, recommended that he should be entered for Parliamentary honors. Possibly but for a quarrel between the two Liberal candidates, Lord Enfield and Mr. Labouchère (the “Labby” of to-day), the extremely youthful Conservative candidate—he was then not

more than twenty-three—would have come off second best. As it was, he contrived to win the seat for his party, much to the gratification of Mr. Disraeli, who duly noted him down for subordinate office, which, however, was not bestowed till 1874, the elections of 1868 having proved fatal to the Conservative Government. Since that time Lord George's political career has been continuously prosperous, and if some of his old schoolfellows have viewed his rapid aggrandizement with a certain amount of surprise, it may be truly said that not one of them has grudged him his success, while the governing body has testified its sense of the distinction he has conferred upon Harrow by electing him one of their number, in which capacity he worthily represents his father, himself a governor for nearly half a century.

With reference to the Middlesex contest of 1868, I believe it was the last Parliamentary election at which, in London, at all events, personal "squibs" were placarded on the

walls. One couplet I well remember. It related to Mr. Labouchère, who had shortly before been involved in some rather comical dispute abroad with a foreign baron, whose stature apparently was in marked contrast to the dimensions of his cane, for the doggerel ran thus:

“Run away, Labouchère, run away quick;  
Here comes the small man with the very big stick!”

Lord Enfield, the other Liberal candidate, was, I think, the sitting member. At all events, I remember him addressing the Harrow electors from the “King’s Head” portico in the general election of 1865, and being interrogated from the top of the “King’s Head” ’bus by the well-known “Squire” Winkley, one of the principal local tradesmen and politicians. The Squire, whose somewhat inordinate social aspirations did not contribute to his popularity, was hailed by the boys gathered outside the “King’s Head” with a good deal of derisive vociferation, which he rather imprudently resented, for in the

midst of his harangue the unhorsed omnibus began slowly to move from before the inn door, and amid the "inextinguishable laughter" of the crowd and the frantic gesticulations of the intrusive politician he was conveyed to a distance whence his eloquence was no longer audible. His pretensions were certainly rather ludicrous. To his residence (over his shop) he gave the sonorous name of "Flambards," and it was always understood (though, I dare say, without any real foundation) that his sobriquet of "Squire" arose from his having invested himself with that title during a holiday tour. Some travelling acquaintance (the story went) to whom he had thus magnified himself, happening one day to come to Harrow, bethought him of his fellow traveller, and seeing at the station an old hawker with a donkey-cart asked him if he could tell him where Squire Winkley of Flambards lived. "What!" exclaimed the old hawker, "my damned proud nevy? Why, over his shop, of course, in the High



Street!" Another legend about him, even less credible, was that he had asked Doctor Vaughan, in recognition of some function he fulfilled in connection with the school, if he might wear a cap and gown. "That's as you like," was the discouraging answer. Nothing daunted, the Squire then asked if the boys might touch their hats to him. "That's as they like," the Doctor again replied, with contemptuous suavity. But, however apocryphal the story, it had a certain vitality, for the Squire was almost invariably greeted by the boys with the salutation which he was reported to have so vainly courted, but in such a marked spirit of mockery as to drive the recipient almost frantic with affronted dignity. The Squire also served not infrequently as a target for pea-shooters from the windows of masters' houses adjoining Flambards. On one occasion, when in solemn conclave with some one he had buttonholed in the street, a deftly directed pea from an unseen

marksman suddenly and sharply hit him on the cheek. I happened to be close by, and shall never forget the outraged air with which he complained to a passing master of having been "shamefully assaulted in the public street while in confidential conversation with a mutual friend of myself and the Earl of Clarendon." The master, as in duty bound, professed indignation and sympathy, but the culprit, who was perhaps not too diligently sought for, was never discovered.

The Earl whose name had lent such impressiveness to the Squire's complaint had three sons at Harrow, all of whom subsequently made their mark. The eldest, the present Lord Clarendon (then Lord Hyde), is Lord Chamberlain, and, had his bent been more political, might fairly have aspired to high ministerial office. The second son, the late Colonel George Villiers, was an accomplished soldier and diplomat, and the youngest brother, Mr. Francis Villiers, occupies a

highly important post in the permanent department of the Foreign Office. All these were members of Edwin Vaughan's house, which harbored most of the "patricians," especially those from the Emerald Isle, where Mrs. Edwin Vaughan, an extremely charming woman, had many connections. Several of the "young Vaughanites" became in due course deservedly popular Irish landlords, notably the late Lord Caledon, a Household Cavalry officer of the best type, soldierly, straightforward and unassuming, who retained throughout life the genuineness and simplicity that characterized him as a Harrow boy.

Another embryo politician who gave little promise of attaining cabinet rank was Edward Majoribanks, now the second Lord Tweedmouth, who became one of the most adroit and diplomatic of party whips and occupied the post of Lord Privy Seal in the last Liberal administration. At Harrow he was chiefly conspicuous for a ready plausibility

which, if unappreciated by his pastors and masters, has rendered him excellent service in the work of party management; nor did he reveal much promise at Christ Church, where he belonged to a famous set more remarkable for social than scholastic achievements, and whence he withdrew, like his ex-chief, Lord Rosebery, without the adornment of a degree, owing to a difference with Dean Liddell concerning the amount of respect due to college statuary. But to a "gilded youth" of Great Britain such a *contretemps* is of very little consequence. Having sown his wild oats, harmlessly enough, Mr. Majoribanks betook himself to plowing the political furrow with a vigor and dexterity which a double first-class would probably have considerably impaired.

Among ecclesiastics, Harrow of that day can boast a noteworthy representative in the Archbishop of Canterbury; while to the law it gave Mr. Justice Ridley, Sir Francis Jeune, the late Recorder of London

and the present Lord Advocate. The Archbishop is, again, an instance of the "unexpected." At Harrow he displayed no special ability, and though compelled by an untimely accident to content himself at Oxford with a "pass" degree, his previous university record had scarcely augured any conspicuous achievement in the honor schools. Nevertheless, he revealed as an undergraduate certain valuable qualities which strongly impressed Archbishop Tait, whose only son was one of his most intimate college friends. The Archbishop, who wisely accounted ingratiatory tactfulness and sound judgment more important traits in a modern English ecclesiastic than mere scholarly attainments, however brilliant, quickly recognized that the young clergyman was not only calculated to render him excellent service as a lieutenant, but in process of time also to figure with credit and influence in the high places of the Church. Nor was Doctor Tait the only personage who formed a favorable opinion of young Mr.

Davidson. Queen Victoria, who had an early opportunity of becoming acquainted with him, was equally prepossessed, with the result that at the age of only thirty-five he was awarded the much-coveted deanery of Windsor, in which he earned the esteem and appreciation of the sovereign in a higher degree than had been the case with any previous occupant of the office, excepting, perhaps, Dean Wellesley. His subsequent advancement has been invariably attended with an increase of reputation, and by his promotion to the primacy he has succeeded in winning for his old school an honor which, however little anticipated in his days of pupilage, is universally admitted to be completely justified. Probably his fine tact and delicacy of feeling were never more felicitously exercised than on the occasion of his enthronement at Canterbury, when his graceful tribute to his old master, Dean Farrar, who was present at the ceremony, must have been particularly soothing to the veteran whom

he had so signally distanced. It is noteworthy that during the last fifty years Harrow has furnished two primates: one in the person of Doctor Longley, a former headmaster, the other Doctor Davidson, an "old boy"; but before the latter's elevation no Harrovian proper had, I believe, attained the highest honors of the Church.

Harrow has never been a great recruiting-ground for the judicial bench, nor in that respect has Eton, I believe, been much more fertile.

Mr. Justice Ridley, known at Harrow as "young Ridley," in contradistinction to his elder brother, the late Home Secretary, had, like the latter, a singularly brilliant career both at Harrow and at Oxford; but it is pretty certain that but for his near relationship to an influential cabinet minister he would never have been promoted to a seat in the high court, where, if he has his inferiors, he can scarcely claim to be ranked among the rapidly diminishing number of

“strong” judges. Had he cast in his lot exclusively with politics he might very probably have gained a considerable if not a first-rate position, and as a finished scholar and distinguished fellow of All Souls’ he would have added luster to a government which is strangely deficient in university prestige. But where an elder brother has attached himself to politics, the younger, even if equally gifted, usually adopts some other career. Edward Ridley, accordingly, decided upon the less congenial calling of the law, and after the short Parliamentary apprenticeship which every legal aspirant considers indispensable, was awarded an official refereeship, from which he was eventually advanced to a puisne judgeship.

It is a curious circumstance that both these brilliant brothers should in performance have fallen so far short of their early promise. The effacement, however, of the late Home Secretary must have been due to some other cause than that of inadequate capacity for the office



which he held. Possibly he was not sufficiently acceptable at court, and another cabinet post of equal importance could not be found for him; but it certainly was a surprise to behold him kicked upstairs with the tinsel solatium of a viscount's coronet, receiving little better treatment than the merest political limpet.

Sir Francis Jeune is the eldest son of the third of that trio of heads of houses who were known in Oxford as "the World, the Flesh and the Devil." In spite of his sobriquet, Doctor Jeune became successively Dean of Lincoln and Bishop of Peterborough, the latter of which preferments he owed to Mr. Disraeli, whose ecclesiastical sympathies were with the more moderate branch of the Low Church party, to which Doctor Jeune belonged. Francis Jeune was more proficient than prominent at Harrow, whence he proceeded to Balliol, achieving there considerable distinction, which, however, hardly pointed to the measure of success

he has since attained in the legal world. Equipped with a Hertford fellowship, he was called to the bar, where in his early days he very wisely did not disdain a police-court brief. Indeed, his tact and dexterity would have qualified him for any department of advocacy, though those strange bedfellows, ecclesiastical and divorce law, finally attracted most of his forensic attention. But he was equally at home in the highest tribunals, and I have heard Lord Selborne, who was not prodigal in his compliments to counsel, pay a marked tribute to his arguments in the Court of Appeal on an occasion when he was opposed by the law officers of the Crown and other legal magnates. As a judge, though he cannot claim to rank with such predecessors as Cresswell, Wilde and Hannen, he discharges his functions with dignity and credit, and being also judge advocate-general, enjoys the unique privilege of exercising a triple jurisdiction: in matters military, nautical and connubial.

Sir Charles Hall, known in his house as "Gentleman" Hall, owed his eventual position partly to his parentage—his father was a vice-chancellor—but mainly to his social qualifications, which procured for him powerful friends in high places. His knowledge of law was far from profound, but he had sufficient acumen and dexterity to enable him to conduct any case intrusted to him at least creditably, and to qualify him in the long run for a silk gown, which he wore with an air of dignity and distinction that was the admiration of every lay onlooker. His manners, too, were as unexceptionable in as out of court, and unquestionably won for him no small degree of favor. With these advantages and a county seat in Parliament he was eminently fitted to fill the post of attorney general to the heir apparent, which he did with particular satisfaction to his illustrious patron. The recordership of London involved, however, from a legal point of view, far more serious

responsibilities, and when Sir Charles was elected to the post in preference to other candidates of more weighty professional attainments it was feared that he might find some difficulty in adequately sustaining the rôle of a criminal judge. Such, however, was not the case, and if his court did not quite uphold the prestige it had acquired under Russell Gurney, a judge who certainly ought to have adorned a superior bench, it more than maintained the reputation handed down by his immediate predecessor. That he found the corporation duties attaching to his office congenial I should not like to say, but he fulfilled them with excellent taste and judgment, though he must have occasionally laughed in his sleeve at the contrast between the manners and customs of St. James's and those of the Guildhall. However that may have been, he preserved unruffled relations with both quarters of the town, as much at home with the representatives of Gog and Magog as the *élite* of Marlborough House.

“For either sphere preëminently fit,  
Whether with Prince consorting or with Cit,  
In royalty’s saloons a radiant star,  
Or charming tradesmen east of Temple Bar!”

The present Lord Advocate was an accomplished pupil of the late Bishop of Durham (Doctor Westcott), to whom he would occasionally cross over from the House of Commons and chat on old times. At Harrow he combined elegance of scholarship with considerable skill as a racquet-player, and if he left Cambridge without having quite maintained the promise of his school days, he carried away with him more than enough learning for all the practical purposes of his profession. His charm of manner and *savoir faire* have been serviceable allies to the sound abilities which he has always displayed in the course of a somewhat varied legal career, and Scotland may be congratulated on being represented by a law officer who in culture and personal distinction, if not in actual professional attainments, is a worthy namesake of the illustrious Mansfield.

Of the Harrow cricketers in the early sixties I. D. Walker and C. F. Buller were, I believe, the only ones who afterward became really famous, F. C. Cobden belonging to a rather later period. I. D. Walker, who *in statu pupillari* looked quite as old as many of the masters, provoked, I remember, considerable sarcasm from the Etonians at Lord's, several of them asserting that he was a veteran smuggled back for the purpose of the match, a charge to which Walker's rather wizened countenance and premature side whiskers afforded some color. "Lord's" was in those days much less of a "society" resort than at present. The price of admission to all parts of the ground did not exceed sixpence; there were no stands (excepting, of course, the old M. C. C. pavilion) and very few seats, the majority of the spectators (who were unrestricted by ropes) sitting on the grass, while carriages, riders and pedestrians mingled indiscriminately under rather precarious conditions. The "chaff," or, as the respective head-

masters more ceremoniously defined it, the "ironical cheering," was then in full swing, and, though amusing enough to the vociferators, was a terrible ordeal to the players and an unmitigated nuisance to the adult portion of the assemblage. To be obliged to deliver a ball to the strident accompaniment of "Bubba-bubba-bowled" (I spell the preliminary exclamation phonetically) was to any boy with even good nerves hideously disconcerting, and it was a profound relief when, a climax of discord having been reached, the headmasters succeeded by their adjurations before the next match in stopping, or at all events in mitigating, the nuisance.

C. F. Buller, though less useful, was a far more brilliant player than Walker. He was, in fact, almost universally brilliant, even his school work, when he condescended to do any, being no exception. He was the son of Sir Arthur Buller, an ex-Indian judge, and a nephew of Charles Buller, the promising Whig statesman, much of whose charm and

talent he had inherited. Both his father and his uncle were pupils of Thomas Carlyle, but Sir Arthur, at all events, conveyed no suggestion of the fact. Like his son, unusually handsome and distinguished looking, he had more the air of a Pall Mall cynic than of a pupil of Chelsea's rugged sage. He idolized his boy, whom he appeared to treat more as a younger brother than as a son, and very seldom missed coming down to see him play. I well recollect him sitting in the little pavilion on the old Harrow ground, between the steps of which some nettles had begun to intrude rather aggressively. "Here, you boys!" exclaimed Sir Arthur imperiously to some small boys seated on the steps, "I wonder you allow nettles to choke up the place like this; clear them away, can't you?" The small boys, who were engaged in vicarious refreshment, did not relish this haughty command from a visitor and took no notice. "Ah!" observed Sir Arthur with a withering sneer, "if I



had said that to Eton boys they would have done it."

The influence and prestige of C. F. Buller at Harrow can only be compared to those of Steerforth in "David Copperfield." Even the masters fell under his spell, and though not sufficiently high in the school to be entitled to "find"—*i.e.*, to have meals in his own room—he was specially favored in this respect by his tutor. At football (which he frequently played in patent leather boots) he excelled as greatly as at cricket, while I think he was the only schoolboy on record who has accomplished a wide jump of twenty-two feet. With the gloves, too, he was invincible, and many a braggart town "chaw" who thought to challenge his supremacy used to retire from the encounter chastened and unpresentable.

He passed into the Second Life Guards (by the way, he used to say at Harrow that the only exercise he could not accomplish was to ride), where his popularity and prestige were

such that his brother officers twice paid his debts rather than that he should be lost to the regiment. Eventually, however, financial exigencies compelled his retirement, and in other respects fortune ceased to smile on him, but to all Harrovians of the early sixties his name is still one to conjure with, pre-eminent among the many that will ever be recalled with affectionate admiration.

II.  
LAWYERS

*Chief Baron Pollock—Edwin James—Baron C. E. Pollock—  
Lord Bramwell—Mr. Justice Byles—Vice-Chancellor  
Bacon—Lord Chief-Justice Cockburn—Lord Coleridge—  
Lord Bowen—Lord Westbury—"Dick" Bethell—Sir  
George Jessel—Vice-Chancellor Malins—Sir Francis  
Jeune—Lord Lyndhurst—Lord Chelmsford—Lord Chan-  
cellor Cairns.*

## II.

### L A W Y E R S.

MY FIRST introduction to the majesty of the law was somewhere about the year of the Indian mutiny, when as an urchin I was taken by my mother to the Croydon assizes, where we occupied seats on the bench as the guests of Chief Baron Pollock, who was the presiding judge. Inasmuch as the Chief Baron was born as far back as 1783, had taken his degree as senior wrangler within a few days of Mr. Pitt's death, and was called to the bar in the following year, 1807, this visit to Croydon constitutes one of my most interesting links with the past. The old judge, with his deeply lined face and stately bearing, struck me as profoundly impressive, and in aspect as a far greater dignitary than any of his judicial successors whom I chanced to see

in later years. He, in truth, belonged to a school of legal magnates which on his retirement in 1866 became practically extinct, though to some extent it was represented by such judges as the late Lords Bramwell and Blackburne. As every one knows, the Chief Baron was the son of King George the Third's saddler, a highly-respected royal warrant-holder who had good reason to be proud of his progeny, for another son became an Indian chief justice, while a third was the distinguished field marshal. The latter I remember once seeing on a gala day at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, when Sir John Fox Burgoyne (the son of the general who surrendered in the American war) was also present, and a more weather-beaten pair of old warriors I have never beheld. But the Chief Baron was, I believe, always considered the ablest of the three brothers; at all events, he was the most versatile, for besides being an eminent lawyer he was no mean scientist, and a fre-

quent contributor to the Transactions of the Royal Society almost to the day of his death. On the occasion when I was his juvenile guest at the Croydon assizes, the first case he tried was, I fancy, a commercial one, in which I remember Mr., later Chief Justice, Bovill took a leading part, much to the gratification of his venerable mother, who was also an occupant of the bench. Then followed a "horse" case, which turned, I imagine, on a question of "warranty," for I recollect what Mr. Fox used to call the "damnable iteration" of that word by the various counsel engaged. One of them, with a peculiarly vulgar, revolting face, had caused some amusement in court by getting wedged with a learned brother in a narrow gangway leading to the front row of the bar. However, in spite of his corpulence he contrived to squeeze himself triumphantly through to the array of "silks," among whom he took his seat with an oily and peculiarly impudent smile.

Even the dignity derived from his forensic

attire was largely discounted by an extremely "loud" pair of black-and-white check trousers which prominently obtruded themselves as he rose to address the court. "Who is that unpleasant-looking barrister?" inquired my mother *sotto voce* of the Chief Baron as this ornament of the inner bar began to harangue the jury with the voice and demeanor of a Smithfield butcher. "That," replied the Judge in a subdued tone of supreme disdain, "is Edwin James." Great heavens! How he bellowed, and brandished, and buttered the jury, and "my lud-ded" the Judge, every now and again glancing leeringly round the court for admiration from the bystanders, who appeared to regard him as a veritable oracle! But to a child like myself he presented an element of odiousness which for a long time prejudiced me against every one connected with his particular vocation.

Edwin James is a name of little significance nowadays; nevertheless, his career is unparalleled in the annals of English advocacy. An



outcast from his father's house before he was twenty, he perceived in the Central Criminal Court a promising market for his master-talent—matchless and indomitable effrontery. In these days, even if successful in his own line of practice, an advocate of such an order would find the prizes of the profession relentlessly withheld from him, but I have heard on unimpeachable authority that when the crash came which culminated in the revocation of his patent as queen's counsel and his expulsion from the bar, the high office of solicitor-general was actually within Edwin James's reach! As M. P. for so important a constituency as Marylebone, he had, no doubt, established claims on the Liberal Government which he was the last man not to urge in and out of season, but even if the appointment had been made it would have raised such a clamor of protest from the majority of the bar that the Government would probably have found it advisable to withdraw it. "Unprofessional conduct"

was the immediate cause of James's downfall, but he must have long been looked upon with suspicion by the benchers of his Inn, for, almost contrary to all precedent, on his obtaining "silk" they refused to elect him a bencher. Nowadays, the number of "silks" is so largely increased that the non-election to the Inn Bench of a newly created king's counsel conveys no sort of reflection; but at that time it was otherwise, and the only similar instance of exclusion was that of Abraham Hayward, which, however, was solely due to the personal animosity of Mr. Roebuck, and implied no disapprobation of the candidate's professional conduct.

It has always been a mystery how Edwin James got into those pecuniary difficulties which were the cause of his professional irregularities. His practice, though not of the first magnitude, had latterly amounted to quite £7,000 a year, and his personal habits, as Thackeray pointed out in one of the "Roundabout Papers," were apparently

the reverse of extravagant. He certainly lived in Berkeley Square, but the house was a small one and well within his professional income. Either he gambled recklessly or had to meet some persistent drain upon his resources which never came before the eyes of the world. Sir Thomas Lawrence, though avoiding a similar disgrace, presented very much the same enigma. In the receipt of princely gains from his portraits, and with no outwardly lavish expenditure, he astonished society by dying practically insolvent. I remember two characteristic stories of Edwin James's consummate impudence. At one time he lived in some West End chambers of which the unfortunate landlord could never succeed in obtaining any rent. At last he had recourse to an expedient which he hoped might arouse his tenant to a sense of his obligations. He asked him if he would be kind enough to advise him on a little legal matter in which he was concerned, and, on James acquiescing, drew up a statement specifying his

own grievance against the learned counsel and ask him to state what he considered the best course for a landlord to take under such conditions. The paper was returned to him the next morning with the following sentence subjoined: "In my opinion, this is a case which admits of only one remedy—patience. EDWIN JAMES."

The other story is indicative of his methods in court. He was engaged in some case before Lord Chief Justice Campbell, and in attempting to take an altogether inadmissible line with a witness was stopped by the Judge, who was the last man to allow any irregularities in the conduct of a case. James accepted Lord Campbell's interposition with a very ill grace, and the Judge, being of the same political party, took the opportunity, when summing up, of softening the remarks he had found it necessary to make in reference to James's "try on." "You will have observed, gentlemen," he said to the jury, "that I felt it my duty to

stop Mr. Edwin James in a certain line which he sought to adopt in the cross-examination of one of the witnesses, but at the same time I had no intention to cast any reflection on the learned counsel, who I am sure is known to you all as a most able——” Before the Judge could proceed any further James started to his feet and in a voice of contemptuous defiance exclaimed: “My Lud, I have borne with your ludship’s censure; spare me your ludship’s praise!”

After being disbarred, Edwin James retreated to America, and, before the facts could be properly ascertained by the authorities there, managed to get called to the New York bar. But somehow or other he proved a complete failure, and before long returned to England, where he made a determined attempt to get his decree of “disbarral” rescinded by the Inns of Court. His efforts, however, were fruitless, the array of professional delinquencies that could be established against him being far too formidable, and he

then became for a time common-law clerk to some Old Bailey solicitor, but not prospering in that capacity he finally took a room in Old Bond Street, where he invited the public to consult him on legal matters, by means of a white marble tablet in the doorway, on which he pompously described himself as "Mr. Edwin James, Jurisconsult." But this resource also failed. Even had he been a competent lawyer, his clients would probably have not been too numerous, but in point of fact his legal attainments were of the slightest, "common jury rhetoric" having been his main forensic stock in trade, any law that his case might involve being got up as necessity demanded, merely to serve the particular occasion. I saw him once, emerging from his Bond Street lair, seedy, ill-shaven, sodden-faced, in a coat in which rusty brown had almost supplanted the original black, and a hat of that greasy sheen peculiar to the headgear of the old-fashioned sheriff's officer. Poor wretch! the curtain was then

about to fall on his tragedy, for such surely his life must have been even at its apparent heyday. Very soon afterward he died almost a pauper's death, pointing a moral such as happily few public men have ever supplied, at all events in this country.

But to revert to Chief Baron Pollock. At the mid-day adjournment of the court he entertained us at luncheon at the Judge's lodgings, a repast which is impressed on my memory by a rather ludicrous incident. In those days claret was still a negligible quantity, at any rate in old-fashioned cellars, the staple vintages being almost invariably port and sherry. Whether the Chief Baron's libations of port in his northern circuit days had sated him with that beverage I cannot say, but at the time of which I am writing he had become a great patron and connoisseur of sherry, and on the dining-room sideboard was ranged, I remember, a long and imposing row of decanters, each representing some choice example of his favorite wine.

My mother, however, had forgotten or was unaware of her host's hobby, and in response to his inquiry, "Which wine will you take?" (meaning Amontillado or Solera or Vino de Pasto and so forth), she unluckily expressed a preference for port. "I am afraid," replied the Judge, with just a suspicion of polite irony, "that port is a wine with which I am wholly unprovided, though I can offer you every kind of sherry." My poor mother, to whom wine of any sort was really a matter of supreme indifference, was covered with confusion, and attempted to atone for her blunder by enthusiastically declaring for cold water. With reference to connoisseurship of wine, I will venture, *en passant*, on two little anecdotes which are instructive in their way. Not long ago I was staying in a country house the host of which was possessed of an extremely *recherche* cellar. It was about Christmas time, and he good-naturedly decided to entertain some of his less affluent neighbors who were not



much given to feasting, among them the elderly unmarried daughters of a deceased clergyman. At dessert the butler, with an inflection of compassionate condescension in his pompous voice, accosted one of these good ladies, who was my dinner neighbor, with the formidable interrogation: "Port, sherry, claret, or Madeira?" The embarrassed guest, whose aspect suggested weak negus as the acme of her alcoholic aspirations, replied after a moment of tremulous deliberation: "A little Marsala, please." Fortunately the answer did not reach our host's ears, but the indignant butler had considerable difficulty in controlling himself. However, with a supreme effort he swallowed his ire and, disdaining to offer any explanation, merely repeated with aggrieved emphasis the solemn formula, "Port, sherry, claret, or Madeira?" The terrorized spinster could only gurgle something which her tormentor took for a refusal, and he stalked on in offended majesty, casting a reproachful glance

at his master for exposing him to the affronts of local Philistines. The other anecdote is commended to would-be judges of '47 port. On the outskirts of a small country village there lived an old bachelor who, like Chief Baron Pollock, had in his later days forsaken the vintage of his youth for wines of a lighter quality. He had formerly been a North Country merchant or manufacturer, but on relinquishing business had migrated to a southern county. Some years after his retirement he received one afternoon an intimation from some old business friends that they were in his neighborhood and should take the liberty of presenting themselves at dinner. He immediately sent for his butler and apprised him of the coming guests, desiring him to be very particular about the wine, as they were great connoisseurs who in former days had always accorded the highest praise to his cellar. "Very good, sir," said the butler; "but what are we to do about port? There is not a bottle in the cellar." "I had

forgotten the port," said the host in consternation; "and now I think of it, they used, like me, to be great port-drinkers. What is to be done?" "Well, sir," replied the butler, "there is not time to send to ——," naming the county town, "but I think I might be able to borrow a bottle from Squire X——'s cellar." The Squire being a great "layer-down" of vintage port, the host felt considerably reassured, and wrote a short note, explaining the circumstances, which the butler was to take over to the Squire's house, at no great distance. Various engagements prevented him from seeing his butler again before dinner, but he felt complete confidence in Squire X——'s cellar, and consequently heard without the least trepidation both of his guests pronouncing for port as their post-prandial libation. "Ah!" exclaimed one of them with an expression of discriminating gusto, as, after holding his glass up to the light, he took his first sip, "I see that your port maintains

its old reputation." "More than maintains it," observed the other in a long-drawn tone of supreme satisfaction. "You had good port in the old days, but this beats it hollow. There is only one word for it—'superb'; '47, I suppose?" "I believe so," carelessly remarked the host, "but I have given up drinking port myself; still, I like to have a tolerable glass for my friends." The bottle was finished amid increased encomiums, and in due course the guests departed.

"Did the Squire send any note with that port, Watkins?" inquired the host of his butler the next morning. "I am glad it turned out so well."

"So am I, sir," observed the butler with a curious twinkle in his eye, "though it was none of the Squire's, after all."

"Not the Squire's?" rejoined his master. "Where did it come from, then?"

"It came from the 'Spotted Dog,' sir," replied the man triumphantly, naming the village "public." "The Squire had gone up

to London till Monday, and they couldn't get at the cellar; but gentlemen as drinks port ain't always the judges they think they are, so I just chanced it, and on my way back got a bottle at the 'Spotted Dog' for half a crown."

Chief Baron Pollock only missed by a year or two the satisfaction of seeing his son Charles raised to the bench of his old court. Charles Pollock—"the last of the barons," as he was called, when by the death of Baron Huddleston he became the solitary survivor of the old exchequer judges—though not equal to his father in ability, was by no means a specimen of those judges who derive their elevation, according to the well-known legal witticism, "*per stirpes et non per capita.*" He was a capable if not a profound lawyer, and discharged his duties not only with fastidious impartiality, but with a quiet dignity which has of late been far too rare in the high court. At the same time he was by no means deficient in a sense of

humor, and would on occasion relax his austerity with sallies of a much better quality than is nowadays associated with legal jesters. One of them, at least, is worthy of commemoration.

The Baron was trying a case which turned on what constituted "necessaries" for a minor, the leader on one side being a rather decrepit and elderly Q. C. whose marriage to the somewhat mature daughter of a patrician house had occasioned a certain amount of ironical comment on the part of his learned friends, while the opposing party was captained by a "silk" who, although younger than his antagonist, had decidedly the advantage of him in the matter of olive branches. The question for decision was whether a piano constituted a "necessary," the childless old benedict arguing that it was, and his opponent, the paterfamilias, insisting that it was not. At last the former, by way of clinching his contention, began to allude rather

pompously to his married experiences, a subject he was very fond of introducing on account of the augustness of his alliance. "My lord," he ostentatiously urged, "as a married man I can speak with some authority on these matters, and in my experience I have always understood that a piano was a 'necessary' for any one in the position which the minor in this case occupies." Hereupon the "paterfamilias" counsel cruelly interrupted with: "My lord, my learned friend boasts of his married experiences, but I must remind him that, as a matter of fact, he only entered upon the connubial state comparatively recently, whereas I, my lord, have not only been married nearly twenty years, but am the father of a large family; while in that respect, so far as I am aware, the union to which my learned friend refers with so much complacency has not proved equally fortunate." "My lord," furiously rejoined the other, "I must really protest against my friend

making these offensive remarks. I request your lordship——” he was continuing with accelerated wrath as the titter in court became more pronounced, when Baron Pollock, bending over from the bench, threw oil on the troubled waters by quietly interfering with, “Gentlemen, I think we had better confine ourselves to the issue in the present case.”

Baron, afterward Lord, Bramwell was one of the small group of “strong” judges whose presence on the bench was cordially appreciated by every one except the meritorious criminal. In appearance he was curiously like old J. B. Buckstone, of the Haymarket Theater, whose capacity for comedy he also to some extent shared. An amusing touch of this quality was revealed on one occasion at a certain sporting city where the assizes happened to synchronize with the annual race meeting. As a matter of fact, the Judge had no isthmian proclivities, but many members of the bar then on circuit being ex-



tremely anxious to see the race of the day, which always created widespread interest, one of the leading counsel engaged in a case then in progress asked the Judge to allow a short adjournment. Baron Bramwell, himself nothing loth, inquired of the jury whether they had any objection to the adjournment asked for, but after consultation with his colleagues the foreman intimated that the majority of them had come from a distance and were anxious that the case should not be interrupted, in order that they might get back to their homes, if possible, that evening.

The Judge, who in the heart of a sporting county had expected a more complaisant response, was not best pleased that the proposal should be discountenanced, but he merely remarked, "Very well, gentlemen," and the case proceeded. In the luncheon interval, however, he sent for the counsel who had applied for the adjournment, and after intimating to him that he

had no notion of being overridden in the matter by the jury, suggested that he should renew the application still more urgently after lunch. Accordingly, on the reassembling of the court the same counsel again rose, and apologizing to the Judge with affected diffidence for renewing the application of the morning, stated that he had been afforded during the luncheon interval an opportunity of ascertaining the feeling of the bar in the matter, which was so unanimously in favor of an adjournment for the race that he ventured to hope the concession might be granted. The Judge, who feigned a sort of resigned surprise at the revival of the subject, thereupon turned to the jury and addressed them as follows: "You have heard, gentlemen, what has just been urged by the learned counsel. Of course, under ordinary circumstances I should not think of entertaining so unusual an application, and one, moreover, which does not commend itself to the jury; but on the present occasion

the case is exceptional. We happen to be here at the time when a great event in connection with what has been rightly designated the national pastime is about to be celebrated, and it has been represented that there is a very strong—indeed, an almost unanimous—desire on the part of those in court to witness this historic race. Should I be justified,” he continued, solemnly scanning the jury—“should I be justified in refusing to sanction a short adjournment for what is, under the circumstances, so legitimate and reasonable an object?”

The jury still remained moodily obdurate, and the Judge, after a pause, resumed: “I regret to observe, gentlemen, that you do not appear to be in accord with the prevailing sentiment, but I cannot nevertheless help feeling that it would be ungracious, I might even say arbitrary, on my part if I refused to give effect to it. In fact,” he added, slowly gathering up his robes, “I am inclined to think—indeed, I am quite

sure—that in spite of your continued dissent it is incumbent on me, nay, it is my positive duty, to adjourn the court [then majestically rising from the bench], *and I will!*”

Mr. Justice Byles was another “strong” judge of that epoch whose austere demeanor was in strict harmony with an almost ultra-puritanical attitude of mind, which on one occasion was subjected to a very unwelcome experience. He was trying a case at Winchester in which some soldiers of the depot were indicted for a riotous affray with a gang of navvies employed in the neighborhood. One of these navvies had been under examination for a considerable time with very little practical result, and at last the Judge, interposing, observed to the examining counsel that he appeared to be making very little way with the witness, who had better be allowed to give his evidence after his own fashion. “Come, my man,” said the Judge reassuringly, “we must get to the end of this. Suppose you tell the story in your own way.”

“Well, my lord,” broke out the navvy, greatly relieved at being delivered from his tormentor, “you see it was like this: We met the sodgers on the bridge and one of ’em says to me, ‘Good mornin’.’ ‘Good mornin’, yer——’” But before the specimen of appalling vernacular that followed was well articulated Mr. Justice Byles had fled precipitately from the bench, with, no doubt, a mental resolution never again to invite a witness of the navigating order to “tell his story in his own way.”

Apropos of witnesses and counsel, I think the most scathing retort that I ever read was the following, which I saw in some country newspaper report of an assize case. A counsel had been cross-examining a witness for some time with very little effect, and had sorely taxed the patience of the Judge, the jury, and every one in court. At last the Judge intervened with an imperative hint to the learned gentleman to conclude his cross-examination. The

counsel, who received this judicial intimation with a very bad grace, before telling the witness to stand down accosted him with the parting sarcasm: "Ah, you're a clever fellow, a very clever fellow! We can all see that!" The witness, bending over from the box, quietly retorted, "I would return the compliment *if I were not on oath!*"

Counsel are not, as a rule, too receptive of hints from the bench as to the conduct of a case. I remember hearing a leather-lunged gentleman bawling legal platitudes to old Vice-Chancellor Bacon, who, after sitting passive for some time in a state of ill-concealed irritability, gave utterance in quavering tones to the following pungent remonstrance, "I am of course aware, Mr. So-and-so, that it is my duty to hear you, but I venture to remind you that there is such a quality as mer-r-cy!" The Vice-Chancellor, though rather crusty on the bench, was a model of old-world politeness in private life. I remember on one occasion that a Bayswater omnibus

in which I was riding made an unduly long halt at the end of a street near Hyde Park Gardens, and just as the "fares" were beginning to wax impatient an old gentleman was seen crossing the road, in the direction of the omnibus, under the guardianship of a butler. As he laboriously hoisted himself up the step I saw to my surprise that it was no less a personage than Vice-Chancellor Bacon, who in the vacation (as it then was) apparently considered himself justified in sinking his dignity by indulging in a twopenny ride. I extended a helping hand to the old man, who was then nearer ninety than eighty and naturally far from agile. As a rule, I have found that assistance thus proffered, though eagerly accepted, receives very little acknowledgment beyond an ill-tempered grunt or a stony stare. But the old Judge, entirely at variance with his demeanor on the bench, turned ceremoniously round to me before sitting down (a maneuver not easy to the most active in a moving omnibus), and

with an old-world urbanity faltered in his curious nut-cracker voice, "I beg to thank you, sir, for your very great courtesy."

He and Lord Chief Justice Cockburn were, I think, the only two judges who regularly attended the Monday popular concerts, though there was always a large legal element in the audience. Sir Alexander Cockburn was a personage who would have figured with great effect in a novel. Unimpeachable in his public capacity, his private life resembled rather Lord Thurlow's than that of a nineteenth-century judge. Nevertheless, like Thurlow, he scrupulously maintained the dignity of his office, which somewhat suffered during the *régime* of his successor, Lord Coleridge, who, so far as externals were concerned, had greatly the advantage. Both, however, were more distinguished at the bar than on the bench, though Cockburn was far from being a mere forensic orator, his speech on the Don Pacifico ques-



tion being one of the finest ever delivered in Parliament. Probably the greatest compliment paid to him as an advocate was from Palmer, the Rugeley poisoner ("my sainted Bill," as his mother always termed him), who on being found guilty handed down to his counsel a slip of paper bearing the following words: "It's the riding that's done it," Cockburn having been the prosecuting counsel. Lord Coleridge was decidedly his inferior both as an advocate and as a Parliamentary orator, though usually felicitous enough when delivering a literary address or a post-prandial speech. On one occasion, however, he was betrayed into a curious piece of bathos which all the magic of his silvery accents was unable to redeem. He was among the distinguished guests at the dinner given at Balliol to celebrate the opening of the new college hall, and Archbishop Tait having responded for the college, Lord Coleridge was deputed to respond for the university. With his accustomed diffidence, or

assumption of diffidence, he began his speech by disclaiming all qualifications to fulfil so important a duty: "The most reverend Prelate," he observed with melodious unction, "in spite of his far more exalted position and infinitely superior eloquence, has on this memorable occasion been called upon to respond only for a part, while I, in every respect his inferior, who cannot claim to excel in a single one of the accomplishments with which he is so lavishly endowed—I, my lords and gentlemen, have been asked to respond for a whole, and [with sonorous emphasis] *what a [w]hole!*"

Although posing as one of those untrierial judges who have never heard of a music hall and are wholly unacquainted with slang, Lord Coleridge was not above enjoying an occasional touch of billingsgate when applied to any individual whom he did not particularly affect. One of his learned brethren with whom he was on intimate terms was one day abusing a fellow puisne, who hap-

pened to be especially repugnant to them both, in language the reverse of Parliamentary. Coleridge listened to the opprobrious appellations with bland satisfaction and then unctuously observed, "I am not addicted to expressions of that kind myself, but would you mind saying it again?" As is well known, he signalized his tenure of the lord chief justiceship by presenting the unprecedented spectacle of appearing as a defendant in an action brought against him by his son-in-law, in the course of which he sat in the body of the court prompting his counsel. Doubtless this unedifying incident was due rather to his misfortune than to his fault; but ermine, even if itself unsullied, becomes somewhat depreciated when placed in contact with dirty linen, and Lord Coleridge never quite survived so unfortunate a shock to his prestige. Moreover, he had an unhappy propensity for indulging in extrajudicial utterances of a highly democratic character, and in the course of a visit

to America adopted an attitude of implied, if not expressed, antagonism toward his own country and its institutions, while fulsomely lauding those of the United States. On the whole, in spite of conspicuous talents and a highly ornamental presence, he must be ranked as the least satisfactory occupant of the lord chief justice's chair for considerably over a century.

How much Coleridge, when at the bar, owed to the untiring ability and laboriousness of Charles Bowen only those who were behind the scenes can properly estimate. Bowen certainly never recovered the strain of the Tichborne trial, in which he was throughout the animating spirit of the Attorney-General, who without him would many times have perilously floundered. Bowen was one of the subtlest lawyers and most brilliant scholars that ever adorned the English bench. Moreover, he was endowed with a peculiarly mordant wit, enunciating the most sardonic utterances in a voice of

almost feminine softness. Of these, perhaps, the most prominent was his protest to the counsel who was impugning wholesale certain evidence which had been filed against his client. "Aren't you going a little too far, Mr.—?" he murmurously interposed. "Truth, you know, will occasionally out, even in an affidavit."

To see him in the Court of Appeal, entangling in his exquisitely fine meshes that rough-and-ready "knot-cutter," Lord Esher, was a treat of which it was impossible to have too much. The feline purr in which he would half-deferentially, half-disdainfully ply his puzzled senior with filigree subtleties was the most finished example of intellectual torture I ever had the privilege of witnessing. How the sturdy old Master of the Rolls must have rejoiced when his superlatively ingenious colleague was promoted to the House of Lords and replaced by the less complex intellect of Sir John Rigby! Lord Esher was at the best but rugged ore com-

pared to the thrice-refined gold of Charles Bowen, who, if he had only deigned to trample the dust of the political arena, would have equaled on the woolsack even the reputation of Westbury.

But law was not the only field in which he shone. If not actually a poet, he was a verse-writer of a very high order, while as an essayist or a historian he would by dint of style alone assuredly have won a distinguished place. His single defect was perhaps an undue proclivity for irony, which on one occasion he indulged in from the bench, with disastrous effect on the jury. Shortly after his appointment as a puisne judge he was trying a burglar in some country town, and by way of mitigating the tedium of the proceedings summed up something in the following fashion: "You will have observed, gentlemen, that the prosecuting counsel laid great stress on the enormity of the offense with which the prisoner is charged, but I think it is only due to the prisoner to

point out that in proceeding about his enterprise he at all events displayed remarkable consideration for the inmates of the house. For instance, rather than disturb the owner, an invalid lady, as you will have remarked, with commendable solicitude he removed his boots and went about in his stockings, notwithstanding the inclemency of the weather. Further, instead of rushing with heedless rapacity into the pantry, he carefully removed the coal-scuttle and any other obstacles which, had he thoughtlessly collided with them, would have created a noise that must have aroused the jaded servants from their well-earned repose." After proceeding in this strain for some little time, he dismissed the jury to consider their verdict, and was horror-struck when on their return into court they pronounced the acquittal of the prisoner.

Lord Bowen was probably the only judge who, on being summoned on an emergency to the dread ordeal of taking admiralty

cases, entered upon his doom with a pleasantry. After explaining to the counsel of that consummately technical tribunal the reason of his presiding over it on the occasion in question, and warning them of his inexperience in this particular branch of practice, he concluded his remarks with the following quotation from Tennyson's beautiful lyric, then recently published:

"And may there be no moaning of the Bar  
When I put out to sea."

I have ventured to suggest that Lord Bowen's legal intellect was not inferior to that of Lord Westbury, a notability whose sayings are still of absorbing interest to a large section of the public. With brains of gold and a tongue of gall, both at the bar and as chancellor he was, though in a subtle fashion, fully as formidable as the terrible Thurlow, and his downfall was due, I have been assured on the best authority, less to indiscretion in the matter of patronage (in connection with which he actually resigned)



than to a determined combination against him of various eminent individuals who had smarted under his affronts. Of these, the most notable was an illustrious personage whose resentment was, under the circumstances, not surprising.

According to my informant, his royal highness had long been interesting himself on behalf of a certain gentleman whose wife held a confidential position in his consort's household, and it appearing probable that the second reading clerkship of the House of Lords would shortly become vacant, he had caused his *protégé's* claims to be made known to the Chancellor with a view to eventualities. In due course the invalid reading-clerk departed this life, and the Prince, who had taken measures to have immediate intelligence of the event, at once sent off an equerry to the Chancellor with the news and a strong hint that his *protégé's* candidature for the vacant post should receive favorable consideration. As

a matter of fact, the Chancellor could not possibly have been aware of the reading-clerk's death, but that did not deter him from charging the equerry with the following answer: "You will convey my most respectful compliments to his royal highness, and you will inform his royal highness that to my profound regret I am unable to comply with his royal highness's wishes, as the appointment in question is already filled up." Then, on the withdrawal of the astonished messenger, he rang the bell and said to the servant, "Tell Mr. Slingsby I wish to see him." On Slingsby Bethell making his appearance the Chancellor greeted him as follows: "Slingsby, you are appointed second reading-clerk in the House of Lords." But though nothing loth to accept the post on his own account, Slingsby Bethell at once saw how prejudicially it would affect his father, and urged him to reconsider his decision; but the Chancellor was inflexible, and accordingly made an implacable enemy

of the royal personage he had thus so ruthlessly affronted.

Not content with this exploit, the Chancellor shortly afterward signalized himself by another only less remarkable. He had issued invitations for a "high judicial" dinner party, the guests including Vice-Chancellor Wood, a saintly old gentleman who had recently produced a work on "The Continuity of Scripture," and the late Lord Penzance, alike in official and private life the embodiment of austere decorum. To the inexpressible indignation of these eminent worthies, both of whom were accompanied by their ladies, they found the end of the Chancellor's table (he was then a widower) presided over by a foreign countess more conspicuous for her fascinations than her fair fame. As may be easily imagined, the drawing-room part of the entertainment was not of long duration, and on reaching home the outraged author of "The Continuity of Scripture" immediately sat down and indited

a complaint of four pages to Lord Palmerston, the peccant Chancellor's ministerial chief. Lord Palmerston's reply, which my informant had the privilege of seeing, was scarcely consolatory. It ran thus:

*"My dear Wood:* I quite agree that the Chancellor's conduct is inexcusable; but I am sure you will admit that he treated me worse than any of you, for he made me take the lady down to dinner! Sincerely yours,  
PALMERSTON."

The virtuous Vice-Chancellor had to pocket his indignation, but in common with Lord Penzance (then Sir J. P. Wilde) he nursed his vengeance to some purpose. On the night when a motion of censure on the Chancellor's unsatisfactory methods of patronage was being debated in the Commons, Lord Granville was talking to his colleague on the woolsack and laughing to scorn the bare idea of an adverse vote. But he

reckoned without the combined forces of the Chancellor's enemies, for a few moments later the news arrived that the motion had been carried, though it was universally recognized that in the particular circumstances the Chancellor had been more sinned against than sinning. There is no doubt that Richard Bethell, Lord Westbury's eldest son, had taken undue advantage of his father's good nature in the matter of patronage, and that the Chancellor, though certainly blamable for carelessness, was absolutely free from any suspicion of corruption. It was Richard Bethell who inspired his father with one of the neatest of impromptu puns. Always a spendthrift, even when his father was attorney-general, he had been proclaimed an outlaw, and was forced to lie *perdu* on the other side of the Channel. When, however, Sir Richard was made lord chancellor and a family meeting was held to decide on the title of his peerage, Dick Bethell, as the heir, thought well to steal back in order to

be present at the consultation, which took place at a country seat then occupied by the Chancellor near Basingstoke, called Hackwood. Various titles were suggested, but without result, and eventually Dick Bethell attempted to solve the difficulty by suggesting that his father should become Lord Hackwood. "No, no, Richard," replied the Chancellor, "that would never do; for if I became Lord Hackwood you would infallibly be dubbed the Honorable Mr. 'Cut-your-Stick'!"

I believe that Lord Westbury had a far kinder heart than his manner ever permitted him to gain credit for. The late Mr. Commissioner Holroyd, in whose chambers the Chancellor had been a pupil, among many others who afterward attained judicial rank, told me that of them all Lord Westbury was the only one who had attempted to serve him (he proposed, though unsuccessfully, the Commissioner as chief judge in bankruptcy under a new act), and that the loyalty

and genuine goodness of heart which underlay his undesirable qualities had never been done justice to. The late Lady Westbury ("Dick" Bethell's widow) told me the same thing, though she admitted that her father-in-law was at first terribly formidable. She instanced an occasion on which, while he was still at the bar, she had to see him at his chambers on some question connected, I think, with her marriage settlements, and while they were talking Sir Richard's clerk rashly entered with a message about a brief. "Will you be obliging enough," drawled the Attorney-General with ominous trenchancy, "to close that door and remain on the other side of it?" The wretched clerk looked as if he would have been thankful to sink through the floor, and Lady Westbury said she felt suddenly frozen up. But his supreme achievement of this sort occurred at a special meeting of the Conservative Club, to which he had been summoned to explain his conduct in standing for Parlia-

ment as a Liberal. The chairman of the meeting was Mr. Quintin Dick, who, being slightly deaf, could not altogether catch Bethell's mincing tones of contemptuous defiance delivered from a rather remote part of the room. On Mr. Dick somewhat imperiously requesting him to "speak up," Bethell replied with acetic suavity that "he was very sorry for being inaudible, but he had really supposed that the ears of the honorable chairman were long enough to be reached by his remarks even from that distant part of the room"! His doom after that was of course a *fait accompli*; indeed, aware that in any case it was assured, he resolved before receiving sentence to treat his tribunal to a taste of his quality. Only once, I believe, did he actually incur corporeal retribution for his offensiveness, and that was at the hands—or, rather, at the toes—of Mr. Neate, a Chancery barrister who sat in Parliament for the city of Oxford. Bethell had thought fit in the course of some



case to make an envenomed attack on Mr. Neate, who was also engaged. Neate, red-hot with resentment, waited for the great man outside the court and treated him to the rough-and-ready form of vengeance which I have already indicated. To kick a leader of the bar as one would a cheeky school-boy was *un peu trop fort*, however great the provocation, and poor Neate only saved himself from being disbarred by undertaking never to hold a brief again.

One of the greatest equity judges of the last half-century was the late Sir George Jessel, the first and so far the only Jew who has been raised to the English bench. Jessel's appointment was received with a certain amount of misgiving, not on account of his attainments, which were unexceptionable, but by reason of an undesirable audacity which had occasionally marked his conduct of cases at the bar. There is no doubt that at a pinch, in order to score a point, he was not above "improving" the actual text of the

report which he purported to be quoting, and I well remember that this practice produced quite a dramatic little scene when, having sprung upon a particularly painstaking opponent some case which apparently demolished the latter's argument, that learned gentleman, with an almost apoplectic gasp, requested that the volume might be passed to him. The result of his perusal was more satisfactory to himself than it was to Jessel, who, however, treated the matter as a mere trifle not worth fussing about and calmly restarted his argument on a new tack.

In this undesirable habit he resembled an eminent predecessor who, on investing some obsolete case on which he was relying with a complexion peculiarly favorable to his argument but quite new to the presiding judge, the latter quietly asked him to hand up his volume of reports. After a moment's critical examination the Judge handed the volume back with the scathing rebuke: "As I thought,

Mr.—; my memory of thirty years is more accurate than your quotation.”

But once on the bench, Jessel not only discarded all derogatory methods, but also pounced remorselessly on any too ingenious practitioner who might attempt to resort to them, and brief as was his judicial career, he contrived to leave a reputation unrivaled in the Rolls Court since the days of Sir William Grant.

A chancery court is not, as a rule, a very amusing resort, but Vice-Chancellor Malins was always able to command a fairly “good house,” as he might generally be counted on to show a certain amount of sport under the stimulating attacks of Mr. Glasse and his Hibernian rival, Mr. Napier Higgins. Mr. Glasse, whose countenance recalled that of a vicious old pointer, when not engaged in bandying epithets with Mr. Higgins applied himself only too successfully to developing the unhappy Vice-Chancellor’s propensities for making himself ridiculous. Sir Richard, an

amiable, loquacious old gentleman, who had bored and buttonholed his Parliamentary chiefs into giving him a judgeship, was certainly an easy prey for a bullying counsel. In external aspect dignified enough, he was afflicted with a habit of conversational irrelevancy which might have supplied a master-subject for the pen of Charles Dickens. While Higgins roared him down like a floundering bull, Glasse plied the even more discomfiting weapons of calculated contempt and impertinence.

The following is a sample of scenes which were then of almost daily occurrence in Sir Richard's court. "That reminds me," the judge would oracularly interpose, fixing his eyeglass and glancing round the court—"that reminds me of a point I once raised in the House of Commons——"

"Really, my lord," Mr. Glasse would bruskiy interrupt with a withering sneer, "we have not come here to listen to your lordship's Parliamentary experiences." Whereat,

with an uneasy flush, the Vice-Chancellor would mutteringly resume attention. On one occasion I recollect Mr. Glasse so far forgetting himself as to exclaim audibly in response to some sudden discursion from the bench, "D——d old woman!" Every one, of course, tittered, and the Vice-Chancellor, for once nerving himself for reprisals, bent forward with a scarlet face and the interrogatory, "What was that you said, Mr. Glasse?" But his terrible antagonist was not to be confounded. Without a moment's hesitation he replied, airily flourishing his many-colored bandana, "My lord, I will frankly acknowledge that my remark was not intended for your lordship's ears," an explanation which Malins thought it prudent humbly to accept.

But in justice be it said that though intimidated in a fashion by this brace of forensic bruisers, the Vice-Chancellor was in his judgments no respecter of persons, and in the celebrated Rugby School case he administered a rebuke to a right reverend

prelate, lately at the head of the Church, which must have been far from comfortable reading if a full report of the proceedings ever came under his notice.

Sir Richard's garrulity once cost him rather dear. On arriving unusually late in court he artlessly explained that his unpunctuality was due to his having started for his morning ride minus his watch, which he had accidentally left at home, and in consequence had been beguiled into a prolongation of his amble with the "liver brigade." About an hour after this rather unnecessary explanation a person presented himself at the Vice-Chancellor's house in Lowndes Square and informed the butler that he had been sent from the court for Sir Richard's watch. The butler at first was suspicious, but on finding the watch on his master's dressing-table, and thinking that he would be greatly inconvenienced without it, he handed the timepiece, a very valuable one, to the messenger, who promptly

hurried off, but not in the direction of Lincoln's Inn.

Though by no means a wit even of the judicial order, Sir Richard must be credited with one apposite pleasantry which, though well enough known among lawyers, may be narrated for the benefit of the lay community. At the time when Vice-Chancellor Bacon was one of his colleagues, Malins had before him some case in which one of the parties was of that order peculiarly obnoxious to the legal mind, namely, the "cranky" litigant. In delivering judgment, the Vice-Chancellor felt himself constrained to take a view adverse to the claims set up by this individual, who determined to avenge himself for what he chose to consider a miscarriage of justice. Accordingly, one morning shortly after the judgment he presented himself in court, and taking aim from amid the bystanders, hurled an overpreserved egg at the head of his oppressor. The Vice-Chancellor by ducking adroitly managed to avoid the

missile, which malodorously discharged itself at a comparatively safe distance from its target. "I think," observed Sir Richard, almost grateful in spite of the *lése majesté*, for so apt an opportunity of qualifying as a judicial wag—"I think that egg must have been intended for my brother Bacon."

Apropos of troublesome litigants, the days of Mrs. Weldon's forensic feats are now far distant, and, sad to relate, her solitary reappearance, as is too often the case with retired "stars," was a dismal fiasco. But twenty years ago she was a power and something more in the High Court, in spite of public ridicule and professional prejudice scoring triumph after triumph, such as fall to the lot of few of even the most practised advocates. One of her most effective weapons was her exquisitely modulated voice, which was capable of the subtlest inflection of scorn and irony that I ever heard from human lips. It showed to particular advantage in one of the numerous actions which she success-



fully brought by reason of having been improperly placed in a private lunatic asylum by certain well-meaning but injudicious friends. The case was tried by a judge whose well-known proclivities for patrician society and surroundings rendered him occasionally a somewhat partial arbiter. In this instance his sympathies were from the first manifestly in favor of the defendants, while he displayed toward the plaintiff, who was as usual conducting her own case, a harshness and *brusquerie* which were quite uncalled for. But judicial antipathies never greatly troubled Mrs. Weldon, who as a litigant had very soon discovered that a dead set by the judge, especially against a woman, not infrequently results in enlisting the sympathies of the jury. Accordingly, after one or two ineffectual attempts on the part of the bench to stifle the whole business, Mrs. Weldon was allowed to proceed. I did not hear much of her opening address, but was fortunate enough to be present

during the first part of her examination of Sir Henry de Bathe, the substance of which, for the sake of convenience, I will give in dialogue form. It must be borne in mind that Sir Henry had been one of Mrs. Weldon's oldest friends, and that she was perfectly acquainted with all particulars as to his rank and status.

*Mrs. Weldon* (to witness): I believe your name is Sir Henry de Bathe?

*Sir Henry* (with lofty indifference): Yes.

*Mrs. Weldon*: A baronet?

*Sir Henry*: Yes.

*Mrs. Weldon*: And formerly colonel commanding the Scots Guards?

*Sir Henry* (with a touch of self-complacency): Just so.

*Mrs. Weldon*: You are also, I believe, a county magistrate?

*Sir Henry* (with a bored air): Oh, yes.

*Mrs. Weldon*: Anything else?

*Sir Henry* (after a pause): Not that I know of.

*Mrs. Weldon:* Oh, come, Sir Henry de Bathe, just refresh your memory, please.

*Sir Henry* (after a longer pause): I really can't recollect.

*Mrs. Weldon:* Dear me! And I should have thought it so very important! Come, now, have you never heard of St. Luke's Asylum?

*Sir Henry* (with an enlightened expression): Oh, ah, yes, of course; but I wasn't thinking of that kind of thing, you know.

*Mrs. Weldon:* I can quite believe that. Well, now, tell my lord and the jury what your connection with St. Luke's Asylum is.

*Sir Henry:* Well, I am one of the governors, you know.

*Mrs. Weldon:* Exactly. You are one of the governors of St. Luke's Asylum, which I believe is an asylum for sufferers from mental diseases?

*Sir Henry:* I believe so.

*Mrs. Weldon:* You only believe so! Come. Is it a fact or not?

*Sir Henry*: Oh, yes; certainly.

*Mrs. Weldon*: Well, now, will you tell us in what your duties as a governor of St. Luke's Asylum consist? [An embarrassed silence, during which the witness rather nervously adjusts his necktie.] I am waiting, Sir Henry de Bathe. [No answer.] Surely, Sir Henry de Bathe, you are not going to let the jury infer that, although a governor of this important asylum, you are unable to give any account of your duties?

*Sir Henry* (after a further pause and almost agitated attention to the ends of his tie): Well, I—I—look in now and then, you know.

*Mrs. Weldon* (with an inflection of consummate irony): You look in now and then! [To the jury.] I hope, gentlemen, you will appreciate the answer of the honorable baronet. Here is a person who, being governor of a lunatic asylum, signed an order declaring me to be of unsound mind, and yet the only definition he can give

of his duties is that he “looks in now and then!”

(Sir Henry writhes, and the jury smile with a significant air of sympathy, which renders a verdict for the plaintiff a foregone conclusion.)

“Society” judges are, for obvious reasons, not satisfactory occupants of the bench. With every desire to be impartial, they are insensibly prejudiced in favor of the class with whom they aspire to mingle, and in a celebrated trial that took place some twenty years ago, in which a certain sculptor much affected by great ladies was one of the parties, the presiding judge cut a figure which made him ridiculous in the eyes of the law and almost a public laughing-stock. Of the present judicial body Sir Francis Jeune is the only member who mixes much in fashionable society, and though he has hitherto been fortunate in not having to deal with his hosts and hostesses in the character of delinquents, it is of course always possible that

such a *contretemps* may occur, in which case it would require all the President's tact and adroitness to maintain an attitude satisfactory to himself and to the public. In the old days, with the single exception of Vice-Chancellor Leach, judges did not aspire to patrician society, and the spectacle of the chief of a tribunal for matrimonial causes appearing at a "smart" ball in fancy costume would have been hailed with pious horror. Lord chancellors, of course, are in a different category; but even Lord Lyndhurst's "society" proclivities were looked upon in many quarters with disapprobation, succeeding as they did the austere aloofness observed by Lord Eldon. Lyndhurst, indeed, in spite of his legal genius, was by temperament much more qualified for a party than a judicial arena. One of those politicians who make expediency the main article of their creed, he was never troubled by scruples when they stood in the way of scoring a trick in the political game; and though Lord Camp-

bell in his "Lives" is undoubtedly too hard on him, his *volte-face* from principles that verged on Jacobinism to those that prompted the "Six Acts" has never been satisfactorily accounted for. For his popularity he was chiefly indebted to his many personal qualities, that of never forgetting a friend being prominent among them. The father of an old gentleman with whom I was acquainted had given Lord Lyndhurst, then merely the unknown son of a not too prosperous artist, his first brief, and, whether in or out of office, the Chancellor never forgot it. He befriended the family in every way open to him, and after one of them had proved a hopeless failure in every other capacity, rather than let him "go under" he made him one of his private secretaries. "*Si sic omnes!*"

Another ex-chancellor of exceeding charm, though of far inferior abilities, was the first Lord Chelmsford. I once had the good fortune to sit opposite him at a dinner party, and was greatly struck by his courtly manner

and sparkling talk, which were enhanced by unusually handsome features, though he was then a good deal nearer eighty than seventy. One fact that he mentioned concerning himself astonished me not a little. The talk happening to turn on naval subjects, he quietly remarked: "I am afraid I have forgotten the little I once knew on such matters, but I began life in the navy, and was a midshipman in the Copenhagen expedition of 1807." Lady Chelmsford was also at the dinner, an amiable-looking old lady, whom it was difficult to credit with the affront on Mrs. Disraeli which was said to have procured the latter her coronet and Lord Chelmsford his *cong e*. I have been told lately that the dismissal did not rest with Mr. Disraeli, and perhaps the actual facts will come to light in Lord Rowton's long-awaited biography. At all events, Disraeli subsequently showed a marked friendliness to members of the ex-chancellor's family, appointing his second son, Alfred, *per saltum* to a lord justiceship



of appeal—the only other instances of like promotion being, I believe, in the cases of Lord Justice Mellish and Lord Justice Cotton, though several law officers and ex-law officers of the Crown have been appointed to the same court without holding intermediate judicial office. It has always seemed to me a pity that no memoir of Lord Chelmsford has been given to the world. Though not a great lawyer, he was distinctly a personage who lived in important times, and, moreover, had a very pretty wit. Perhaps his most felicitous *mot* was the following, which I do not think is very widely known. When chancellor he had rather a partiality for reading prayers in the House of Lords—a duty which, I believe, devolved upon the chancellor in the absence of the junior bishop, or at any rate in the event of there being no spiritual peer present. On one occasion, the prelate who should have read the prayers not having arrived at the prescribed hour, Lord Chelmsford, without giving him any “law,” pro-

ceeded to perform the ceremony. Scarcely had the service begun when the defaulting bishop arrived, breathless, but of course too late. After prayers were over, as the Chancellor was preparing to note the occurrence according to custom, the bishop hastened up to the table with the petulant protest, "I think your lordship needn't have been in such a hurry; you might have given me a moment."

"Oh, if that's all," rejoined the Chancellor, taking up his pen, "I'll make a *minute* of it."

I will close this chapter with an anecdote about another chancellor, Lord Cairns, which illustrates the wide divergency between precept and practice. Some years ago I ordered some hosiery of an Oxford Street tradesman with whom I had not previously dealt, and happening to be at dinner when the articles were sent home, was rather annoyed at the messenger refusing to leave them without being paid. The next morning I called at the shop and expostulated at having been

treated with what I considered scant ceremony. The proprietor politely apologized, but explained that he always made a practice in the case of a new customer of not delivering goods without payment, and proceeded to support his usage by declaring that it had been enjoined by no less a personage than Lord Chancellor Cairns, who, according to the hosier, had intimated in some case that if tradesmen left goods without waiting to be paid and afterward failed to get their money, they had only themselves to thank. "I read this," he explained, "in some newspaper, and at once resolved that I would in future act on his lordship's advice, at all events where new customers were concerned. Curiously enough, not long afterward, who should come into my shop but Lord Cairns himself, who ordered some shirts which, when made, were to be sent to his house in South Kensington. Accordingly, when they were ready I sent my man with them, and bearing in mind his lordship's own excellent

advice, I told him to wait for the money, which, to tell the truth, I was at the moment rather in want of. My man, accordingly, on delivering the shirts presented the bill to the footman, requesting that it might be paid. The footman at first seemed disposed to shut the door in his face, but on my messenger declaring that if payment was not made his orders were to take the parcel back, the man departed to consult the butler, who appeared on the scene, bursting with indignation, and ordered my messenger to be off. The man remaining obdurate, the butler departed in hot haste for the steward, or groom of the chambers, who raged even more furiously but to no purpose, my man standing firm. Finally this official departed, and after a short interval his lordship himself appeared, and hectored the man to such a tune that he finally capitulated and left the parcel minus the account. On hearing my man's report of what had happened I wrote a most respectful letter to Lord Cairns, explain-

ing that but for his own advice on the subject I should not have thought of requesting payment at the door; that, moreover, I really supposed (which was true) that he preferred to have this system adopted in his household; concluding with a hope that under the circumstances he would not be offended. However," added the disillusioned hosier, "his lordship took no notice of my letter, and actually kept me waiting two years for the money."

Moral: Be chary of judicial precepts, even when they emanate from a chancellor.



III.  
THE CHURCH

*Bishop Blomfield—Doctor Hinds and Lord Palmerston—  
Archbishop Tait—Mrs. Tait—Bishop Jackson and the  
Lincolnshire Clergy—"Squarson" King—Parson Dymoke  
—Bishop Sumner—Lord Thurlow—Bishop Wilberforce  
—William Wilberforce—Professor Jowett—His Favorite  
Pupils—A Dinner Party at Jowett's—Lord Goschen—  
Lord Milner.*



### III.

#### THE CHURCH

My earliest glimpse of lawn sleeves was in St. James's Church, Piccadilly, where as a small child I remember seeing a burly, bald-headed old divine gesticulating in the pulpit to the accompaniment of a somewhat resonant discourse, which to me, of course, at that tender age, merely amounted to "*vox et præterea nihil.*" This imposing-looking preacher was no other than Doctor Blomfield, Bishop of London, a prelate of considerable vogue in his day, though at present almost forgotten, except, perhaps, as the dedicatee of one of Cobbett's most trenchant diatribes and name-giver to half a dozen of the dreariest terraces in Paddington. My acquaintance with Fulham Palace began under his successor's reign, but I shall always cherish one

tradition of the Blomfield days, which, lest it be left unrecorded in the annals of the episcopal edifice, I will venture to set forth in these pages. The composition of the Bishop's domestic circle was plentiful, but a trifle complex. He married twice, and in both unions had been blessed with progeny, while his second wife was a widow who, besides supplementing her second husband's family, had imported an independent brood of her own. In my experience the children of ecclesiastics do not, even under normal conditions, always exemplify the Christian unity so solemnly enjoined from the parental pulpit, and with such a blend as that which I have just denoted it is scarcely surprising that unruffled peace was not invariably present under the Bishop's roof. On one occasion when an unequal battle was raging fast and furious among the miscellaneous offspring, the Bishop was disturbed in his study by the impetuous entrance of his lady. "What is it, my dear?" he inquired with

ill-concealed testiness. "Oh, Bishop," she replied in agonized accents, "quick! quick! There's not a moment to lose! Your children are siding with my children and are murdering our children!" I never saw the late Admiral Blomfield or his brother, the church architect, each as peaceful-looking an old gentleman as ever ambled along Pall Mall, without wondering what part they took in that famous fray, and my decorous recollection of their right reverend parent is always slightly marred by a whimsical vision of him sallying forth from his sanctum with a disordered apron and administering indiscriminate chastisement with a "Cruden's Concordance."

Doctor Blomfield was almost the only bishop of those days who did not relinquish his miter simultaneously with his life, excepting, by the way, poor Doctor Hinds, a highly respected prelate whom a clandestine marriage at a cockney watering-place rather unnecessarily forced into premature retire-

ment. Such, at least, was the opinion of Lord Palmerston, who never liked to see a good man "go under" on account of a feminine entanglement; but more modern prejudices were allowed to prevail, and Palmerston, sighing for the halcyon days when such bagatelles were accounted nothing derogatory in a pillar of the Church, had reluctantly to accept the susceptible Prelate's resignation.

But to return to Fulham and its occupants. On Doctor Blomfield's retirement (to avoid misconception, let it at once be said on account of ill-health) his see was offered to Doctor Tait, then Dean of Carlisle, a successful college tutor, a less successful headmaster, and by no means a preëminent dean, who, it was said, would never have become a bishop but for the sympathy felt for him in high quarters on account of a peculiarly distressing family bereavement. Yet, in spite of this not very significant record, Tait at once rose to the situation, and proved himself, not only in London but at Canterbury, an eccle-

siastical ruler of the highest capacity. My experience of him was by no means official, but merely arose from my having been at a preparatory school with his son, poor Craufurd Tait, which led to my receiving occasional invitations to the palace for juvenile parties and cricket matches. On these occasions the kindness and geniality of the Bishop were especially conspicuous. He had a cordial word and a pleasant smile for every one of his young guests, particularly the public-school section of them, and would act as prompter at theatricals or scorer at cricket with as much zest and as little ceremony as if he were once more a schoolboy himself. There was not a touch of the forced affability or "grand seigneur" condescension which on such occasions so often characterizes the spiritual big-wig; quite simply, and yet without the smallest loss of dignity, he entered into the mirth and gaiety of the moment, genuinely enjoying the pleasure of those around him. Seldom, indeed, is a great

personage so gifted with the faculty of setting "the young idea" at ease as was the tactful, mellow-hearted Bishop.

I remember one particularly pleasant instance. Craufurd Tait used to beg for an occasional scamper with the harriers, and had asked me, then passing the holidays a few miles off, to let him know when a certain private pack happened to have a fixture within reach. Accordingly, getting news early one morning of a meet that day within practicable distance, I "footed it" off to Fulham to inform young Tait, holding my pony in reserve for later use. To my consternation, as the hall door opened I was confronted by the whole episcopal party advancing toward the chapel, the Bishop at its head! This was the last thing I had bargained for, and I was about to execute a hasty retreat when the Bishop good-humoredly saluted me with, "Well, my boy, I'm glad to see you; but why this early visit?" "I only came to tell Craufurd," I blurted

out, "that the harriers meet at ——" With a humorous twinkle, and placing his hand reassuringly on my shoulder, the kindly old fellow interrupted, "Hadn't you better come into chapel now, and tell us about the harriers over some breakfast afterward?" Rather ruefully I consented to go into chapel, but begged to be excused the breakfast, darting off after service with an alacrity which seemed greatly to amuse my episcopal captor.

I was relating this experience to an old country clergyman whom I became acquainted with some years ago, and he capped it with another instance of the Bishop's graceful kindness. My old friend had been, in his day, fellow and tutor of a famous Oxford college, but his university distinctions, as is too often the case, had failed to procure him ecclesiastical advancement, and when I met him he was the rather embittered incumbent of a dull college-living in a neighborhood where his ability and scholarship were very little appreciated. A year or so

before I made his acquaintance a new church had to be consecrated in his district, and Doctor Tait, who had then become primate, had promised to perform the ceremony, which was to be followed by a great luncheon party of local magnates in the Archbishop's honor. At this luncheon my friend happened to sit next a rather thick-headed and exceedingly consequential squire, who was by way of treating him somewhat cavalierly, while one or two places off was seated the Archbishop.

The old clergyman, who resented being thus rated as a negligible quantity, determined to impress his "off-hand" neighbor by speaking of the Primate in a manner that implied some sort of previous acquaintance, a pretension which the Squire greeted with disdainful incredulity. "And where," he exclaimed, raising his voice with a decidedly "superior" inflection, "were you so fortunate as to make his grace's acquaintance?"



“At Oxford, of course,” replied the clergyman rather irascibly.

“At Oxford? Indeed!” rejoined the Squire, still more contemptuously. “Ah, well, although you may remember the Archbishop, I am afraid it is hardly likely that his grace will remember you!”

Before the affronted clergyman could retort, the Archbishop, who had overheard the remark, bent forward from his chair and said to the Squire with impressive emphasis: “On the contrary, I can assure you that any one who, as I did, enjoyed the privilege of examining Mr. —— for his fellowship, would find it exceedingly difficult to forget him.” The Squire’s condescension promptly shrank into sheepishness, and the delighted clergyman held his head several inches higher for the rest of the afternoon.

My impressions of Mrs. Tait were not so favorable. She struck me as possessing more than one of the less attractive characteristics of a headmaster’s wife. Perhaps I was

unduly prejudiced by the fact that, although I was then in the fifth form at Harrow, she insisted on addressing me by my name *tout court*, merely prefixed by the unflattering adjective of "little." Her invitation, too, had the unpleasant ring of a command. "Little S——, you will remain to dinner"—a behest which, conveyed to me as it was one day from an open window, at a moment when I was endeavoring to mix on equal terms with some older boys, was particularly incensing. Aflame with offended dignity, I haughtily replied that I was afraid I was engaged, and stalked off to the stables for my pony almost to the consternation of the obsequious domestic chaplain.

Perhaps, however, my worst moment with Mrs. Tait was one evening when I arrived at a juvenile party somewhat too punctually, and on being ushered into the drawing-room found the formidable palace *châtelaine* its sole occupant. A more terrible five minutes I have never been fated to pass. Jowett *tête-*

*à-tête* with a freshman could not have been more appalling. In vain I ventured upon meteorological banalities; the majestic personage remained severely monosyllabic. At last, in desperation, I made a frantic resort to the *argumentum ad feminam*. Confronting me on the wall was a rather florid portrait of my hostess, from, I think, the brush of Mr. Sant, R. A. "What a beautiful portrait that is!" I murmured faintly. The great lady smiled condescending assent. "*Is it meant for you?*" I fatuously proceeded, emboldened by her tacit encouragement. What crushing reply was forming itself on those august lips I cannot say, for luckily at that moment other guests were announced, and I stole off, horrorstruck at my *gaulcherie*, to a distant part of the room. But if Mrs. Tait was a little exalted by her aggrandizement (*iête montée* was a sobriquet I heard applied to her by a caustic ecclesiastic), she had no doubt many excellent qualities for the wife of a diocesan, and was of real

service to her husband both at Fulham and at Lambeth.

Doctor Tait's successor in the see of London, Doctor Jackson, was an old friend of my family when rector of St. James's, Piccadilly. He was an able and dignified prelate (a "first class" man, by the way, of Lord Canning's year), who commanded respect, if not popularity, both in his former diocese of Lincoln and in London. In Lincolnshire he succeeded an easy-going bishop of the old school, who had allowed things to drift after the fashion of his predecessors till the spiritual condition of that essentially sporting county had become decidedly chaotic. Jackson came into the diocese determined to place things on a more modern footing; but he found his work cut out for him. Many of his clergy resented interference from a chief whose seat upon a horse was decidedly open to criticism, and I remember the Bishop himself telling me with a grim smile that down to the last days of his Lincoln episcopate he felt certain that

he was secretly credited with shooting foxes. One of his most famous sporting parsons was Squire King, the owner of Apology, a mare who won the Oaks; but that, I think, took place in the more recent days of Bishop Wordsworth, when Squire King ran horses under the pseudonym of Mr. Laund, a practice to which Doctor Wordsworth not unnaturally demurred, much to the parson's indignation.

Early in Doctor Jackson's episcopate Squire King and several other *laissez aller* divines were bidden to set their houses, or rather their churches, in order, and to prepare for confirmations and other ceremonials which had for years been almost a dead letter. Squire King received this mandate with mingled disgust and consternation. However, there was no help for it, and with the assistance of a brother rector, also of sporting proclivities, he proceeded to rub up his rusty ecclesiastical acquirements in preparation for the Bishop's dreaded and, from his point of view, quite uncalled-for incursion. On the eventful con-

firmation day the candidates were all duly assembled in the church, and Squire King, supported by his *fidus Achates*, stood properly cassocked, in punctilious readiness for his diocesan, who on entering proceeded up the chancel in order to take up his post at the altar. On reaching, however, the communion rail and attempting to open the wicket, the Bishop found it absolutely unnegotiable, the fact being that it had not been opened for years! The situation was too much for the aggrieved rector. Putting up his hand to his mouth, he said to his supporter in a resounding whisper, "*He'll have to take to the timber, Tom!*" then leisurely proceeded to tug at the offending wicket, which finally creaked open, though not before the scene had perilously verged on the comic, much to the scandal of the reforming prelate.

But perhaps one Parson Dymoke (either the champion or a member of his family) carried off the palm for clerical "inertia." Some years ago I took in to dinner the

daughter of the parson's successor, and she told me the following amazing story: Her father, on going down to reconnoiter his new living, was received by the parish clerk, an extremely old man who seemed on the brink of second childhood, and from whom he had the greatest difficulty in gleaning any information. After plying the parish Nestor with very little effect for some time, the new rector took his departure for the station, but he had not gone many steps when he heard a feeble, cracked old voice quavering after him, "Maister, maister, there be one more thing I wornts particler to axe yer." "Well, what is it?" responded the rector. "I wornts to know whether when you comes, sir, you intends to take the baptisms or shall Oi?"

The rector at once set the poor old clerk down as hopelessly daft, and replied in a half-soothing tone, "Come, come, my man; I shall take them, of course."

"As you will, sir," rejoined the old man.

"I only axed, because in old Sir 'Enerý's time *I allers did the baptisms.*"

Clergymen are not, as a rule, over accommodating as fellow-travelers, and my first experience of Norway was somewhat embittered by the methods of a rural dean who had come to Norway in search of health, though he was certainly the most vigorous and voracious invalid I ever beheld. It was a woful thing to be anticipated at meals by the reverend gentleman at any "station" where the commissariat was limited. Claiming, apparently, "benefit of clergy," he invariably swept the board, watching with malign exuberance the crestfallen faces of the hungry fellow-travelers he had contrived to forestall. In addition to this invidious practice, the holy man was gifted with the most offensive faculty of self-assertion and contradiction that I ever experienced even among members of his privileged calling, to say nothing of foisting upon us an inexhaustible flow of the stalest anecdotes, of which



he not infrequently would pose as the hero. One of them was, I recollect, recounted as an illustration of the readiness of some people to take offense, and was told by him in the following form: "I occasionally like to have a look at the hounds, and one day in the hunting season, as I was seated on my cob at the coverside, chatting with a group of sporting parishioners, one of them, a singularly conceited and at the same time empty-headed individual, began to lament that, while no one around him was afflicted with a single gray hair, his whiskers were already quite grizzled, though his head had curiously not changed color. 'Don't you know the reason, you idiot?' I said; 'you use your jaws so much and your brains so little!' Instead," he continued, "of the fellow joining in the laugh at my harmless pleasantry, would you believe it, he actually never spoke to me again!" This was all very well, but it so happened that a few months later I came across "his harmless pleasantry" in some

jest-book I was turning over in a dentist's waiting-room.

With reference to personal jokes, I have more than once found that a man resents a joke against his property, particularly his horses, even more than one against himself. For instance, I have never been forgiven by a country friend of mine who was extremely proud of a hunter whose knees, to my impartial eye, distinctly suggested occasional contact with mother earth. "What do you call him?" I inquired, by way of avoiding the delicate subject of the animal's merits. "Confessor," was the reply. "Confessor?" I ruthlessly rejoined; "not, I hope, because he is so often on his knees." I was not asked to prolong my visit at that country house, nor have I ever been invited to renew it. Again, a late noble lord never quite recovered the retort of a hunting friend whom he had asked to look at some horses of his that were on view at Tattersall's. "Well, did you see my horses?" inquired

the owner. "No," rejoined his friend, "but I heard them!"

But to return to my traveling companion. One of his party was an amiable and really invalided brother, utterly unlike him in appearance, thin, pale, and subdued, whom he treated with a deplorable lack of consideration. On one occasion, when, owing to the parson's overweening confidence in his own powers as an amateur Mr. Cook, only one cariole was procurable among the three, the clergyman insisted on monopolizing it during a hilly stage of quite a dozen miles, at the end of which his unfortunate brother came staggering in more dead than alive, while the parson drove up in his cariole, serene and rosy and as fresh as when he started.

"I am afraid you are rather done up," I sympathetically remarked to the unhappy brother. "That fellow will be the death of me," he gasped, looking with rueful pallor at his burly oppressor. "Oh, nonsense!"

laughed the latter with rollicking gusto; "do you all the good in the world, my dear chap; but as for me," he continued, suddenly lapsing into solemnity, "even a quarter of a mile over rough ground would most probably prove fatal to me. I have never had the proper use of my limbs since I caught a kind of plague at the funeral of a pauper parishioner. But," he added, unctuously upturning his beady little eyes, "it is the will of God; I do not murmur!" When I read of the death of the much-put-upon brother less than a year afterward, I wondered how much longer his life would have been spared had he refrained from accompanying his "stricken relative" on a tour of health.

One of our party on this particular route was an easy-going, amiable American who had decided to accompany us to Bergen and thence home. One morning, however, before it was light he entered our room and intimated his intention of not proceeding any farther. "But," we urged, "you'll have

to retrace your steps at least two hundred miles, and alone." "I can't help that," he replied dismally; "I would retrace them, even if it were to the north pole, to get quit of that parson. If I journey another twenty-four hours with him there'll be murder. It's bad enough to be bilked of one's food, but when, in addition, he jumps down your throat at every word you say, and bosses the show as if the whole country belonged to him, darn me if I can put up with it any longer!" And back he went. At Bergen, however, the parson met his match. He undertook to enlighten the table at dinner on the origin and ethics of national costume in the various countries of Europe. "In Switzerland," he declared, his capacious mouth stuffed with cranberry tart—"in Switzerland the national attire is nearly always black, in consequence of the austere temperament of the inhabitants." "Nonsense, sir," interrupted a wall-eyed man who sat near, laying down his spoon and fork. "Did

you say 'nonsense,' sir?" rejoined the parson, with a kind of turkeycock gobble. "I did, sir," rejoined the wall-eyed man, "and I repeat it. What you said was sheer nonsense." "I am sure my young friend here," retorted the clerical tyrant, eying me rather solicitously, "will agree with me that the mental characteristics of a nation have no small influence on its costume." "Rubbish, sir," contemptuously rejoined the wall-eyed man; "I am sure that these young gentlemen will agree to no such thing, and I am surprised that a person of some education, as you presumably are, should commit yourself to such an absurdity." "I think," said the parson, with an air of seraphic superiority, as we maintained a delighted silence—"I think that if there is no other course I will go and look at the newspapers." "I hate parsons," observed the wall-eyed man triumphantly as the door closed on his vanquished foe. "Besides, that fellow got helped first to everything and left nothing for anybody

else"; a complaint which, after three weeks' experience, we knew to be only too well founded.

The old race of parsons is not, even now, altogether extinct. I knew of one—still, I believe, the vicar of a remote hamlet in one of the southern counties—who would go any distance for a good dinner, but stirring from his fireside and tumbler of toddy to dispense spiritual consolation to a poor parishioner, even only a mile distant, was quite another matter. On one occasion a neighboring resident, not much given to hospitality, sent for him to administer the communion to his valet, a Swiss Protestant, who was lying at the point of death. It was a cold night, and though the parson had only to cross two or three fields, he ignored the summons in favor of the more pressing claims of a pipe and whisky-and-water. In the course of the night the poor Swiss died, and his master, very properly indignant, repaired the next morning to the vicarage to remon-

strate with the negligent pastor. "You must pardon me for saying," he remarked, as the vicar received his indignant remonstrances with easy nonchalance, "that in my opinion you have incurred a very great responsibility in neglecting to administer the last rites of the Church to a dying man." "Pooh! pooh!" testily retorted the man of God; "one can't be at everybody's beck and call after dinner on a winter's night. Besides," he added contemptuously, "the fellow was after all only a *darned Frenchman!*" Not long after this he fell out on some parish question with the lord of the manor, whose son and heir, a squireen who divided his time between field sports and the whisky bottle, so provoked the reverend gentleman at a village meeting that the latter, much to the admiration of his sporting parishioners, proceeded to tweak his opponent's nose, to the accompaniment of highly unclerical language. Retaliatory measures ensued with such energy that eventually magisterial intervention was in-



voked at the county town, when the reverend gentleman was bound over to keep the peace for six months, much to the disgust of the squireen, who had hoped for at least a heavy fine, and paraded the market-place proclaiming that though the bench might let the parson off, there was another tribunal that would deal with him less leniently. "I'll put the Bishop on to 'im," he vociferated with a vengeful flick of his thong, very much as he might threaten to set a terrier on to a rat. "I'll put the Bishop on to 'im, that's what I'll do." But the Bishop was even more unreasonable than the magistrates, much to the triumph of the militant parson, and the feud continued with unabated bitterness till one winter's afternoon the young squire's favorite black mare galloped up the manor-house avenue with an empty saddle, her owner having started home from some neighboring carouse with a loose rein and an unsteady hand on what proved to be his last ride. Poor fellow! Both he and his vicar

had come into the world a century too late. They would have made admirable studies for the pen of Henry Fielding.

But to revert to the princes of the Church. About thirty years ago I spent a week-end at Farnham, and on the Sunday morning, a little before the eleven o'clock service, encountered on the outskirts of the town a stately looking old-fashioned chariot which was slowly rumbling behind a pair of sleek horses toward the church from the direction of the castle. Leaning back in the chariot was a venerable figure with the episcopal cast of countenance with which one is familiar in the Georgian prints, courtly, dignified, and supremely composed. I inquired of a passer-by if he could tell me who the occupant of the carriage was, and ascertained that it was no other than "the ould Bishop Sumner, the Bishop of Winchester as was." What a world of associations the name called up! I was at once taken back half a century to the epalaustic days of King George the Fourth

and his obese charmer, the Marchioness of Conyngham, who was the founder of the fortunes of the irreproachable old prelate of whom I had just caught a fleeting glimpse.

Lady Conyngham, who, albeit a royal siren was not indifferent to her duties as the mother of a future marquis, had been at considerable pains to discover a suitable bear leader for her eldest son, the Earl of Mountcharles, who was about to make the indispensable "grand tour," and she finally fixed on a young clergyman, by name Sumner, of no particular family or connections, but strongly recommended on account of his excellent character and qualities. The Earl and his custodian accordingly departed on their travels, the latter having particular instructions in case of illness or any untoward occurrence to communicate at once with the Marchioness by means of a special courier. As ill-luck would have it, an awkward incident occurred quite early in the tour; for during a short stay at Geneva the callow young

nobleman fell desperately in love with a pretty Swiss girl, the daughter of a well-to-do resident, who, however, was wholly out of the question as father-in-law to an embryo marquis. The young clergyman exerted all his powers of persuasion, but to no purpose; affairs began to look ominous, and he accordingly secretly dispatched a letter to the Marchioness, explaining the situation and asking for instructions, by special courier, who was ordered to travel night and day. The messenger arrived at Brighton in hot haste and delivered his missive, which was naturally read by the Marchioness with feelings of the direst consternation. However, she swiftly decided on her course of action and indited a reply, which was intrusted to the courier with instructions to speed back to Geneva as fast as he had come. In the meantime the young Earl's devotion had grown daily more ardent, and his tutor awaited the return of the courier with feverish anxiety. At last the long-

looked-for answer arrived. The distracted clergyman tore open the letter and eagerly scanned the contents. The instructions were terse and terribly to the point. They contained only three words, "Marry her yourself." This was a surprise indeed, and not altogether a pleasant one; but Mr. Sumner was a far-seeing young divine, and after a brief consideration of all the circumstances, present and future, he made up his mind to obey, and before the end of the week the fascinating young Swiss lady had become Mrs. Sumner, and before the end of the year the accommodating bear-leader had become Canon of Windsor, with the certain prospect of a miter.

The mention of Lady Conyngham recalls another clergyman who in consummate obsequiousness even surpassed the famous court chaplain of Louis XIV. This worthy, who was suffering from an insufficiency of ecclesiastical loaves and fishes, contrived to gain admission to the Pavilion Chapel pulpit on

some occasion when the King was in residence at Brighton in company with Lady Conyng-ham. His sermon was, needless to say, one of those jumbles of doctrinal platitudes and profuse flattery which mostly characterized the royal preachers of that day. But familiarity is apt to breed contempt, even for adulation, and finding the King's attention beginning to wander, the preacher made an attempt to recapture it with a sentence that is assuredly unsurpassed in the annals of clerical subservience. "When," he proceeded, upturning his eyes sanctimoniously to the chapel ceiling—"when we think of the heavenly mansions"—then suddenly pausing, he inclined his gaze to the royal pew and interposed apologetically, "or, I should say, the heavenly *pavilions*." History does not record the subsequent career of this holy man; but if he failed to profit by this superlative interjection the ingratitude of princes deserves even stronger reprehension than it has hitherto incurred.

In refreshing contrast to this incident is one recorded of Lord Thurlow in reference to another Brighton sermon. He was walking on the Steyne with the Prince of Wales when they were met by the Bishop of St. Asaph, an unctuous prelate who at once besought the royal attendance for his sermon on the following Sunday. Assent was graciously accorded, and, flushed with his success, the Bishop incautiously turned to Lord Thurlow and expressed a hope that he would also honour him with his presence. "No," growled the savage old lord, who affected religion but little and bishops still less; "I hear enough of your damned nonsense in the House of Lords, where I can answer you, and it's not likely I'm going to listen to it in church, where I can't!"

But the present day has been able to produce an example of clerical time-serving which will bear comparison with any recorded of the eighteenth century. It is narrated in one of the published letters of the late

Dean Merivale, and as it has been curiously overlooked by the majority of readers, I venture to reproduce it here. The Dean relates that, although not much given to using "special" prayers in the cathedral services, he made an exception at the time when General Gordon's life was hanging on a thread, and conceiving that there could be no possible objection, took the step without consulting any of his chapter. On the following day, however, he received an indignant protest from one of the canons, who complained that if the fact came to Mr. Gladstone's ears it might have a very prejudicial effect on the promotion of himself and his colleagues. So shocking an instance of calculating worldliness on the part of a so-called "servant of God" is probably unique. It places even Samuel Wilberforce on a pinnacle, though that versatile prelate's diary discloses a degree of mundane ambition, to say nothing of envy, hatred and uncharitableness, which is far from edifying reading.



His lordship's admirers were greatly disturbed at the manner in which the diaries were edited, or rather unedited, and one of them, the late Lord Granville (who was riding with the Bishop when he met with his fatal accident), remonstrated with Mr. Reginald Wilberforce on his injudicious way of dealing with his father's journals. "You must pardon me," he said, "for remarking that by quoting so indiscriminately from your father's diaries you have done his memory a very great injustice." "Oh," the Bishop's uncompuentious first-born is said to have replied, "if your lordship only knew what I have left out!" The innuendo (filial piety is not always a strong point with the offspring of spiritual celebrities) was probably well enough founded, for the Bishop was credited with many unrepeatable witticisms and anecdotes, certain of which may have found a place in his diary. He was, in truth, more a political ecclesiastic of the Talleyrand type than an English nineteenth-

century bishop; and had he been a Frenchman in the pre-Revolutionary days he would probably, like Talleyrand, have abjured the episcopal purple for a minister's portfolio. His wit and eloquence were undeniable, but he had qualities which enabled him to adapt himself to any company. When I was a small boy I chanced to stay with my parents at a country house near Romsey, where Bishop Wilberforce and Dean Hook had just preceded us as guests, and I remember the following riddles were circulated as having been propounded by the Bishop to the young ladies of the house after dinner. The first he had asked in a tone of simulated solemnity which put his fair friends entirely off the scent: "What does the Sun in his glory say to the Rose in her bashfulness?" Every sort of poetical solution was suggested, but in vain, and at last the Bishop, suddenly changing his voice, supplied the banal answer: "You be blowed!" The next riddle involved his fellow-guest, Doctor Hook, and was

again addressed to the young ladies: "What articles of feminine attire do a couple of church dignitaries now present typify?" Again the problem, after innumerable guesses, was given up, and the Bishop chucklingly solved it with the following answer: "Hook and eye [I]." I think it was after this very visit that he proceeded to pay that memorable one to Lord Palmerston at Broadlands, in the course of which the distinguished pair bandied couplets so felicitously out of Tate and Brady. By repeating the incident I shall probably incur the charge of "chestnutting," but as it is not so well known as many of the Wilberforce stories I will venture to narrate it for the benefit of the uninitiated. Palmerston and the Bishop were not particularly fond of one another (indeed, the Bishop's animosity against Palmerston as a supposed "spoker of his wheel" was at times sadly unchristian), but the tolerant old minister could on occasion put up with even a virulent churchman, provided he was witty, and

the Bishop was accordingly invited to spend a week-end at the well-known Hampshire seat. On the Sunday the weather looked threatening, and Palmerston proposed that they should drive to church. Wilberforce, however, insisted that it would not rain, and preferred to walk, while his host expressed his intention of driving. Accordingly, the Bishop started on foot, and after a few minutes, sure enough, down came the rain. When it had settled into a steady downpour Palmerston's brougham came up, and Pam., putting his head out of the window, exclaimed, with roguish triumph:

“How blest is he who ne'er consents  
By ill advice to walk.”

The Bishop, however, was equal to him, for he instantly retorted:

“Nor stands in sinners' ways, nor sits  
Where men profanely talk.”

Any one who saw “Soapy Sam” in the saddle could not have been greatly surprised to hear of his fatal fall. He had an essentially

bad seat, and was given to riding with a loose, uneven rein which, when a horse is cantering down hill over rough ground, naturally invites disaster. I used often to wonder that more episcopal necks were not broken when I beheld the "Black Brigade" taking their exercise in the evening "Row," a function, alas! long since fallen into desuetude. One evening as I was walking in the Row with an old Harrow friend, R. B. Place, of the Horse Artillery, Wilberforce and one or two other bishops passed us mounted on particularly clever-looking cobs, while immediately after them came a procession of Semitic financiers, also excellently horsed. "Why, the Jews and the bishops are better mounted than any one in the Row!" I remarked. "How did they manage to pick up such good-looking hacks?" "Oh, *by hook or by crook*," replied Place, with a significant glance at the nasal conformation of one of the Hebrew Croesuses. Place, by the way, was the gayest and most promising of "gunners," who, had he lived,

would assuredly have done signal credit to his old school, to which he was devotedly attached. He died quite early in India, of cholera; but so remarkable an appreciation did his commanding officer write home of him that, although he had not fallen in action, Doctor Butler (who read the letter to the sixth form) made an exception in his case, and sanctioned the erection of a memorial to him in the school chapel. Place, though the keenest of soldiers, had also great literary gifts, and was, I believe, one of the very few capable of writing a sympathetic and discriminating memoir of Shelley, to which at the time of his death he was devoting all his leisure. To see him at a supper of "The Windsor Strollers," or chaffing old school-fellows at Lord's, or riding awkward customers in the regimental races, one would never have suspected the existence of this deeper vein; but, in the opinion of those who were competent to form a correct judgment, his fragmentary work revealed the highest

promise, and Shelley literature is unquestionably the poorer by his premature death.

But to return to Wilberforce. Much has been said about his successful encounters with Lord Westbury; but on the whole it was generally considered that the Chancellor did not get the worst of it, while the castigation which the Bishop received from Huxley would have humbled a less arrogant man for the remainder of his life. He had, in truth, very little of the intellectual pure metal which certain of his partizans claimed for him, being far more an example of that "sounding brass and tinkling cymbal" which arrest the ear but fail to convince the mind. The unerring perception of the Prince Consort soon rated Wilberforce at his proper level, and it was the prejudice against him which the Prince created in the mind of Queen Victoria that saved England the indignity, if not the scandal, of having this supple and self-seeking ecclesiastic placed at the head of the Church. Some of his defects were

probably hereditary; for his father, the "obscure and plebeian Wilberforce" (as Lord Rosebery has correctly but cruelly described him), though possessing many estimable qualities, was undoubtedly something of a humbug. I shall never forget the shock with which I read in William Jerdan's autobiography of the astonishing discovery made by Jerdan in taking over some house in Brompton which old Wilberforce was relinquishing. Wilberforce asked Jerdan as a favor to allow him a little time for the removal of his wine, which it was inconvenient to transfer at the expiration of his tenancy. Jerdan was a little surprised that so fervent an apostle of temperance should pollute his house with any wine at all; but his surprise developed into sheer amazement when, on the cellar being emptied later on, he beheld the choicest and most varied collection of vintages it had ever been his fortune to set eyes on. This, and the disenchantment occasioned by Wilberforce's



authentic last words, "I think I could eat another slice of that veal pie," have, perhaps unreasonably, not a little impaired my veneration for the emancipator of the blacks and the would-be reclamer of Richard Brinsley Sheridan.

The famous "Imaginary Conversations" of Walter Savage Landor would be difficult to imitate, but Mr. W. H. Mallock or Mr. Andrew Lang might attempt an effective "modern series," in which a conversation between Doctor Samuel Wilberforce and Professor Benjamin Jowett could be made supremely attractive. Had Wilberforce lived rather longer he would probably have been found, like many another of Jowett's former persecutors, partaking of the cosmopolitan hospitality for which the heretical Professor was so famous. Somebody wittily observed that in his eagerness to entertain lions Jowett welcomed even those that had done their best to tear him to pieces; and once master of Balliol, in appearance at all events, he

sank any resentment he may have felt against Tait and others of his spiritual arraigners.

Much has been written about him since his death, notably by his accredited biographers, Messrs. Abbot and Campbell, but I venture to think not always judiciously. His conversation and correspondence have assuredly received scant justice, and if the world had been favored with more of his *mots* and fewer of his letters to "pet" ladies—compositions mostly characterized by the purr, without the compensating quality of William Cowper—the master would have been more easily recognized by his former friends and pupils. Neither have the attempts of his biographers to explain his attitude in religious matters been particularly fortunate. It was, in truth, quite as nebulous as that of Frederick Maurice, while his sermons, even in Westminster Abbey, were little more than Socratic lectures sandwiched between a couple of collects. But whatever his faith, he was inherently a great and,

on the whole, a just ruler, who devoted not only all his energies, but a large portion of his means, to promoting the welfare and fame of his college. If he had a failing worthy of the name, it was a weakness for those born in the purple, which was in some degree accounted for by his own rather humble origin; but this was more than redeemed by the strong and unfaltering friendship which he always displayed for genius in whatever station of life.

If Jowett had once satisfied himself that a man was worth backing there was nothing he would not do for him, not only at Oxford, but in many instances in after life. But, then, genius or very exceptional ability was an indispensable qualification; with the mere plodder who pulled off his "first class" by the sweat of his brow, so to speak, he had little sympathy, and many a man of this caliber has felt keenly the indifference with which he was treated by the master. Dullness or mediocrity was in his eyes scarcely

atoned for by a "double first," while the exclusion of a man of real brilliance from the highest place was to him a matter of very little concern. When Lewis Nettleship was only awarded a "second class" in the Final Classical Schools, Jowett received the intelligence with the contemptuous remark, "H'm! All I can say is that Mr. Nettleship was far more competent to examine the examiners than the examiners were to examine Mr. Nettleship"; while Arnold Toynbee, whose health never allowed him to appear in any honor list, he appointed Tutor of Balliol, and at the time of Toynbee's death was promoting his election to a fellowship. Jowett's friendship for Arnold Toynbee was wholly admirable. As Lord Milner has told us in his charming monograph, Toynbee came up to Oxford absolutely unknown, entering at Pembroke out of deference to the wishes of a former tutor who had been an alumnus of that college. Shortly after joining Pembroke, which he found by no

means congenial, he competed for the Brack-enbury scholarship, which he failed to win, gaining, however, a *proxime accessit*. But Jowett, always on the lookout for promising recruits, offered him rooms in the college, which Toynbee gladly accepted, supposing that his migration from Pembroke would only be a matter of form. The master of Pembroke, however, strongly resented this kind of decoying on the part of the master of Balliol, and he peremptorily refused Toynbee permission to migrate. Nothing daunted, Jowett suggested an appeal to the Chancellor, who, however, decided in favor of the master of Pembroke. At this stage an ordinary man would have "thrown up the sponge," but Jowett was indomitable. He carefully examined the statutes, and found that, under the circumstances, Toynbee could take his name off the books of the university and after the lapse of a year join any college he pleased, his terms of residence still being allowed to count. Jowett, accordingly, ad-

vised Toynbee to take this course, promising to admit him to Balliol as a guest during his year of non-membership of the university. Toynbee adopted this advice and Jowett proved even better than his word. So signal an act of friendship to an unknown and almost untried man was highly creditable to Jowett, whose affection and admiration for Toynbee were steadily maintained to the last. I remember dining with Jowett in the early eighties, Toynbee being one of the oddly assorted guests, who included Lord and Lady Bath as representing the *haute noblesse* (Lord Bath was an ex-lord chamberlain and had about as much in common with Jowett as Lord Suffield has with, say, Mr. John Morley), Mr. and Mrs. Goschen, Lord Justice and Lady Bowen, the Bodleian librarian and his wife, a Balliol don, and one of those dusky potentates *in statu pupillari* who were nearly always represented at the master's dinners. The evening is memorable to me from a little incident in connection

with a now world-famous man, Lord Milner. As Toynbee was leaving, Mr. Goschen called after him and asked if he had seen anything lately of Milner, who had been Toynbee's closest friend at Balliol. Toynbee replied that he had seen him recently, and that he was then writing for the *Pall Mall Gazette*, having left the bar. "Left the bar!" observed Lord Justice Bowen with incisive suavity; "he was only there one day!" That was, I think, in 1882, and only four years later Milner (whom I think Mr. Goschen at the time of Jowett's dinner had only once seen) was brought into the treasury as the new Chancellor of the Exchequer's right-hand man, thus gaining the first step toward the great position which he now occupies.

The circumstances connected with this appointment of Mr. Goschen to the exchequer are, I have always thought, as dramatic as any that have occurred in English politics. The principal actor was, of course, Lord Randolph Churchill, who, intoxicated with

his rapid advancement, had resolved to try his strength with no less a personage than the Prime Minister himself. "*L'audace, l'audace, toujours l'audace*" was his maxim, and for a moment it looked as if the game were going in his favor, when he suddenly played a card which proved his ruin. That is to say, having, as he thought, reckoned with every contingency, he resigned office, making certain that he was indispensable to the Government, who would be compelled to supplicate him to return on his own terms. But just as the great Liverpool wheat "cornerer" omitted from his exhaustive calculations one remote area, so it had never occurred to Lord Randolph that a successor to him might be found outside the ranks of the Conservative party. His resignation was accepted, but he regarded that only as a matter of form, and waited, first in surprise, then in something like consternation, for Lord Salisbury's humble petition to him to resume office. Day after day passed



and nothing came—not a messenger, not a note, not a syllable of any description. What did it all mean? Could it be possible that he was a “negligible quantity,” and that they were going to do without him, after all? A paragraph in *The Times* soon enlightened him. Taking up the paper at breakfast, the announcement met his eye that Mr. Goschen had been offered and accepted the post of chancellor of the exchequer lately resigned by Lord Randolph Churchill. “By God!” he is reported to have exclaimed, dropping the newspaper, “I had forgotten Goschen!” But for that historic oversight Lord Milner might never have had his political chance.

Jowett, toward the end of his life, came perilously near being a Jingo, and though at one time he dabbled in Socialism and posed as the patron of trades unions and combinations, a certain event in which those methods ran seriously counter to his plans and convenience cured him finally of all

tendencies in that direction. This was nothing less than a workman's strike during the erection of the new Balliol buildings, which were under contract to be finished by a particular date, and Jowett, relying on their punctual completion, had fixed the day and issued invitations to all the great Balliol alumni for the opening ceremony. To his consternation, when the day fixed for completion was approaching, the workmen adopted the form of redress hitherto approved by the master, and struck to a man. In a moment all his sympathy with the tyrannized employed was sent to the winds. Recanting the gospel of discontent, he vigorously preached that of obedience to obligation and humble allegiance to the law of contract, and from that day forward regarded the British workman with even less favor than he did the average undergraduate. Take him, however, altogether, he was a truly great man, only disfigured by an extravagant veneration for the augustly born. It is

pitiable to reflect that the almost inspired interpreter of Plato should have demeaned himself by penning two columns of encomium on a ducal nonentity. But such, alas! is too often the attitude of the "aristocracy of intellect" to the "aristocracy of accident."

Lord Milner's career, by the way, has been in many ways remarkable. He received his early education in Germany, where his father, an Englishman, held a professorship in one of the universities. Thence he migrated to King's College, London (where, I think, he first became acquainted with Arnold Toynbee), proceeding later on to Balliol, to the mastership of which college Jowett had a year or two before succeeded. At Balliol he rapidly acquired a brilliant reputation for scholarship, gaining nearly every university distinction with surprising ease, and crowning his achievements with a fellowship of New. On leaving Oxford, he decided, probably on Jowett's advice, to adopt the bar as a profession, on which he embarked, equipped necessarily

with the well-endowed Eldon and Derby scholarships, usually conferred on the foremost man of the year who has elected to cast in his lot with the law. But Milner soon found his chosen vocation eminently distasteful. Possibly it might have been otherwise had he selected the chancery branch, but for some reason he had fixed on the common-law bar, which, much impressed by Lord Bowen's great success in that department, Jowett was apt to suggest as the shorter road to distinction. But to Milner's quality of mind common law intricacies and technicalities were peculiarly repugnant, while the prospect of spending the best part of his life in cajoling British juries soon became positively intolerable. Accordingly, a few months' not very assiduous attendance at chambers and, I believe, a single experience of circuit, sufficed to convince him that he had mistaken his vocation, from which he retreated with unmistakable relief into the far more congenial atmosphere of journalism.

But although welcomed by John Morley as a promising recruit to the staff of the *Pall Mall*, oddly enough Milner never attained any very conspicuous rank as a leader writer, and in the opinion of many of his friends he seemed at this period to be in considerable danger of missing his mark in life altogether. But fortunately for him the replacement of Mr. Morley by Mr. Stead produced changes in the conduct and tone of the paper which determined Milner to withdraw from the staff, and the general election of 1885 happening to take place just at that time, he boldly made a fresh departure by offering himself as one of the Liberal candidates for Middlesex, where, however, he was signally defeated. So far, considering his brilliant abilities and the great things that had been predicted of him, his career had been disappointing. For nearly ten years (he took his degree, I think, in 1876) he had "hung fire," and even after Mr. Goschen took him by the hand and enabled him to make his

first real start, few anticipated that he would attain more than a high rung on the "official" ladder. His excellent work in Egypt, and the admirable book that was the outcome of his experiences there, secured for him, no doubt, considerable prestige, but the promotion to which it led—the chairmanship of the Board of Inland Revenue—is usually regarded as the final stage in successful "officialism," and it was generally considered that with that snug appointment and its usual accessory—a red ribbon—Milner would have to rest contented. Fortunately, however, in this ordinarily uneventful sphere he was afforded an exceptional opportunity of proving his capacity, being entrusted by Sir William Harcourt, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the financial compilation of his drastic "Death Duties" statutes, an undertaking which he accomplished with conspicuous success. Still, hitherto his laurels as a public functionary had been won exclusively in the sphere of finance, and when in 1897 he was selected

to succeed Lord Rosmead in that cemetery of reputation, South Africa, the appointment was unquestionably a surprise even to those who were most impressed with his merits. One very distinguished administrator, who had the highest opinion of his financial capacity, expressed a very decided opinion that he was not the man for the post, and it must be owned that in the matter of diplomacy—a sphere in which the new High Commissioner had practically had no experience—these misgivings have not been wholly unjustified. But in other respects Lord Milner must be credited with as much success as was attainable under conditions of unprecedented difficulty, while his well-deserved honors, borne with the unaffected modesty that has always been one of his many charms, but poorly compensated for the stupendous toil and anxiety that have been his incessant lot for the last six years.

I have often wondered whether the course of events in South Africa would have been

different if it had been possible for the late Lord Dufferin to assume the high commissionership in succession to Lord Rosmead.

President Kruger was probably proof against all diplomacy, however consummate, but Lord Dufferin had more than once prevailed over even the most rigid opposition. A friend of mine, formerly the colonel of an Indian cavalry regiment, told me that he was on escort duty on the memorable occasion when the Ameer of Afghanistan came into Nawal Pindee for a state conference with Lord Dufferin, then Viceroy of India. "I was on duty," said my friend, "when the Ameer rode in, and a more sullen, unaccommodating countenance than he presented I had never beheld. Shortly afterward the conference began, when he and Lord Dufferin held a prolonged parley, no one else being present. At the end of the conference," continued the Colonel, "I was again on duty, and saw the Ameer come out. I could hardly believe it was the same man. As if by



magic the sullen frowns had been transformed into beaming smiles, and the understanding then arrived at by Lord Dufferin's superb diplomacy was productive of benefits that are felt in India to this day."

But a peculiarly ingratiating manner was of course a valuable adjunct to Lord Dufferin's diplomatic dexterity. It would be difficult to find the man, high or low, who did not leave his presence thoroughly captivated by his rare courtesy and charm. The following incident will explain the reach of his almost unique popularity. A friend of mine, an able young Oxford man, was some years ago acting as traveling tutor to a certain youthful peer who was making a tour around the world. At Calcutta they were the guests of Lord Dufferin (then Viceroy), to whom they had letters of introduction. After a most enjoyable stay they proceeded on their journey, and some two or three months afterward found themselves again in the neighborhood of the vice-regal court, which was

making a "progress" through a certain district of the country. They were accordingly invited to some court function, where, as is the custom, all the guests ranged themselves in two lines, between which the Viceroy slowly passed, exchanging greetings with any that he happened personally to know. My friend, the young tutor, who was stationed at about the middle of one of the long lines, separated from his charge, was, much to his disappointment, passed by the Viceroy without recognition, but he was soon consoled. When Lord Dufferin reached the end of the line he turned round, and after glancing back for a moment in the direction of the tutor, he retraced his steps to the spot where he was standing and, putting out his hand, apologized for having at the moment failed to recognize him. A more perfect example of high breeding in the best sense of the word it would be impossible to find.

Again, Lord Dufferin was always the kindest and most considerate encourager of literary

work, however young and unknown the author. I have before me at this moment a letter of his, written to a youthful poetaster (whose verses had been sent to him by an acquaintance), in which the generous praise and gracefully tempered criticism present a charming contrast to the few lines of formal acknowledgment that are usually accorded to unknown writers.

For such a man it is not surprising that the nation should have felt a regret more poignant than has been evoked by the death of any statesman since the days of Palmerston.

I have alluded to Mr. Ruskin in connection with Howell, whom I remember flitting gracefully "at the wings" of the Royal Institution on one of the famous Friday evenings, when the illustrious art-critic delivered a supremely fascinating but discursive address on, I think, Gothic architecture. In the course of this lecture he recited with singular effect, in spite of his curious half-Scotch intonation, Sir Walter

Scott's "Lay of Lovely Rosabello," enunciating every line in a way which many of our fashionable unpunctuating reciters would do well to imitate.

More than one friend of mine belonged to Ruskin's famous gang of undergraduate "diggers" on the Hincksey road near Oxford, and one of the professor's mementoes at Brantwood was the spade used by Arnold Toynbee, who was among the earliest and most ardent of the "diggers." Another friend of considerable eminence, long since deceased, was an occasional correspondent of Ruskin, one of whose highly characteristic letters which lately came into my possession I will venture to transcribe, as it will not appear in any of the published series:

"DENMARK HILL, February 8, 1866.

"*My dear Sir:* I am heartily obliged by your letter and particularly glad that you like that piece about human nature. I shall speak more and more strongly as I can get

a hearing—every word of truth spoken to the English public at present is answered by a stone flung at you, and I can't take a cartload all at once.

“So Mrs. —— is a friend of yours. She is a fine creature: but when women reach a certain age their heads get as hard as cocoanuts—and it's lucky if the milk inside isn't sour; which it is not yet with her.

“Where did you find that saying of the lawyers about honesty? It would be useful to me.

Truly yours,

“J. RUSKIN.

“It is curious your speaking of ‘the Happy Warrior.’ I had always read it just as you do, as a type of what all men may become.

“Sir Herbert Edwardes read it to me, showing that it is quite specially written for soldiers and literal in every expression. I am going to use part of it in a lecture to the cadets at Woolwich on the 16th. It is entirely glorious.

“Is your little tradesman at Bethnal Green still living?”

Perhaps the most vivid likeness of Mr. Ruskin at the above period is the bust by Sir Edgar Boehm which I remember seeing at the studio, when the sculptor drew my attention to the marked contrast between the two sides of Ruskin's face; one, as he put it, being essentially intellectual and the other having many of the characteristics of an ape!

Old George Richmond's portrait of him, even allowing for his comparative youth at the time that it was taken, was, like most of Richmond's portraiture, considered far too flattering. It is a pity that Sargent never had an opportunity of painting him. He would have produced a masterpiece of characterization.

One of the neatest “plays upon names” that I remember was achieved at a dinner given many years ago to two well-known judges by the bar of the Western Circuit. The

guests were Mr. Justice, afterward Lord Justice, Lush and Mr. Justice Sheo, one of the first Roman Catholics raised to the judicial bench. After dinner, when the regulation toasts had been disposed of, a member of the bar rose and remarked that it was his pleasing duty to propose a toast which had been honored by the circuit from time immemorial—namely, “Wine and Woman”; “accordingly,” he concluded after a few appropriately humorous remarks, “it is my privilege to give you ‘Wine and Woman,’ which with peculiar appositeness I am enabled to couple with the names of Her Majesty’s judges who have honored us with their presence here to-night—*Lush and She(o).*”

Mr. Justice Sheo, being an Irishman, no doubt duly appreciated the sally, but I think it can hardly have been palatable to Mr. Justice Lush, who combined excellent legal attainments with a considerable degree of Nonconformist austerity.

In another section I have referred to the

authorship of "Junius's Letters," which nowadays are confidently attributed to Sir Philip Francis, though apparently on very little better ground than a rather striking similarity of handwriting. With all due deference to the ingenious gentlemen who have so positively pronounced for Francis, I am bound to confess that, after a not altogether superficial consideration of the subject, I am strongly inclined to accept Sir Philip's savagely iterated disclaimers and to ascribe the celebrated epistles to an author far better qualified to compose them. As regards Francis, there are to my mind two insuperable objections: the actual writer must have been thoroughly "behind the scenes," both in court and political affairs, which at the time the letters were published was certainly not the case with Francis, the son of a schoolmaster and a mere War Office clerk; while the peculiar style of the writer, or at all events some suggestion of it, must have been occasionally apparent in other works from the same hand,



a fact which it is impossible to establish with regard to Francis, for in the whole of the two bulky volumes of his correspondence I can confidently state that there is not a single sentence or expression that has the smallest affinity with the style of the famous letters. This correspondence, mostly dating from India, is precisely that of the pompous, ponderous, and frequently splenetic East Indian "big-wig" of that period, the type of gentleman who raked in his rupees, contracted a liver complaint, and returned home in due course to tyrannize over his family and lay down the laws in Leadenhall Street. So far as I have been able to discover, the sole characteristic that Francis had in common with "Junius" was abundant rancor, which, however, he always wreaked with a bludgeon, while "Junius" invariably used the finest rapier. "Solder her up! Solder her up! She's lived thirty years too long!" Sir Philip's elegant exclamation on hearing of the demise of his ill-used wife, is a fair sample of his

best manner, and though it may justify his title (accorded by Rogers) of "Junius Brutus," it is certainly very far from helping to identify him with the author of such phrases as "You sit down infamous and contented!" (to General Burgoyne) or "As for Mr. Wedderburn, there is that about him which even treachery cannot trust!" (of Lord Loughborough).

A far more probable solution of the authorship is to be found in the following remarkable extract from a book with which the public is fortunately, perhaps, very little familiar, namely, Lady Anna Hamilton's "Secret History of the Court of England from the Accession of George the Third to the Death of George the Fourth": "It was during this year [1763] that the celebrated 'Letters of Junius' first appeared. These compositions were distinguished as well by the force and elegance of their style as by the violence of their attacks on individuals.

"The first of these letters was printed in

the *Public Advertiser* of December 19th and addressed to the King, animadverting on all the errors of his reign and speaking of his ministers with contempt and abhorrence.

“An attempt was made to suppress this letter by the strong arm of the law, but the effort proved abortive, as the jury acquitted the printer, who was the person prosecuted. ‘Junius’ (though under a feigned name) was the most competent person to speak fully on political subjects. He had long been the bosom friend of the King, and spent all his leisure time at court.

“No one, therefore, could better judge of the state of public affairs than himself, and his sense of duty to the nation animated him to plead for the long-estranged rights of the people; indeed, upon many occasions he displayed such a heroic firmness, such an invincible love of truth and such an unconquerable sense of honor that he committed his talents to be exercised freely in the cause of public justice, and subscribed his addenda under an en-

velope rather than injure his prince or leave the interests of his countrymen to the risk of fortuitous circumstances.

“We know of whom we speak, and therefore feel authorized to assert that in his character were concentrated a steady friend of the Prince’s as well as of the people.

“Numerous disquisitions have been written to prove the identity of ‘Junius,’ but in spite of many arguments to the contrary we recognize him in the person of the Reverend James Wilmot, D.D., rector of Barton-on-the-Heath and Aubcester, Warwickshire, and one of His Majesty’s justices of the peace for that county.

“Doctor Wilmot was born in 1720, and during his stay in the university became intimately acquainted with Doctor Johnson, Lord Archer, and Lord Plymouth, as well as Lord North, who was then entered at Trinity College. From these gentlemen the Doctor imbibed his political opinions and was introduced to the first society in the kingdom.

“At the age of thirty Doctor Wilmot was confidentially trusted with the most secret affairs of state and was also the bosom friend of the Prince of Wales, afterward George the Third, who at that time was under the entire tutorage of Lord Bute. For this nobleman Doctor Wilmot had an inveterate hatred, for he despised the selfish principles of Toryism.

“As soon as the Princess of Mecklenburgh (the late Queen Charlotte) arrived in the country in 1761, Doctor Wilmot was introduced as the especial friend of the King, and this will at once account for his being chosen to perform the second marriage ceremony of their Majesties at Kew Palace as before related.

“A circumstance of rather a singular nature occurred to Doctor Wilmot in the year 1765, inasmuch as it was the immediate cause of the bold and decisive line of conduct which he afterward adopted. It was simply this: the Doctor received an anonymous letter requesting an interview with the writer in

Kensington Gardens. The letter was written in Latin and sealed, the impression of which was a Medusa's head.

"The Doctor at first paid no attention to it, but during the week he received four similar requests written by the same hand, and upon receipt of the last Doctor Wilmot provided himself with a brace of pocket pistols and proceeded to the gardens at the hour appointed.

"The Doctor felt much surprise when he was accosted by *Lord Bute*, who immediately suggested that Doctor Wilmot should assist the administration, as *Her Majesty* had entire confidence in him. The Doctor briefly declined, and very soon afterward commenced his political career. Thus the German Princess always endeavored to inveigle the friends of the people.

"Lord Chatham had been introduced to Doctor Wilmot by the Duke of Cumberland, and it was from these associations with the court and the members of the several admin-

istrations that the Doctor became so competent to write his unparalleled 'Letters of Junius.'

"We here subjoin an incontrovertible proof of Doctor Wilmot's being the author of the work alluded to:

"'I have this day completed my last letter of Ju——s, and sent the same to L——d S——ne. W——, March the 17, 1772.'

"This is a facsimile of the Doctor's handwriting, and must forever set at rest the long-disputed question of 'Who was the author of Junius?'"

The L——d S——ne mentioned in the above-quoted memorandum was of course Lord Shelburne, afterward first Marquis of Lansdowne, and it is well known that this nobleman at the close of his life expressed the intention of revealing the identity of "Junius," of which he had long been aware. Before, however, he could carry it into effect he was seized with an illness which very shortly proved fatal, and he carried the secret with him to the grave.





IV.

ART AND LETTERS

*The Pre-Raphaelite Painters and Charles Augustus Howell—  
A Curious Dinner Party—Leonard Rowe Valpy—A  
Luncheon at Howell's—Mr. Swinburne—His Contempt  
for Tennyson—His Eton Days and Adventure with the  
Headmaster—His Novel—Edward Burne-Jones—His  
Indignation Against Du Maurier—Oscar Wilde as a Wit  
and Playwright—D. G. Rossetti—J. T. Nettleship—  
"The Lost Leader"—Browning—Sir Edgar Boehm—  
Thackeray and Trollope—Tom Robertson—H. J. Byron  
and Sir F. Burnand—Patty Oliver—"Tommy" Holmes  
—Palgrave Simpson and "the Gods"—Alfred Wigan—  
Aimée Désclée—William Terriss—A Remarkable Dream.*

## IV.

### ART AND LETTERS

FORTY years ago the pre-Raphaelite painters were practically unknown outside their own small and very select circle; but the adoration of a clique, however gratifying, provides but little in the way of bread and butter, and it was a happy inspiration on the part of "Gabriel" Rossetti and "Ned" Burne-Jones when they appointed an informal agent for the disposal of their eccentric wares in the person of a certain seductive Anglo-Portuguese gentleman, by name Charles Augustus Howell, at that time the secretary and factotum of Mr. Ruskin. Howell was the most astonishing compound of charm and chicanery that I have ever encountered in the flesh or read of in fiction. When I first knew him the charm only was

*en evidence*, though one had an instinctive feeling that the accompanying quality was not very far below the surface. I never clearly understood what his earlier record had been; but he talked vaguely of kinship with a Scotch baronet, and when finding it convenient to quote a professional status, would describe himself as a civil engineer. The first intimation I had of his connection with that abstruse vocation was while traveling with him one day in the vicinity of Clapham Junction, when, the railway carriage beginning to jolt unpleasantly, he promptly put his head out of the window and vociferated for the guard. The train was brought to a standstill and the guard hurried up breathless, evidently expecting to be greeted with news of a murder, or at least a murderous assault. He was therefore not unnaturally a trifle nettled when Howell haughtily bade him look to the couplings, which he declared were causing a vibration that might seriously imperil the integrity of his spine.

Howell's bohemian aspect and half-foreign accent scarcely tended to strengthen the guard's belief in his *bona fides*, and he muttered menacingly that "if people played this sort of pranks over here they might find themselves run in." "Fellow," retorted Howell with withering scorn, "I'd have you know that I am a civil engineer, and if you don't put your damned couplings to rights I shall lodge a complaint against you at Clapham Junction." He then began to fumble in his pockets for a card-case, but the guard evidently thought it was for a poniard, and with a scared countenance and profuse apologies hastened back to his van. In later days the civil engineer *rôle* was resorted to with even greater effect, for, his finances being at low water, Howell hit upon the masterly expedient of taking rickety houses at nominal rents in neighborhoods where he had good reason for supposing that the district railway would find it necessary to acquire land, and when in-

formed that his tenements were required for the purposes of the line, managed to exact phenomenally high terms on the ground that to be disturbed would be fatal to his occupation of civil engineer.

How I came to know him was in this wise. Old George Cruikshank, the artist, had fallen on evil days, and Ruskin, who was a great admirer of his work, with characteristic generosity determined to get up a testimonial fund for him. He accordingly set his secretary, Howell, to canvass for subscriptions among all who were interested in Cruikshank and his work. Of these my father happening to be one, Howell duly called upon him, and after successfully pleading the particular cause he had in hand, managed adroitly by a side-wind to arouse my father's interest in the works of his gifted friends "Gabriel" Rossetti and "Ned" Jones. In less than a week Howell, Burne-Jones, and a third guest almost as remarkable, Leonard Rowe Valpy (of whom more

anon), were dining with my father, who so strongly caught the pre-Raphaelite fever that but for his unexpected death a few weeks later he would assuredly have become an important purchaser from the studios of both artists.

The first time I saw Howell was about a year after my father's death, when he came to dine at my mother's to meet Mr. Valpy, an esthetic solicitor, there being also present a decorous old gentleman, the brother-in-law of a bishop, who was one of our trustees. I shall never forget Howell's appearance. We had a house for the summer a few miles out of town, and Howell, who then lived at Brixton in order to be near Ruskin at Denmark Hill, had to make a cross-country railway journey, which landed him quite an hour late for dinner. The bald-headed trustee was growing ominously brusque and the esthetic lawyer more and more dejected, when the door opened and a swarthy-faced, black-

haired individual sidled in, caressing a terribly rumpled dress-shirt front and radiating a propitiatory smile. "I am so sorry," he drawled melodiously, "to be so shockingly late; but the fact is, I was so absorbed in reading Algernon Swinburne's 'Poems and Ballads' that I unconsciously consumed my railway ticket and got into difficulties with the collector, who declined to accept my word of honor. I must apologize, too," he added gracefully, "for the condition of my shirt; but in stooping to search for my ticket—before I discovered that I had consumed it—I am afraid the front got rather tumbled, and, moreover, I had the misfortune to lose a couple of my studs, but——" Here the bald-headed trustee gave a menacing grunt and the lawyer murmured something about a weak digestion, so to my intense regret Howell's apology was cut short and we went in to dinner. After my mother and sisters had withdrawn, Howell treated the trustee and the lawyer to various erotic



passages from Swinburne, which they in vain tried to cough down—the trustee in deference to his Episcopal connection and the lawyer to certain Calvinistic tendencies which struggled fiercely with his appreciation of the “senuous.” After vainly attempting to suppress these fervid quotations, the two elders suggested an adjournment to the garden, and in passing out the trustee, drawing me aside, inquired who that extraordinary foreigner was, expressing an unfriendly suspicion that he never had any railway ticket at all. Shortly afterward, however, Howell had his reprisals, for, linking his arm confidentially in mine, he vouchsafed that in his opinion trustees and all “blokes” of that description ought not to be allowed about after office hours; that they were the deadly enemies of literature and art, and it was owing to them that so many artists died of want; and he wondered so sensible a man as my father had had anything to do with them. “Now, Valpy,” he continued, with

a glance at the Low Church solicitor, "is a different sort. Although he is a damned lawyer, my dear boy, he has a soul for art, and I'm going to take him to see Gabriel, and put him in the way of securing some of his best things before the public gets on to them, you know." A project which he carried out to some purpose, Valpy eventually becoming one of the largest buyers of Rossetti's pictures in London, if not in the kingdom.

Later in the evening, when we had re-entered the house, Howell threw off an epigram at the lawyer's expense which proclaimed him as no contemptible wit. Mr. Valpy, who was much given to emotional admiration, was sighing deeply in the course of some music which peculiarly appealed to him. "A doleful chap, that fellow Valpy," whispered Howell; "he reminds me of a tear in a dress-coat." The night wore on, and first the trustee, then the lawyer, and finally my family retired, but Howell showed no

inclination to retreat. On he sat, discoursing with infinite drollery (he pretended that he saw the bald head of his enemy the trustee bobbing among some gooseberry bushes in amorous converse with a kitchen maid) and indolently twisting up innumerable cigarettes, till at last it dawned upon him that it was well on into Sunday morning, and he was without any visible means of returning to his Brixton domicile. "Never mind," he chortled cheerfully. "Arthur Hughes lives somewhere on the road to London. He never goes to bed. I'll go and look him up and finish the night there." And off he strolled in the direction of town, intoning stanzas from "Our Lady of Pain" with a sonorous energy that would infallibly have lodged him in the local police station had he chanced to fall in with a guardian of the peace.

A day or so afterward I received a note from Howell asking me to lunch with him to meet "the poet," as he invariably styled

Mr. Swinburne, an invitation which I readily enough accepted. It was a memorable occasion. Howell's abode was externally commonplace enough—a little semidetached villa approached by a strip of garden—but inside it presented a very different aspect, the rooms being profusely adorned with Rossetti pictures and Burne-Jones drawings, some of them extremely beautiful, varied with the rarest oriental china. Mr. Swinburne did not arrive till lunch was over, and before entering the house was engaged in a prolonged difference with his cabman, who eventually snatched up his reins and drove rapidly off as if glad to get away. "The poet's got the best of it, as usual," drawled Howell (who had been gleefully watching the scene). "He lives at the British Hotel in Cockspur Street, and never goes anywhere except in hansoms, which, whatever the distance, he invariably remunerates with one shilling. Consequently, when, as to-day, it's a case of two miles beyond the radius, there's the

devil's own row; but in the matter of imprecation the poet is more than a match for cabby, who, after five minutes of it, gallops off as though he had been rated by Beelzebub himself." Here, looking, it must be owned, singularly innocent of anathema, Mr. Swinburne entered, and being fortunately in one of his characteristic veins, provided me with the most interesting hour of my existence.

Unlike many of his craft, Mr. Swinburne, who had just read Miss Rossetti's "Goblin Market, and Other Poems," recently published, showed the most generous enthusiasm for the work of his fellow-poet, and, after paying her a signal tribute, he asked Howell if he happened to have the volume in the house. Fortunately this proved to be the case, and Mr. Swinburne, taking up the book, rapidly turned over the pages, evidently in search of some favorite poem. In vain I tried to conjecture what his choice was going to be. The volume, as readers of Miss Rossetti are aware, concludes with a series

of devotional pieces which, having regard to the complexion of Mr. Swinburne's own poems at that time, would, I thought, be the last to attract him, strongly at any rate. But I was mistaken. His quest stopped almost at the end of the book, and without more ado he straightway proceeded to read aloud that singularly beautiful but profoundly devotional paraphrase, partly derived from Solomon's Song, which begins with "Passing away saith the world, passing away." The particular meter and impressive monotony of rhyme (every line in the piece is rhymed to the opening one) seemed peculiarly to lend themselves to Mr. Swinburne's measured lilt of intonation, and I then realized for the first time the almost magical effect which Tennyson's similar method of reading was wont to exercise over his hearers. When Mr. Swinburne had finished, he put the book down with a vehement gesture, but only for an instant. After a moment's pause he took it up again, and a second time read

the poem aloud with even greater expression than before. "By God!" he said as he closed the book, "that's one of the finest things ever written!" He then proceeded to touch on a variety of subjects, all with the greatest fervor and vehemence. At that time he appeared to have a sovereign disdain for Tennyson, whose poetry he attacked wholesale with almost frenzied bitterness, quoting, I remember, with peculiar gusto Bulwer Lytton's diatribe against him in "The New Timon." With the courage of extreme youth (I was not eighteen) I actually ventured to interpose a plea for one favorite, at least. "Surely, Mr. Swinburne," I faltered, "you will except 'Maud'?" "Well, sir," he courteously replied, "I think you are right; I ought to have excepted 'Maud,' for it certainly does contain some fine things."

Next he dashed off to Byron and Shelley, the former of whom at that time he appeared to prefer. In connection with Shelley's Eton days, after mentioning that he was himself

an Eton boy, he asked me where I had been at school; and when I told him at Harrow, he at once declared that he wished he had been at Harrow, as it was Byron's school. But this pronouncement was evidently not entirely prompted by a partiality for Lord Byron, for a few moments later he narrated an experience which was quite enough to prejudice him against his own school, apart from any sentimental considerations. He then told us that at the end of his first "half" at Eton, his father, Admiral Swinburne, came down to take him home for the holidays. "My father," Swinburne dolorously explained, "had never been at a public school, and had no knowledge whatever of its manners and customs. In fact, it was quite superfluous his coming down to escort me home, a parental attention which is never paid to any public-school boy. However, like most naval officers, he was a trifle arbitrary, and, whether customary or not, he was resolved to come. In getting into the train for Paddington, as



bad luck would have it, we chanced to enter a carriage in the corner of which, reading *The Times*, was snugly ensconced the then headmaster of Eton. 'Isn't that Doctor ——?' whispered my father to me, peering curiously in the direction of the headmaster. 'I believe it is,' I stammered reluctantly. 'Believe it is!' rejoined my father caustically; 'you must surely know your own headmaster!' Then clearing his throat and raising his voice, to my consternation he bent forward and airily accosted the awful presence behind *The Times* with, 'Doctor ——, I believe, sir?' The Doctor, incensed at being interrupted by a perfect stranger, glared at my father round the sheet of the paper and said testily, 'Yes, sir; at your service.' 'Well, sir,' rejoined my father, jerking a finger in my direction, 'my boy here has just finished his first term at Eton, and I should very much like to know what account you can give me of him.' Now," continued Mr. Swinburne with almost tragical solemnity,

“as a matter of fact, Doctor —— had never set eyes on me and probably did not even know of my existence; but enraged, I suppose, at my father’s rather unconventional interruption, which he no doubt considered a slight on his dignity, he glanced down at me with a scarlet face and said deliberately, ‘Your boy, sir—your boy is *one of the very worst in the school!*’ and then entrenched himself once more behind *The Times*. My father looked volumes, but said nothing till we got out at Paddington. Then the storm burst. In vain I protested that Doctor —— knew nothing whatever about me and had only said what he had out of pure vexation at being disturbed. ‘Do you think,’ said my father, ‘that I am going to take your word before that of your headmaster?’ And I was sentenced to deprivation of all pleasures and privileges for the duration of the Christmas holidays!”

I remember that on this occasion Mr. Swinburne was very loud in his praise of

a certain novel by Mrs. Norton, called "Old Sir Douglas," which I am bound to confess with all humility proved to me rather disappointing. I fancy it is now entirely forgotten. The poet was then writing a novel himself, which unfortunately has never seen the light; but, according to Howell, it was highly dramatic, and interspersed with several striking lyrics, one of which he (Howell) insisted on intoning the same afternoon in the train on our way to London. The first two lines, which are all I can remember of it, were certainly gruesome enough, and discomfited not a little the other essentially matter-of-fact occupants of the railway carriage. They ran, I think, as follows:

"Some die singing, some die swinging,  
Some die high on tree,"

and suggested a hero of the Macheath or Jack Sheppard type, which seemed scarcely characteristic of their classical creator.

Shortly afterward I was taken by Howell to Mr. Burne-Jones's house in Kensington

Square, a visit which I associated less with esthetic art than with the reddest republicanism, which the painter gave forth with almost feminine fervency, striking me as the mildest-mannered man that ever preached democracy. When in recent years he accepted a baronetcy, I wondered how he reconciled it with those Kensington Square invectives against all titular distinctions; but he is not the first man who has discarded the "red cap" for the "red hand," laying the responsibility of his *volte-face* on the shoulders of his family. Burne-Jones in those days was not considered to be by any means on the same artistic level as Rossetti, though at present opinion is all the other way. I venture, however, to predict that half a century hence posterity will restore Rossetti to the higher place. Burne-Jones enjoyed for a time an advantage denied to Rossetti: he exhibited his works at the Old Water-Color Society, with which he remained connected till, I think, 1869,

when an untoward incident occurred which terminated his relations with the society. His principal exhibit at the summer exhibition was a very poetical drawing called "Phyllis and Demophoon," in which both the figures were nude but without conveying the faintest suggestion of indelicacy. Unfortunately, however, an important patron of the society, one Mr. Leaf, a prosperous silk merchant, chose to regard the picture as an outrage on propriety, and brought such pressure to bear on the council that they requested Mr. Burne-Jones to import into the picture a certain amount of raiment. This the painter indignantly refused to do, and the result was the withdrawal of himself and his picture from the society. It was a deplorable incident by which all concerned were the losers, except the puritanical silk dealer, who, as might have been expected, immediately gained the sobriquet of "Fig-Leaf."

Burne-Jones, although in the main the

gentlest of creatures, was at times capable of almost virulent sarcasm. I remember meeting him at dinner at the period when Du Maurier was beginning his campaign in *Punch* against Oscar Wilde and the aesthetes, a crusade which seemed to commend itself to most of those present, Hamilton Aïdé, who was a great friend of Du Maurier, being particularly emphatic in his approval. Burne-Jones, who had been listening with his face half averted, darted round in his chair as Aïdé complacently delivered his final sentence, and, white with long-pent indignation, hissed out, "You may say what you like, but there is more wit in Wilde's little finger than in the whole of Du Maurier's wretched little body!" Then, having spent his ire, he relapsed into moody silence, resting his head on his hand with an attitude of forlorn disgust. We were perhaps unjust to Wilde, but Burne-Jones assuredly underrated Du Maurier, whose keen pictorial satire will probably long survive Wilde's artificial

literary sallies. I had no acquaintance with Wilde, and cannot therefore form a judgment as to his conversational wit; but I have never been able to discover any specimen that could be described as of the first order. Perhaps the best thing he ever said was to a certain rather humdrum bard when the latter was complaining of the neglect with which his poems were treated by the critics. "There seems to be a conspiracy of silence against me. What would you advise me to do?" he inquired of Wilde. "Join it," was the unconsoling reply. But the generality of Wilde's *mots* (when not assimilated) were rather showy than really excellent, like Sheridan's or Lamb's. His description of the Jews, for instance, as people "who spoke through their own noses and made you pay through yours," though serviceable enough for the moment, has not the quality that survives. Compare it with Sheridan's *mot* to Lord Lauderdale, when the latter, a matter-of-fact Scotchman, was attempting

to repeat some jest from Brooks's: "Don't, Lauderdale, don't; a joke in your mouth is no laughing matter!" Or Lamb's retort to the silly dame who, after boring him excruciatingly, complained that for all the attention he paid to what she said she might be speaking to the lady on his other side. "So-o you—you m-might, ma-ad-am, for it a-all g-g-goes in at one ear and ou-ou-out at the other!"

With all his ability, Wilde was a copious though very covert plagiarist, recalling Horace Smith's definition of originality—"undetected imitation." Thirty years ago his plays would not have had a chance, but as Disraeli educated his party, so Wilde educated his public, and at the time of his downfall he had so successfully impressed it with the merits of his work that he might have filled almost every theater in London had he only been provided with a sufficiency of material. But it is highly improbable that his vogue would have lasted. Inversion



and distortion, however ingenious or even brilliant, do not convince in the long run; and the general public, whose taste is *au fond* sound and healthy, would ere long have become sated with highly seasoned kickshaws and reverted to plainer and more satisfying fare.

To return to the pre-Raphaelite coterie. My introduction to Burne-Jones was quickly followed by one to Rossetti, whose personality impressed me then and thereafter far more than that of his brother painter. It is almost impossible to describe the curious effect of suddenly finding oneself within his famous house in Cheyne Walk, afterward so remorselessly desecrated by that ecclesiastical mountebank, Prebendary Haweis. With one step you seemed to place the outer world at an incalculable distance. The dim light, the profound stillness, the almost enchanted solemnity which pervaded even the entrance hall, suggested rather some mediæval palazzo than a suburban abode within

a mile of Victorian London. The man himself was equally aloof from the age. With his somber, olive-shaded face, his sad, reverie-haunted eyes, his dark, unordered attire, and his indefinable distinction of demeanor (in spite of an almost stunted stature), he suggested some figure from the pages of Petrarch or Ariosto. Then, again, the singular beauty of his voice added another touch of enchantment as, standing before a great picture of Lilith, he recited his own descriptive lines, revealing himself in the dual attributes of painter and poet. At that time his remarkable book of poems had not been published, and only his most intimate friends were aware of his great poetical gifts. In fact, one or two poems only had seen the light, and those in the scarcely known publications called *The Germ* and *The Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, to which Burne-Jones, William Morris, and one of two others of the fraternity had also contributed. The only relief to the almost

erie gloom of Rossetti's house was his matchless collection of oriental "blue," a large portion of which was, I think, afterward acquired by Mr. Leonard Valpy, whom I have already referred to as an extensive purchaser of Rossetti pictures. As we passed from dusky chamber to chamber, the mediæval figure leading, and only breaking the tranced silence with an occasional tone of profound melancholy, one began to wonder whether one was still in the vital world or in some haunted domain of ruined love and shattered hopes. In truth, the shadow of his girl-wife's tragic death seemed to hang more or less darkly over Rossetti to the end of his life. Friends he had and companions, but his closest comrade was Sorrow, hallowed, indeed, and beautified, but inseparable from him to the grave.

I have more than once referred to Mr. Leonard Valpy as a friend of Howell and Rossetti and an extensive purchaser of the latter's works. Mr. Valpy was by pro-

fession a Lincoln's Inn Fields family lawyer of good position and repute; but though a strenuous worker in his vocation, his heart was divided between two curiously antagonistic predilections—the "austere" and the "sensuous"—his religious tendencies being sternly Calvinistic and his artistic sympathies chiefly identified with the school of Rossetti and Burne-Jones. This singular contrast of proclivities led not infrequently to scenes and situations of a distinctly comical nature. Many a time have I met in his dining-room, hung with a superb line of Rossetti's red-chalk studies, a solemn assemblage of Exeter Hall lawyers and Low Church clergymen, who looked upon their host's cherished drawings either as autotype reproductions or the work of some inspired madman. Two instances of this philistinism I particularly remember. The hero of one of them was an eminent commercial solicitor, who, after inspecting some newly acquired treasure contemptuously for half a minute, turned on his

heel with the comment that "faces of that kind were usually symptomatic of scrofula." The other offender, a gormandizing clergyman, was even more flagrant. Uplifting his eyes from his empty plate during a change of courses, he happened to catch sight for the first time of three new purchases from Rossetti's studio. "Queer-looking affairs, those, Valpy," he remarked with a pitying sneer; "where did you pick them up?" "They are the work of one Rossetti," replied Valpy with simmering irony. "Rossetti? Rossetti? Never heard of him," rejoined the appalling guest. Then glancing at an idealized study of his hostess, which formed the center of the three drawings, he added, "And who, may I ask, is that ill-looking woman over the mantelpiece?" "That, sir," replied Valpy with what Dizzy used to call "a superb groan"—"that, sir, is my wife!" Yet, strange to say, Valpy persisted to the last in entertaining these uncongenial guests, who never failed to drive him nearly frantic

with their outrageous comments. Occasionally, however, in his bachelor days he would invite one or two artists, and perhaps myself or some other more sympathetic friend, to what he called a quiet dinner, but which really was almost Spartan in its provender. I suppose he imagined that artists were too ethereal to care for the succulent fare which he set before parsons and lawyers, a theory wherein he was, of course, grievously mistaken. I well recollect dining with him once to meet Rossetti and Samuel Palmer, when the menu actually consisted of nothing more luxurious than thin pea-soup, cold boiled beef (as the waiters say, "low in cut"), and a "roly-poly" pudding. Samuel Palmer rose superior to this fare, and was cheery and charming throughout the evening; but it was otherwise with poor Rossetti, who, without being a gourmand, was constitutionally unable to appreciate plain diet. His normal melancholy deepened into positive gloom, and I cannot recollect his uttering

a syllable during the whole of dinner, at which he sat like one of the figures at the banquet in Holman Hunt's picture of "Isabella and the Pot of Basil." Valpy seemed quite unconscious of offense, and to see him persistently plying Rossetti with "roly-poly," which the poet-painter as persistently refused in ever more deeply accentuated tones of weary dejection, was inexpressibly comic.

On a similar occasion I remember meeting poor Fred Walker, then at the height of his fame, yet far more modest and unpretending than many a man who has never risen above mediocrity. His talk was more about fishing than art, though I remember he expressed his despair at the way in which his illustrations had been reproduced in the *Cornhill Magazine*. Valpy had the good judgment to buy Walker's exquisite "May Tree" drawing, perhaps the most perfect of all his water-colors, acquiring it for only a tithe of the sum which it would now command.

Howell (to whom I will now return) was not long in revealing symptoms of those manners and customs which finally placed him beyond the pale even of the tolerant pre-Raphaelite brotherhood. His ethics of finance, as bearing on the functions of an agent, were, to say the least of it, eccentric, while his borrowings grew almost as persistent as those of Harold Skimpole. After stubborn resistance, though at that time ill able to afford it, I on one occasion succumbed to his plausible supplications and lent him fifty pounds. Unfortunately, my banking account happened to be at the western branch of the Bank of England, a fact which Howell, on glancing at the check, instantly endeavored to turn to his advantage! "Hullo, my dear chap!" he trolled out with his seductive *souçon* of a foreign accent, "I had no idea you were such a colny cove! Bank of England! By Jove! and you make all this fuss about lending a fellow a paltry fifty-pound note!"



In vain I explained that one might be a customer of the Bank of England with next to nothing in the shape of a balance. With an incredulous leer he pocketed the check and retired with his tongue in his cheek, intoning: "By George! A fellow must be a coiny bird to bank with the Bank of England!" This unfortunate misconception of my monetary resources, coupled with a normal deficiency in his own, resulted in my not seeing my fifty sovereigns again for two or three years. At last, after incessant applications, followed by voluminous threats of legal proceedings, Howell alighted one day at my chambers from a hansom and stalked in with the air of a deeply injured man.

"I've brought your coin," he almost moaned as he deposited the notes and specie on my table (I had resolutely refused to accept a check); "but upon my soul I have never heard such a fuss made about a beggarly fifty pounds in all my life, and that from a

cove who banks with the Bank of England!" I made some exculpatory reply, but Howell proceeded still more moodily: "And only to think of you, of all chaps, refusing a fellow's check! Hang it! I don't mind being dunned; but want of confidence—by George! that cuts me to the heart!" Again I attempted to clear myself. "Oh, never mind, never mind," he proceeded magnanimously; "only if you had invalid parents to maintain in Portugal——" Then, glancing at the clock, he suddenly interjected: "But I can't stay any longer. I haven't had a mouthful since breakfast, and as for that cabman, he's been tooling me about ever since ten!" Then, with an ingratiatory smile, sidling up to the table he coaxingly added: "I wonder if you'd lend me a quid for my cab fare? I'll send it back to you to-morrow, of course, but this fifty pounds of yours has regularly cleaned me out." And before I could utter a word of protest his itching palm had clutched one of my hardly recovered

sovereigns and he was off like an eel in the direction of his much-enduring Jehu. I never saw Howell again, nor (needless to say) my sovereign. The next I heard of him was that he had started a manufactory of Rossetti "facsimiles" (I am afraid his victims gave them a harsher name), and had been dropped by his former patrons, though I believe Rossetti chivalrously refused to abandon him long after every one else had done so.

I was destined, however, to undergo a *mauvais quart d'heure* by reason of Howell's "facsimiles" later on. Years before, when he was in the odor of respectability and still the accredited agent of the pre-Raphaelite group, I had purchased from him, on behalf of my mother, certain Rossetti drawings, as to the authenticity of which I had never entertained a doubt. One day, however, early in the period of Howell's decadence, a new acquaintance who happened to call on my mother, greatly admiring these Rossetti drawings, inquired how it was that she had

been able to acquire them, as none were ever in the market. "Oh," answered my mother, "they were bought from a friend and sort of agent of Rossetti's, a certain Mr. Howell." "Howell!" exclaimed the caller with pious horror; "then I am afraid you'll find none of them are genuine!" My mother, who had never heard of Howell's new enterprise, though she had long ceased to see him for other reasons, immediately wrote off to me in the greatest consternation, asking what was to be done. I assured her that I had myself no doubt of the genuineness of the drawings, but that she had better, *ex abundante cautelâ*, go to the fountainhead and write to Rossetti himself about them. This she promptly did; but my horror may be imagined when Rossetti replied that from her description he failed to identify a single one of them. In desperation I wrote back that there was only one thing to be done, and that was to ask Rossetti to examine the drawings himself, though owing to his

ill-health, which had then become habitual, I greatly doubted whether he would consent to do it. However, he very kindly sent his secretary to my mother's house for the drawings, which were returned the next day with a note from Rossetti to the effect that they were all his undoubted work, though he had failed to recognize them from my mother's description.

Howell curiously did not long survive Rossetti, dying, I understood, in one of the houses he had so astutely acquired near the district railway, with the very respectable savings of over £4,000; in fact, almost, as he would have termed it, "a coiny cove," though he had considerably impaired the "coininess" of other people. Perhaps one of his former literary intimates will one day present him, adequately illuminated, to posterity.

Mr. Watts-Dunton tried his hand on Howell in his novel "Aylwin," but somehow with no great effect. Possibly the genius who

created "Tito Melema" was alone capable of doing him justice.

About this time I first met the late John Trivett Nettleship, the gifted animal painter, one of a famous quartet of brothers, the sons of a country solicitor, whose profession John Nettleship originally followed. Those who only knew him as a lord of bohemia will be surprised to learn that in the late sixties, when he was still in the law, he was one of the most sprucely attired gentlemen in the precincts of Lincoln's Inn, though always marked by a leonine pose of the head which in later years gave him an air of signal distinction. He then presided, I believe, over the conveyancing department in an important London office, and had the reputation of being a thoroughly capable lawyer. At heart, however, he had little in common with parchment and red-tape, and after a preliminary excursion into literature which took the form of a remarkable volume of essays on the poetry of Robert

Browning, then far less "understood of the people" than is the case at present, he finally shook himself free from the law and boldly cast in his lot with art. Though still under thirty, he was comparatively old to make a start as an artist, and this fact probably accounts for a certain deficiency in technique that was more or less perceptible in his work even to the end of his career. But in point of mere conception he unquestionably surpassed every animal painter of his or perhaps of any other time, being gifted with an un-failing keenness of sympathy and instinct which are not always to be found in the more finished work of Landseer and Rivière. It was not, however, with animals that Nettleship's imagination found the widest scope, his black-and-white and pencil studies, inspired by mythical and purely fanciful subjects, being in many instances quite as remarkable as the creations of William Blake. He was, in truth, a poet in everything but verbal expression, which, nevertheless, in

his prose writings and correspondence was always conspicuous for its poignant felicity. There is, I think, no doubt that his essays on Browning's poetry contributed considerably to a better appreciation of the poet, which the latter never failed to recognize. I have frequently consulted him as to the interpretation to be placed on certain of Browning's obscure passages, and never without gaining enlightenment, though occasionally he would read more into a line or phrase than was intended by the author. I remember once appealing to him as to the identity of "The Lost Leader," who, after careful consideration, I felt convinced could be no other than Wordsworth, though most of the Browning students of that day scouted the idea as utterly unworthy of the writer. Nettleship, however, agreed with me; but my indignant friends declined to accept so distasteful a confirmation, even from him. I accordingly asked him to get an authoritative decision from Browning himself. This



he did, with the result that Browning admitted that “The Lost Leader” was intended to represent Wordsworth, though, he added, he had since regretted it. I confess I do not quite see why. After allowing for a little poetic exaggeration, the lines only record the actual, if awkward, fact that Wordsworth, after professing virtual republicanism, executed a political *volte-face* and became a Tory placeman at the nomination of one of the greatest of territorial autocrats. To tell the truth, Mr. Browning had himself after middle age considerably toned down the political opinions and predilections of his youth, and when I chanced to meet him on more than one occasion in the seventies and early eighties he was by no means given to making the least of his intimacy with members of the nobility whose names and titles came floating across the dinner table with quite unnecessary articulateness. “The pity of it!” Such intellectual monarchs as Browning and Jowett, flushed with elation

at the honor of dining at a peer's table or mingling in the crowd at a peeress's crush! It was all very well for them to attempt to justify themselves by contending that their patrician hosts were such particularly good company. Had Lord Tomnoddy been plain, uncoroneted Tom Snooks, his unintellectuality would have roused in each of them inextinguishable scorn. It was not the head, but the head-gear—the halo-invested coronet—that constituted the charm; and so, I suppose, it will be to the end of time, or at all events till the abolition of titles.

One of the courtliest men in art circles was the late Sir Edgar Boehm, whose studio I had occasion to visit more than once in connection with the medallion of a relative, which he had been commissioned to execute. At that time he had just finished his noble effigy of Dean Stanley, close to which was placed another of the Prince Imperial, the very one which the Dean had been so anxious to import into the Abbey. "A curious

thing happened with reference to that effigy," remarked Sir Edgar. "Stanley, as you know, had been very anxious that it should be placed in Westminster Abbey, but the opposition to his proposal was so strong that eventually, though with not too good a grace, he gave way and abandoned his project. Well," continued Sir Edgar, "not long before his death he came to see this effigy, and after gazing at it intently for some moments he muttered to himself abstractedly, 'I was wrong about that'—the only intimation I believe he ever gave that he had changed his mind." Carlyle, it will be remembered, took a very active part in opposing the Dean's proposal, which I suppose prompted his famous death-bed adjuration, "Save me from that body-snatcher!"

I never was fortunate enough to see Mr. Thackeray, but I remember well the profound impression that was created by the news of his sudden death, though I think his work is more appreciated now than it was

then. On the whole, he has received from posterity his due, and perhaps rather more, for with the exception of "Vanity Fair" and "Esmond," none of his novels can claim to be of the highest order. "The Newcomes," though full of exquisite passages and adorned with one ineffably beautiful piece of characterization, Colonel Newcome, is poorly constructed and far too prodigal of "preachiness"—faults which are even more conspicuous in "Pendennis." It may seem heresy to say so, but I venture to think that Trollope's "Barchester Towers" and "Framley Parsonage" are, as "society novels," superior to both "Pendennis" and "The Newcomes," though of course very inferior in the matter of style. It has always struck me that after "Vanity Fair" and "Esmond," Thackeray's finest piece of work is "The Chronicle of the Drum," surely one of the most remarkable combinations of satire and pathos ever penned in rhyme. I can never read that stanza commencing with

“The glorious days of September  
Saw many aristocrats fall,”

without an icy shudder, though I am as familiar with it as I am with “The May Queen.” Thackeray would have written a superb history of the French Revolution, which I make bold to say he understood infinitely better than Carlyle, who had neither knowledge of nor insight into the French character and temperament.

It is difficult to form a personal estimate of Thackeray. He was evidently a man of moods—one day all sunshine and geniality, the next sardonic and in a sense cantankerous. But, on the whole, the sunshine predominated, and the record of his beautiful sayings and doings puts the converse characteristics (which at times were all too conspicuous) well into the shade. To him must be credited the most chivalrous utterance that, I suppose, ever emanated from a man of letters. Dickens, who never liked him, told a friend that he could see nothing to admire

in one of Thackeray's novels, then being serially produced; and the friend, who knew both the great authors, with friendship's traditional "damned good-naturedness," reported the opinion to Thackeray. It must have rankled deeply, but all the comment Thackeray made was, "I am afraid I cannot return the compliment, for there is not a page that Mr. Dickens has written which I have not read with the greatest delight and admiration." I heard this from Mr. Justin M'Carthy, who knew Thackeray slightly and was engaged to dine with him on the evening of the day on which he died. Mr. M'Carthy considered that Thackeray created quite erroneous impressions of himself by often indulging in irony in the presence of people who were incapable of understanding it. One curious instance which he gave was this: Thackeray had been dining at the Garrick, and was chatting in the smoking-room after dinner with various club acquaintances. One of them happening to have left his cigar-case

at home, Thackeray, though disliking the man, who was a notorious tuft hunter, good-naturedly offered him one of his cigars. The man accepted the cigar, but not finding it to his liking, had the bad taste to say to Thackeray, "I say, Thackeray, you won't mind my saying I don't think much of this cigar." Thackeray, no doubt irritated at the man's ungraciousness, and bearing in mind his tuft-hunting predilections, quietly responded, "You ought to, my good fellow, for it was given me by a lord." Instead, however, of detecting the irony, the dolt immediately attributed the remark to snob-bishness on Thackeray's part, and to the end of his days went about declaring that "Thackeray had boasted that he had been given a cigar by a lord."

With the exception of Mr. M'Carthy, I have met only two men who knew Thackeray, one of whom certainly deserves immortality, though unfortunately I am unable to record his name, having forgotten

it in the march of time. I met this individual at dinner nearly thirty years ago, when in my first "Thackeray" enthusiasm. He was a gray-headed, square-jawed "diner-out," apparently of about sixty-eight or seventy, with an assertive *nisi-prius* manner and one of those rasping voices that seem to dominate the dinner table. After dinner, on the departure of an intervening lady, I found myself compelled to "close up" to this objectionable fellow guest. As it happened, a minute or two previously I had heard him allude to the Charterhouse as his former public school. "Why," thought I, "this old gentleman was most probably at the Charterhouse with Thackeray; suppose I break the ice by inquiring." Accordingly, after an uncomfortable moment in which he seemed to be considering whether I was worth talking to or not, I timidly ventured to remark that I had heard him alluding to the Charterhouse, and wondered if by any chance he was there with Thackeray.



“Thackeray, sir? What Thackeray?” he answered, with a contemptuous stare. “I mean the great Thackeray,” I rejoined, rather astonished. “What!” he rejoined; “the fellow who wrote books? Oh, yes; he was my fag, and a sniveling little beggar I thought him. Often have I given him a sound kick for a false quantity in his Latin verses. I thought nothing of him, sir—nothing, I can assure you!” “Ah, but,” I exclaimed, “you have changed your opinion since, of course?” “Not at all,” he growled, “not at all; why should I?” “Why, on account of his books,” I retorted, fairly staggered. “Never read a syllable of them, I give you my word!” he growled with magnificent complacency; then, turning his back with a gesture of infinite disdain, he proceeded to tackle his neighbor on the other side. When I told this to Mr. M’Carthy, he felicitously observed, “What wouldn’t Thackeray have given to have known that man!”

The other acquaintance of Thackeray whom

I happened to come across was the late Sir Russell Reynolds, the eminent physician. He mentioned that he met Thackeray at dinner when Miss Thackeray's exquisite "Story of Elizabeth" had just appeared, and he told Thackeray how much he admired it. "I am very glad," said Thackeray; "but I can form no opinion of its merits, as I have not read it." "Not read it!" exclaimed Doctor Reynolds in great surprise. "No," said Thackeray; "I dared not. I love her too much."

I do not think that Thackeray was ever quite satisfied with mere literary success; at all events, he was extremely anxious to blend with it a considerable degree of social prestige. To be appointed secretary of legation at Washington, or to belong to the Travelers' Club, would, I believe, have given him almost as much gratification as he ever derived from any success of authorship. But neither aspiration was destined to be fulfilled. He was certainly unqualified

for the secretaryship, nor, even if the Travelers' Club had honored itself by electing him, would he have found himself in congenial company. But the members of that select community were, no doubt, chary of admitting a "chiel among them" with such a consummate faculty for "taking notes," which Thackeray had certainly not been guiltless of doing at other clubs to which he belonged—witness the immortal Foker, who was unquestionably suggested by Mr. Arcedeckne. Although no admirer of the late Mr. Edmund Yates and his methods, I must confess that I cannot see such an immensity of difference between ridiculing a fellow member under another name in a novel and portraying him by his own in a newspaper. Thackeray's portrait of Mr. Arcedeckne in "Pendennis" was as unmistakable as Yates's sketch of Thackeray in *The Man About Town* (the name, I think, of Yates's journal); but the fact was that Thackeray, as a great man, felt himself free to do what in Yates as a

small man was an unwarrantable presumption, especially when his object of attack was Mr. Thackeray himself. The Garrick Club quarrel was, in truth, not creditable to any one concerned. Yates behaved offensively, and Thackeray with a lack of consistency, while Dickens, in his eager espousal of Yates, revealed an animus against his great rival which was very far from edifying.

I have alluded to Anthony Trollope in his capacity of a novelist, and though he is now completely out of fashion I venture to think that the day will come when his star will reappear in the literary firmament, though perhaps not for many years yet. Scant justice has surely been done to the fidelity with which he drew an infinite variety of types. His dukes, his dandies, his hunting-men, his squires, his civil servants, his barristers, his solicitors, and, above all, his clergy, are absolutely true to the life—though it must be admitted that of all these characters the civil servant is the only one

with which he was intimately acquainted. He was once asked by a friend of mine, the wife of a church dignitary, whence he derived his material for his wonderful novel "Barchester Towers," and, to her amazement, he solemnly assured her that when he wrote it he was not acquainted with a single cathedral dignitary. Take, again, Mr. Sowerby, the spendthrift county M. P. in "Framley Parsonage"; the characterization is astonishingly accurate, yet at the time I doubt if Trollope had ever spoken to a county member of Parliament. I know of only one parallel example of unerring instinct, and that was the dramatist Tom Robertson. A friend of mine, a retired army officer, knew Robertson in his provincial management days, and he and some of his brother officers, when stationed at Chatham, used, out of sheer compassion for poor Robertson, to take now and then the front row of the usually empty stalls, an attention which Robertson always gratefully acknowledged. Later on, when Robert-

son took to play-writing and "struck oil" with his charming comedies, nearly all dealing with fashionable society as it was in that day, my friend, mindful of his antecedents, asked him how he had managed to write the plays, adding that he presumed Robertson must have lately found his way into really first-rate society. "My dear sir," Robertson replied, "you may not perhaps believe me, but I never stayed in a great house except once, and that was for a single night to arrange some theatricals, when I dined in the housekeeper's room." The unerring instinct, however, was there, and an uninitiated spectator would have supposed that the author had been mixing in good society all his life. I was lucky enough to be present at the opening night, if not of the Prince of Wales's Theater, at all events of Robertson's first play, "Society," being taken there by a schoolfellow with whom I was staying in the Christmas holidays. The stalls were, I remember, priced at five

shillings, and the balcony stalls at three. It was, I think, in "Society" that John Hare was first introduced to a London, or at all events to a West End, audience in the character of Lord Ptarmigan—a henpecked, soporific peer, whose part mainly consisted in the mumbling of an occasional protest and in falling asleep propped up on a couple of chairs. But Hare contrived to invest it with such delicate and original humor that from that night his success was assured. All the acting was, I remember, fastidiously finished and refined, the acme of high-comedy impersonation, and, to paraphrase the famous definition of the first *Pall Mall Gazette*, London discovered that at last there was a theater where it could see refined pieces "played by ladies and gentlemen for ladies and gentlemen." But, alas! poor Robertson was permitted to enjoy only the briefest taste of this long-deferred prosperity. Just as his name was on every one's lips and the money he had all his life needed so sorely

beginning steadily to stream in, Fate, by one of its cruel strokes of irony, laid him low with a terrible disease to which he rapidly succumbed. It is the fashion nowadays to decry his work; but if slight, it was surely of a higher type than such dramas as "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray" and "The Gay Lord Quex," which, however powerful, depict only the worst and most depraved side of society.

Another theatrical feature of that day was the healthy laugh-compelling burlesque which Mr. Byron and the present Sir Frank Burnand were peculiarly felicitous in composing. Burnand's "Black-eyed Susan," with Miss Patty Oliver in the part of Susan, had for those days the phenomenal run of over a year, and well was it justified. The rhymes, the puns, the "go," even the "gag," were all superlative of their kind; while the acting was inimitable, especially that of Susan's mother and Captain Crosstree. The latter's song, commencing "Captain Crosstree is my name," was encored



nightly, often six times; and I knew one staid old gentleman with a grown-up family who spent sixty nights of that particular twelve-month in the contemplation of Miss Oliver and her gifted troupe. Almost an equal treat, though of a different kind, was this delightful actress's impersonation of Meg in "Meg's Diversion," her simple, tender pathos drawing tears from almost every eye in the house.

Miss Oliver was, I think, one of the actresses who occasionally consented to play with "The Windsor Strollers," whose greatest vogue was in the later sixties and the early seventies. Its constitution was curious—several guardsmen, one or two extraneous officers, and a few civilians, of whom the celebrated "Tom" Holmes and Palgrave Simpson were the most notable. "Tom" Holmes died not long ago at a fabulous age, gay and vigorous almost to the last. He must have been nearly eighty when I saw him at a supper of the "Strollers,"

but he still followed the hounds, astonishing the Leicestershire field by appearing in a sort of Astley Circus costume, on a long-tailed white quadruped which also strongly suggested the arena.

Palgrave Simpson's connection with "The Windsor Strollers" was not altogether satisfactory to himself. One of those extremely vain individuals who take even the most good-natured banter seriously, his *amour propre* encountered more than one rude shock from his dramatic *confreres*. But for his most crucial experience of this kind he was indebted to one of the audience on the occasion of a performance in which he took a leading part at the Windsor Theater. The piece was rather a stagy melodrama, in which Simpson had cast himself for the principal character—one that lent itself to a good deal of "emotional" acting. Palgrave Simpson, who was never one of the "restrained" school of players, in his anxiety to make the hit of the evening persistently

overaccentuated his part, finally prolonging the crowning moment with interminable gasps and gurgles, in the midst of which he made a sort of hand-and-knee progress across the stage. At that moment one of the "gods," unable to stand this inarticulate prelude any longer, shouted encouragingly from the gallery: "Come! Spit it out, old man!" In an instant Palgrave Simpson sprang to his feet and, rushing to the footlights, shrilled out in a paroxysm of fury, "Unless that man is removed I shall decline to take any further part in the play." The scene that ensued may be imagined: the man refused to leave and Simpson to act; eventually, however, he was sufficiently mollified to finish his part; but the ordeal of that night, and of another less agonizing, when in the green-room he found himself confronted with the following inscription chalked on a black-board, "Palgrave Simpson cannot act a damn!" rendered the "Strollers" too trying an association to enlist much of his talent.

Of all the English actors I have seen during the last forty years, I think Alfred Wigan was artistically the most perfect. He seemed to have the indefinable quality possessed by Aimée Désclée: the power, so to speak, of silently insinuating himself into the recesses of the heart. The most perfect representations of pathos I have ever witnessed on the stage were those of Wigan as the old father in the little one-act piece, "The First Night," and of Aimée Désclée as "Frou Frou." I think it is no disparagement to Madame Bernhardt to affirm that Mademoiselle Désclée struck a note which she has never quite reached. It is true, when I saw the performance of "Frou Frou" Mademoiselle Désclée (though the audience was unaware of it) was actually dying, a circumstance which, no doubt, lent additional poignancy to the death-scene in the drama; but her voice, her form, her face, all possessed an intangible, almost spiritual, charm, to which no actress that I have ever seen has quite attained.

The secret, perhaps, partly lay in her simple mode of life. A daughter of the people, she never cared to dwell amid the glittering Paris world, but even in the heyday of her fame would cross the Seine every night to the unpretentious *quartier* where she was born, eventually bequeathing to its poor all the money she had amassed by her matchless art.

“Frou Frou” interpreted by a latter-day English actress does not sound convincing, but admirers of Miss Winifred Emery who missed seeing her in an English version some years ago at the Comedy Theater have much to regret. She revealed a capacity for delicate pathos which surprised even those most familiar with her powers, and gave promise of a really great career in serious drama. The Fates, however, have ordained that she shall cultivate the comic Muse, thus sacrificing a quality which is now more than ever needed on the English stage.

The faculty of arousing tears is rather rare

among our actors and actresses, but in certain pieces Mrs. Kendal and poor William Terriss could unman the most mundane and matter-of-fact audience. Terriss's most signal triumph in this respect was achieved a few weeks before his tragic death, when his superb impersonation of William in Douglas Jerrold's "Black-eyed Susan" nightly melted the entire house to tears. It was not that he was a superlative actor, for he had many defects, but somehow he stepped into this particular part as if he had been made for it (he started life in the navy), and his handsome, manly face, his cheery voice and genial, sailor-like simplicity carried all before them. Those who came to scoff remained to cry, and I remember seeing a "smart" young lady, who had boasted to me that nothing on the stage ever could or would move her to tears, leave the theater a veritable Niobe. Apropos of Terriss's death, a friend of mine, a lady, saw the whole scene enacted in a dream a day or two before the

murder, though she had never seen Terriss either on or off the stage. All the surroundings were exactly those of the tragedy: the passage, the flaring light, the man advancing in the cloak, and the second man suddenly stepping forward and stabbing him. She told her family of the dream when she came down to breakfast, so deeply had it impressed her, and a morning or two afterward, on taking up the paper, she read the account of Terriss's murder. The only parallel that I know to this dream was that of the Cornish gentleman who saw in a similar way, with the minutest details, the assassination of Spencer Perceval, a day or two before it occurred, though he had never set eyes on Mr. Perceval nor on any portrait of him, but merely knew him by repute as the prime minister of the day.





V.

PERSONAGES AND RETROSPECTS

*Disraeli—Disraeli and Gladstone—A Parliamentary Nestor—Canning—Lord Melbourne and the Importunate Place-Hunter—Lord Henry Bentinck—Lady Jersey—Disraeli in the Hunting-field—Prime Ministers as Sportsmen—A Reminiscence of Mr. Fox—Mementos of Lord Chatham and Mr. Pitt—Miss Perceval and George III.—A Military Veteran—Lady Louisa Tighe—Colonel Tighe—William IV. and His Buffoonery—Lord Byron—Mrs. Stowe's Calumny—Sir Percy Shelley and Field Place—The Transfiguration of London—Changes and Innovations.*

## V.

### PERSONAGES AND RETROSPECTS.

THERE are, I suppose, adequate reasons for Lord Rowton's long delay in bringing out the Life of Lord Beaconsfield, but it would be interesting to know for how many more years they are likely to continue in force. In the meantime, so much of a fragmentary character has been written about this extraordinary man, a good deal of it the reverse of complimentary, that the prolonged absence of an authoritative biography is becoming distinctly prejudicial to his reputation. The memoirs of the first John Murray do not present Disraeli, as a young man, in a very creditable light; and certain letters of his and his wife's, published in the most recent volumes of the Peel correspondence, are far from edifying reading. But possibly there is

much to be said in explanation with which the public is unfamiliar. I have always found it easier to understand his complex career by identifying it with three distinct Disraelis: the *poseur* and fop; the political juggler; and finally the "high imperialist" statesman, who only came into being as late as 1874. Until that date Disraeli's political status had been invariably of the hand-to-mouth order. When he found himself in office at all, it was only for the briefest tenure, and never accompanied by power. Accordingly, political greatness being his fixed object, in order to keep himself afloat till the tide should set his way he was driven to adopt shifts and expedients to which otherwise he would never have resorted.

At the same time, it must be owned that, whatever he may have felt, he displayed very little compunction in practising these derogatory methods, and it is not surprising that he should have earned the reputation not only with his opponents, but with his own

party, of being deficient in scrupulousness. Becky Sharp once uttered a dictum to the effect that goodness would be easy to any one in the enjoyment of a good income, and no doubt Disraeli entertained the same sentiment in the matter of politics. Once provided with a handsome majority, he found political propriety easily practicable. At all events, with his advent to real power in 1874 he immediately discarded his former shifty *rôle*, and thenceforth played without intermission the part of a high-principled and consistent statesman. It was in a measure, no doubt, owing to this auspicious change in his political conduct that Queen Victoria became as much prepossessed in Disraeli's favor as a few years before she had been prejudiced against him. Whether, if the Prince Consort had survived, the Queen would so rapidly have overcome her antipathy is open to question, for the Prince's distrust and dislike of Disraeli were profound; still, the factors that weighed with the Queen

would probably to some extent have influenced the Prince, at all events sufficiently to insure an attitude of toleration. Of course Disraeli took care to strengthen his improved position with the sovereign by neglecting no ingratiatory means—such, for instance, as adding to her existing titles that of empress; but the Queen was far too sensible a woman to be solely influenced by such amenities, to which, compared with sterling principle, she attached little value.

Thus much by way of elucidating Disraeli's political character. What remains for me to say of him is purely in his social aspect. For my first fact concerning him I was indebted to an old gentleman who was a schoolfellow of Disraeli's at his second school, a private seminary in the north or east of London, and my informant's chief recollection of the future premier was in connection with his lack of veracity, which he declared was painfully conspicuous. I rather gathered, however, that this was not so much culpable

untruthfulness as an oriental proclivity for romancing and “embroidering,” which to the ordinary British boy is far less venial than the common “bung.” But the veteran declined to discuss fine distinctions, contenting himself with the emphatic avowal that “Dizzy was the biggest liar in the school, and, indeed, that he had ever known!” Murray the publisher, already referred to, conceived himself to be the victim of serious misstatements, and on at least one public occasion Disraeli certainly did not stick at a trifle where a departure from veracity seemed likely to serve his purpose. This was at his election for Shrewsbury, when, by way of constructing some shred of local connection, he asserted, or at all events pointedly implied, that he had been educated at Shrewsbury School. His conduct, too, in the matter of his Parliamentary panegyric on the Duke of Wellington was the reverse of creditable, the peroration being a word-for-word translation of some funeral address

of Thiers—an unacknowledged appropriation which was particularly unfortunate on the part of a cabinet minister and leader of the House of Commons. But, with these two exceptions, I am not aware that Disraeli, in public at all events, ever justified his old schoolfellow's indictment, though straightforwardness could not certainly be called one of his strong points.

In the ordinary sense he was no lover of society, but to the end, even in his second premiership, with the accessories of an earldom and the Garter, he retained that marked veneration for rank and opulence which is more or less pronounced in all his novels. Possibly this was less the foible of a *parvenu* than a tribute to two all-important elements in the great political game. This trait, coupled with an eastern proclivity for paying exaggerated compliments, gained him a reputation for servility which he was far from really deserving. Women, especially pretty ones, he thought fit to address in the most



inflated style of flattery, of which a great and very beautiful lady once related to a friend of mine the following instance. On some occasion she happened to sit next to Lord Beaconsfield at dinner, and on raising her wineglass to her lips was much disconcerted by the marked and deliberate manner in which he riveted his gaze on her lifted arm—a feeling of embarrassment which developed into one very much akin to disgust, when a sepulchral voice murmured in her ear, “Canova!” The compliment was probably of the type which he had found particularly welcome in the saloons of Lady Blessington, but to a beauty of fastidious refinement it is not surprising that such “floridity” was far from palatable.

With intellectual women he had, apparently, not much sympathy; in fact, the feminine society he most affected was that of ladies more distinguished for rank than for talent. A dowager of this order who knew him well, and was discussing him with

me after his death, gave a curious example of what she called his "funny sayings." It appears that he happened to mention in the course of an afternoon call that there were two possessions which every one owned as a matter of course, but which he had all his life dispensed with, and insisted that the old Countess should guess what they were. "I made," she said, "every kind of conjecture, but without success, and on my asking him to enlighten me he solemnly answered that they were a watch and an umbrella. 'But how do you manage,' I asked, 'if there happens to be no clock in the room and you want to know the time?' 'I ring for a servant,' was the magniloquent reply. 'Well,' I continued, 'and what about the umbrella? What do you do, for instance, if you are in the park and are caught in a sudden shower?' 'I take refuge,' he replied, with a smile of excessive gallantry, 'under the umbrella of the first pretty woman I meet!'"

On one occasion this habit of exaggerated adulation led to so bold an attempt by the fair recipient to turn it to her advantage that he was driven to save the situation in a way that was very far from being appreciated. The charmer, a young lady of "advanced views," finding the great man so exceedingly profuse in his attentions, thought it an excellent opportunity for making him a convert to her Utopian ideals, which were of the most daringly democratic order. After a long recitation of her propaganda she wound up with a fervid appeal to the Prime Minister to immortalize himself by espousing her ingenious panacea for remedying the wrongs of humanity. As she finished her impassioned harangue with flushed cheeks and a flashing eye, Disraeli, who had been silently watching her with apparently the profoundest sympathy and admiration, suddenly dropped his eyeglass and softly murmured, "Oh, you darling!" "If it had been at dinner," she afterward declared,

“and I had had a knife, I would have stabbed him!”

It is curious to note how completely Disraeli and Gladstone had reversed their original positions at the close of their respective political careers. In 1832, when Gladstone passed from the best set at Christ Church into the House of Commons as the nominee of a Tory duke, Disraeli was little better than a needy literary adventurer, rubbing elbows with dingy journalists and tawdry dandies, and apparently as remote from the charmed circle to which Gladstone had gained easy admittance as he was from the north pole. And so the thing continued for over forty years, Gladstone always the political good boy, petted and irreproachable, and Disraeli the scapegrace, shunned and suspected even when accepted on sufferance. But the whirligig of time brought about a strange revolution. From 1874 Gladstone began steadily to decline in the estimation of the classes who had theretofore set him on

high, while Disraeli, the former pariah and suspect, gradually acquired over them an ascendancy and influence such as no English minister had ever before enjoyed—surely a superb consolation for all the slights and indignities of his early years.

The mention of Mr. Gladstone's first entrance into Parliament reminds me of a very interesting conversation I once had with a political Nestor who had left Eton before Gladstone went there. I met him in the spring of 1886, when Gladstone's first Home Rule bill was engrossing the attention of the country. I happened to be going up to town from some place in Sussex, and on the train stopping at Pulborough a very old and ill-dressed individual, carrying a small, shabby-looking hand-bag, entered, or rather attempted to enter, the carriage. Perceiving that he had much difficulty in making the ascent from the platform, I gave him a helping hand, an attention which he very courteously acknowledged,

and then sank down exhausted in the corner opposite. A rapid survey suggested that he was either a broken-down country lawyer or land agent, and I resumed my newspaper, with a mental resolution not to encourage conversation. At the other end of the carriage two passengers were intently discussing the Home Rule bill, a parley which seemed somewhat to irritate the old gentleman, for he quavered out to me in a weary tone, "I'm rather tired of this question; aren't you, sir?" On my giving a discouraging answer, drawing himself up and heightening his voice, he continued: "Yes. I have lived in rather different times." "Indeed," I rejoined, still indifferently. "Yes," he proceeded, leaning forward and speaking with impressive deliberation; "I have sat in the House of Commons with Mr. Canning." It was like a voice from the grave! In the House with Canning! That meant a leap back of sixty years at least, into the pre-reform and pre-railroad days! Of a truth this was a

fellow traveler to be cultivated, and for the only time in my life I rejoiced in the snail-like progress of an L., B. and S. C. Railway train. It turned out that my companion was a certain Welsh baronet whose father had represented a Welsh county in the twenties. Sir H—— (as I will call him) had barely taken his degree in 1826 when his father insisted that he should stand for the borough of his county, which he practically controlled. Sir H—— at that time had no wish to enter Parliament, but his father's will was law and he was duly returned. Lord Liverpool was then prime minister and Mr. Canning foreign secretary and leader of the House of Commons. "Well," I said, "you must, of course, have heard Canning speak; what impression did he make on you?" "I had heard," replied Sir H——, "great accounts of Canning's eloquence, which I thought was probably overrated, but when I heard him I altered my opinion. I have heard all the most famous Parliamen-

tary speakers since, but none ever came near him. He was unique; his eloquence was like that one associates with the old Greek and Roman orators." I then asked him who, in his opinion, was the most eloquent House of Commons speaker after Canning. "I shall probably," he answered, "name a man you have never even heard of—Daniel Whittle Harvey, who entered the House after the Reform bill in the Liberal interest. He was an attorney with a third-rate practice and not too much character, but for sheer eloquence I never heard him surpassed, except, of course, by Mr. Canning, and, as I have told you, I have heard all the greatest speakers of my day. Harvey," he continued, "did excellent service to Lord Melbourne's rickety administration, for which he confidently expected to be rewarded with a fat place; but good thing after good thing fell to the disposal of the Government and he was persistently left out in the cold. The truth is, his character was so shady that the Govern-



ment dared not give him a place. At last a small office, an assistant commissionership of police, worth only a few hundreds a year, became vacant, and even that was not offered to Harvey. This was the last straw: foaming with rage, he rushed to Downing Street and insisted on seeing Lord Melbourne. 'My lord,' he burst out, 'I have come to complain of the atrociously shabby way in which I have been treated by your Government. Here have I, night after night, been speaking in your support when all your other adherents have sat dumb, and though I don't want to boast, tided you over many an awkward moment; yet, though all sorts of good places have fallen vacant, not one has been offered me. And finally,' he added with a climax of indignation, 'a wretched little commissionership of police, hardly worth £500 a year, becomes vacant, and you don't even offer me that. It is outrageous!' 'My dear Harvey,' replied Lord Melbourne with a mollifying smile, 'I don't say that you

haven't cause to complain, but with regard to that little police appointment you really do me an injustice. As a matter of fact, I had made up my mind to offer it to you, but on sounding the three other commissioners I found that the damned fellows refused point-blank to sit with you.' Harvey troubled Melbourne very little after that, as you may suppose; however, he got some trifling post at last, I believe, though not without great difficulty."

Sir H—— was very amusing about the Spartan experiences of his Eton days. "We had no great-coats then and no umbrellas. I have ridden up from Wales to London after the winter holidays, in a thin jacket, through the bitterest frost and snow, but it never did me any harm. Things," he continued, "are made far too easy and luxurious at Eton nowadays. Why, last summer I and two friends, also old Etonians, went down one afternoon to see the cricket, and would you believe it, the only individuals

in the playing-fields not seated on rugs were we three old fellows of over eighty!"

The latter part of the journey, though not a whit less interesting, became a trifle embarrassing; the two political chatterers had departed, and were replaced by a couple of old spinster-like ladies equipped with serious literature and economical creature comforts. To my horror, in spite of their presence, the old Baronet embarked on the recitation of various epigrams, more piquant than respectable, of his early days. At first he spoke low, but warming to his subjects he gradually raised his voice, and it was only by the train reaching Victoria that the old ladies were spared the shock of a couplet quite as flagrant as any of the immortal Captain Morris. I never saw my old fellow-traveler again. I heard, however, that when we met he had just got through the last of three fortunes and was rustivating in some small country cottage in the heart of Sussex, apparently minding his adversity as little

as he did the arduousness of his school days. So far as I could ascertain, he had sat in the House of Commons almost continuously from 1826 till 1868, losing his seat in the general election of that year, after which he finally relinquished Parliamentary life.

Sir H—— was the only pre-reform-day M. P. I had an opportunity of conversing with, though I think Lord Henry Bentinck, who was officiating for the last time as master of the Burton hounds on my first day out hunting, must have certainly sat in the later twenties. I remember him well, for he was strikingly handsome and patrician-looking, far more so than his more famous brother, Lord George, whom he also excelled intellectually, having taken a first if not a double first class at Oxford, a feat of which Lord George was certainly incapable. Lord Henry was a consummate whist-player, which naturally made him extremely impatient of less gifted partners. On one occasion he was invited to Lord Jersey's at Middleton to meet some of

the best whist-players in the county. After the first game Lord Henry turned round to his hostess, who was sitting near, and said, "This is a very pretty game, Lady Jersey; what do you call it?"

This Lady Jersey (the Lady St. Julians of Disraeli's novel) survived till 1868 or 1869, having occupied for some years the large house in Berkeley Square which has since been replaced by Lord Rosebery's not too sightly red-brick mansion. Her recollections must have been supremely interesting, for she was married the year before Trafalgar, and was one of the great ladies of the regency often alluded to by Lord Byron. I knew a neighbor of hers who lived in a small adjoining house, on the Mount Street side of Berkeley Square, and was much given to musical parties. At one of these, on a hot summer's afternoon which necessitated open windows, the strains of my hostess's classical music were suddenly intruded upon by those of a hurdy-gurdy stationed under Lady Jersey's

balcony. After enduring it for some time, my hostess sent out a servant to direct the organ-grinder to move on, but he refused to stir, alleging that he had been hired by Lady Jersey to amuse some children whom she was entertaining at tea. After another ten minutes of interruption and torture, my hostess indited a polite note to Lady Jersey (whom she did not know), requesting that the organ might be sent away, as she had a musical party; but all the satisfaction she obtained was a message from Lady Jersey, through a footman, that "when they stopped their fiddling she would stop her hurdy-gurdy"; the result being another hour's hideous discord, in which Chopin strove unsuccessfully to extinguish "Champagne Charley."

But to return to Lord Henry Bentinck. He was, I believe, the originator of the famous resort to the Radical farmer which has been attributed to various other electioneers. Lord Henry was canvassing North or

South Nottinghamshire in the Tory interest, and in due course solicited a large farmer, whose politics were supposed to be somewhat undecided, for his vote and interest. "Vote for you, my lard?" replied the farmer, who had, unknown to the candidate, a day or two before cast in his lot with the Radicals; "I would sooner vote for the devil!" "But," replied Lord Henry suavely, "in the event of your friend not standing?" This anecdote reminds me of another to which his satanic majesty also contributed the salient point. In the course of a trial of an action for slander, the plaintiff was asked by the examining counsel what the defendant had said to him at a certain juncture. "He told me to go to the devil," replied the witness. "Oh, he told you to go to the devil, did he?" resumed the counsel; "and what did you do then?" "I went to Mr. Tomkins," replied the witness, naming a leading local practitioner.

Lord Henry Bentinck and hunting remind

me of a curious sight which an old friend of mine once witnessed when out, I think, with the Belvoir hounds. This was a horseman whose seat was only less remarkable than his attire, which suggested a compromise between the costume of a Fontainebleau sportsman and that of a circus equestrian. On closer inspection the eccentric Nimrod proved to be no other than Mr. Disraeli, who apparently had joined the chase out of compliment to the Tory sportsmen of the district.

It is a curious fact that in this eminently sporting country we have had no prime minister since Lord Palmerston who regularly rode to hounds, and in the nineteenth century none before him except the Duke of Wellington, who, however, was decidedly Palmerston's inferior across country. Prior to the Duke of Wellington we have to go back as far as the "Junius" Duke of Grafton for a hunting prime minister, unless Lord Rockingham, who came very little later,



can be placed in that category. Palmerston, again, was the only prime minister of the nineteenth century who was really devoted to shooting, though the Duke of Wellington always carried a gun in the shooting season as punctiliously as he followed the hounds. Mr. Fox was, I think, the last minister before Lord Palmerston's day who thoroughly enjoyed shooting, and he, of course, was never actually prime minister, though the leading spirit of the Cabinet. I recently saw a print of Fox in shooting costume—a most extraordinary figure, with a chimney-pot hat of which the brim on one side drooped like the ear of a tame rabbit. But it would be dangerous to take the attire of Mr. Fox as representing that of the period, for except in his first youth he was always a slovenly dresser. A lady of my acquaintance told me that a great-aunt of hers had been present, as a girl, at the trial of Warren Hastings, and when pressed by my friend to give her impression of the scene, after considerable

hesitation she vouchsafed that all she could distinctly remember was the extremely shabby pair of brown cotton gloves worn by Mr. Fox, the fingers of which were far too long for him. This is my only link with Mr. Fox; but I can boast one, though of a different kind, with Mr. Pitt, for a friend of mine at whose house I often dine possesses his easy-chair, or, as it was called in those days, *chaise longue*, and she is also the owner of an even more interesting relic, namely, the sofa that belonged to the great Lord Chatham. On both these historic articles of furniture I have ventured to repose, though never without a feeling that I was guilty of sacrilege. Their pedigree is unimpeachable, for they were bought by my friend at the sale of the late Miss Perceval's effects a year or two ago. This Miss Perceval was the last surviving child of Spencer Perceval, the prime minister who was assassinated in 1812. On the death of Mr. Pitt in 1806, Lord Henry Petty, as chancellor of the exchequer, went

into residence at Downing Street and took over all Mr. Pitt's belongings there, which included the sofa and chair already mentioned. In 1807, on the Whig ministry going out, and of course Lord Henry Petty with them, Mr. Perceval became chancellor of the exchequer and took over the Downing Street furniture, which still included the Pitt belongings. On Perceval's death the sofa and chair passed to his widow, from whom they eventually devolved to the daughter who recently died. Miss Perceval, who was over ninety at her death, could remember seeing George III. on the terrace at Windsor. I was not acquainted with her, but I knew her niece, another Miss Perceval, very well, and she informed me not long ago that her mother, who was a Drummond, had sat on George III.'s knee on some occasion when the King rode over from old George Rose's at Lyndhurst to Mr. Drummond's place, Cadlands, on the Southampton Water. The child, who was

then little more than a baby, instead of appreciating the honor, burst into a violent fit of crying, and was relegated in disgrace to the nursery. The good-natured King insisted, however, on her having another chance; but the little girl was obdurate, and emphatically declined to reënter the drawing-room till "the man in the leather breeches had gone."

I have another association with Spencer Perceval in the person of an old gentleman, a relative of mine by marriage, with whom I dined in 1885 when he was past ninety. He had received his commission in the army as far back as 1811, and was spending his leave at Ealing in the following year, when the news reached the village where Perceval had a country house that the Prime Minister had been assassinated. My old friend told me that when he joined the army in 1811 pigtails were still worn, though they were shortly afterward discontinued. His first station was in one of the Channel Islands—

I think Alderney—and his orders were to keep a lookout for the French, with whom we were then, of course, actively at war, and in case of danger to give the alarm by ordering the island beacons to be lighted. After the boy—for he was only sixteen—had been there a few days, the sergeant of the depot, a man who had been on duty in the island for a considerable time, rushed in with the news that the “French were on ‘them!” The young ensign felt very uncomfortable, as he knew that if he gave a false alarm the consequences to him might be very unpleasant, if not serious. The Sergeant, however, was confident that the intelligence he had given was correct, and consequently, with no little trepidation, the Ensign ordered the lighting of the beacons. But his misgivings were only too well founded; the alarm proved to be a false one, and he was very severely reprimanded. He told me that the most miserable moment in his life was when he missed the chance of being present at the battle of

Waterloo. A detachment of his regiment, then at Colchester, was ordered to join the Duke of Wellington's army, with, of course, only a proportionate number of subalterns, and so keen were they all to go that after mess they began to quarrel as to who should have the preference. "The Colonel, however," said my old friend, "came up, and patting us paternally on the head, settled the matter by saying, 'Come, my lads, there's no need to quarrel about it ; you can't all go, and the only way to settle it is to draw lots,' which we did, and I, to my eternal chagrin, was one of those who drew a blank!" He well remembered an inspection of the regiment by the Duke of York, who good-naturedly promised to make a captain of him; "but," continued the old Major (for that was the highest grade he ever attained), "like many royal promises of that day, it was never fulfilled."

Although my old friend had not been at Waterloo, I knew one artillery officer who

had been present; and as a child I sat in the adjoining pew at church to an old general, Sir Henry Murray, who had led the Eighteenth Light Dragoons in the cavalry charge at the battle. I was asked, too, some quarter of a century ago, though I was unable to accept the invitation, to meet Lord William Lennox, who had been on the Duke's staff, but by way of compensation I have sat at lunch opposite Lady Louisa Tighe, who was actually present at the famous ball, and fastened on the Duke's sword before he left for the field. A very curious incident is connected with Lady Louisa and that particular luncheon. She was accompanied by her husband, Colonel Tighe, of Woodstock, Kilkenny, a distinguished-looking old gentleman, who, I particularly noticed, was wearing a rather bohemian-looking velvet coat and a peculiar light-blue bird's-eye neckcloth, every one else being in strict London costume. I never saw either Lady Louisa or Colonel Tighe again, but many

years afterward I was asked to meet a lady who was said to have had various psychical experiences concerning which I was anxious to hear. After a tantalizing account of a haunted room in which she heard but refused to look upon the notorious Jack Wilkes, she proceeded to tell me her latest experience, which she said had occurred during a visit to some friend (a lady) in Ireland, by whom she was taken to call at a neighboring "great house" which belonged to a widow lady, whose name she did not give. On entering the house they were conducted by the servant through a suite of rooms on the ground floor, in the first of which my informant observed an old gentleman reading a newspaper. He took no notice of them, and they passed on to a drawing-room at the other end, where they paid their call on the old lady, and in due course took their departure. As they passed through the first room again, my informant looked for the old gentleman, but he was gone. When they reached the



drive my informant asked her friend who the old gentleman was who had been reading in the first room as they entered. "What old gentleman?" said her friend; "I saw none." "Oh, but there was certainly an old gentleman there," rejoined my informant; "I distinctly saw him reading a newspaper." "What was he like?" inquired her friend, thoroughly mystified. "Well," said my informant, "he was dressed rather peculiarly, for he was wearing a black velveteen coat and a very bright blue neckcloth with white spots——" "Was that," I suddenly interrupted, "by any chance a Colonel Tighe?" "What made you ask?" said my informant. I then explained how I had once, very many years ago, seen Colonel Tighe in that very attire. "Well," said my informant, "it was not Colonel Tighe, for he had died the year before, but it was his apparition; for my friend, on hearing my description, immediately recognized it as the Colonel, who before his death had promised Lady Louisa

that, if possible, he would revisit her!" Lady Louisa died, a centenarian, only a couple of years ago.

Another interesting military veteran of my acquaintance was an old ex-Grenadier Guardsman of the rank and file, who long before I knew him had found his way back to his old hamlet and exchanged his uniform for the now, alas! rapidly disappearing smock-frock. He was a strikingly handsome and intelligent old fellow, who had begun life as a "parish boy," in which capacity he was "bid for" by the neighboring farmers as a so-called "'prentice," but virtually as a servitor, a position which he relinquished, as soon as his time expired, in order to join the colors. He told me that he had formed one of the guard of honor on the accession of William IV., who was apparently never tired of inspecting the Guards when stationed at Windsor, greatly to the discomfiture of the commanding officers. One incident which he related supplied an

emphatic corroboration of the character which William IV. gained from Charles Greville and others for undignified buffoonery. It appears that the King had insisted on joining the Duke of Wellington on some occasion when the latter was making an official inspection, an honor which the Duke was evidently far from appreciating. One or two places from my old friend was a private with a nose very much resembling the Duke's in shape, which so tickled his Majesty that, falling behind the Duke, he proceeded with a wink to stroke his own nose and to point first at the private's and then at the Duke's, all the while smothering a guffaw. Not content with this undignified exhibition, after asking the name of the adjoining private, and learning that it was William King, he exclaimed with a chuckle: "Ah, then there's not much difference between us, eh, my man? You're William King and I'm King William! Ha! ha! ha!" No wonder that the Duke looked "mighty sour," as the old fellow expressed it.

Like many others, especially Harrovians, I have always been deeply interested in everything connected with Lord Byron. My first association with him dates from my childhood, when one day, as I was walking with my father along Bond Street, at the Grafton Street crossing a slight-looking, rather decrepit old gentleman slowly passed us in the direction of Piccadilly. "Did you see that old gentleman?" asked my father. "That was Lord Broughton, the great friend of Lord Byron." There was very little of the democratic Hobhouse about him in those days. As is usually the case with youthful apostles of liberty, office had cured him, and committing to oblivion his early political escapades and their climax in Newgate, he had maneuvered his way into the Painted Chamber under the imposing title of Lord Broughton de Gyfford. How Byron would have laughed and sneered at his old crony's *volte-face*!

My next link with Lord Byron was at

Harrow, where in the early sixties there still survived a funny little old vender of cheap stationery, named Polly Arnold, who as a girl remembered Byron in his Harrow days, though she could give no distinct impression of him. A little later on I met an old gentleman who had been at Harrow with him, and who remembered meeting him some years afterward at Brighton, when Byron, then on the verge of his matrimonial troubles, congratulated him in somewhat equivocal terms on his recent marriage.

So far as I have been able to gather, Byron at Harrow was very much what he was in after-life—a creature of moods and whims and impulses, one day overbearing and tyrannical, the next almost quixotically good-natured and chivalrous. The actual cause of his separation from Lady Byron is still a secret, but I suspect that the revelation, if it is ever made, will be of a comparatively humdrum character. Considering the essentially matter-of-fact temperament

of Lady Byron, and the fact that Byron was unquestionably "*un fanfaron des vices qu'il n'avait pas*"—one who in certain moods would, out of mere bravado and a saturnine delight in shocking commonplace decorum, boast of achievements and practices of which he was really quite guiltless—the cause, after all, is not very far to seek. His highly seasoned fabrications were probably accepted by the serious, unimaginitive Lady Byron as literal confessions of fact, and when reported by her to the no less serious and unimaginitive Doctor Lushington, were, no doubt, treated by him in the same spirit, the result being the solemn legal opinion that Byron was a monster of iniquity, with a touch of madness thrown in, from whom she must at once irrevocably decide to separate. As a matter of fact, Byron was no worse, and in many instances a good deal better, than several of the noblemen of that day; but his genius, his eccentricity, his emotional, paradoxical temperament, all tended to

place him, so to speak, under the public magnifying glass—an ordeal to which discreeter and more commonplace offenders were never subjected.

I have lately heard from one who knew a good deal “behind the scenes” in connection with Lord Byron, that at the time of his death certain of his intimate friends strongly suspected that he had expedited his end. Certainly I know, from a statement of his own in an unpublished letter, that a year or two before he had not only contemplated but actually made his preparations for suicide, and the disappointing turn which events in Greece were rapidly taking lend some color to the suspicion above alluded to. He had staked all on this final throw of the Greek campaign, and the likelihood of its proving a fiasco would be quite strong enough an inducement for him to precipitate “the shuffling off of a mortal coil” which had, on the whole, brought him little more than vanity and vexation of spirit.

Before leaving the subject of Lord Byron, I cannot refrain from saying a word relative to the famous (and infamous) charge made against him by Mrs. Beecher Stowe, which, like all such charges, however ill-founded, has been in many quarters only too implicitly credited. If Lady Byron, as stated by Mrs. Stowe, separated from Byron on account of his relations with Mrs. Leigh, how was it that for nearly fifteen years after the separation Lady Byron remained on the most affectionate terms with that lady? The objection is insuperable, and absolutely fatal to Mrs. Stowe's case. There were, doubtless, serious rumors afloat concerning Byron and Mrs. Leigh—indeed, I am aware that they were credited by certain well-known personages of that day; but it is probable that they originated from the fact of Byron having written "Manfred," though if he had been guilty of the conduct alleged against him it is extremely unlikely that he would have allowed the publication of the poem. If



Lady Byron did confide this highly improbable story to Mrs. Stowe, it could not, for the reason already stated, have been connected in any way with the separation, and was probably merely related by Lady Byron as having come to her ears long afterward, though Mrs. Stowe, with characteristic recklessness, subsequently placed it in a wholly different aspect. If Lord Byron sinned much, he assuredly suffered in proportion, and it is monstrous that his memory should be blackened with a charge wholly unsupported by anything worthy the name of evidence, which in a court of law would have earned for the accuser the most unsparing condemnation.

From Byron to Shelley is a natural transition, though my "links" with Shelley are comparatively few. I had, however, the good fortune to be slightly acquainted with the late Sir Percy Shelley, his only son, to whose house on the Chelsea Embankment I remember paying what, for me, was a mem-

orable visit. I was accompanying my mother, whose call was really on Lady Shelley, a gifted woman, greatly wrapped up in all that appertained to her illustrious father-in-law, and I had not expected to see Sir Percy, who was not in the room when I arrived. As we were talking with Lady Shelley about the new Life of the poet on which Mr. Dowden was then engaged, the door opened, and there entered a little red-faced man with "ferrety" eyes and altogether a rather insignificant appearance. He was posing in his hand a small parcel, which he extended toward Lady Shelley, exclaiming rather irritably, "You told me this was twopence, but I find it's overweight." Lady Shelley, however, diverted him from his postal grievance by introducing us, a ceremony which he seemed far from disposed to follow up by conversation. However, by way of breaking the ice, I fortunately bethought myself that I had only a week or two before driven past "Field Place," near Horsham, where

his father, the poet, was born. I accordingly mentioned the fact, expressing my deep interest in seeing it. "Ah, yes," responded Sir Percy, still resentfully poising the offending parcel, "it's not a bad place, *but the worst of it is I can't let it!*" This was a *douche* with a vengeance from the poet's own offspring, and I immediately concluded, and I think rightly, that Sir Percy had harked back to Sir Timothy with possibly just a *souçon* of old Sir Bysshe and come into the world minus a grain of intellectual affinity with his marvelous father, and, for that matter, with his only less marvelous mother. Shortly after this episode we made a pilgrimage to the Shelley room to see the relics, Sir Percy following slightly in the rear, but punctiliously and almost reverentially joining in the inspection. Lady Shelley afterward explained that Sir Percy never failed to accompany visitors in their inspection of the relics, though he had, of course, seen them hundreds of times, and that his affection

and veneration for his mother were such that he seldom spoke of her without tears in his eyes. He had therefore, at any rate, the deepest affinity of all—that of the heart. Subsequently I went more than once to Sir Percy's charming theater in Tite Street, for which he always painted the scenery, and with fair success, though his acting was not above that of the average amateur. His ownership of this theater, and indeed his occupation of Shelley House, were abruptly terminated owing to an untoward incident for which the spitefulness of the late Mr. Slingsby Bethell was responsible.

Slingsby Bethell, who was a neighbor and acquaintance of the Shelleys, had been invited to take part in various representations which Sir Percy had organized in his theater from time to time, but when arranging for an important charity performance at which the Prince and Princess of Wales were to be present, for some reason or other he was not asked to join. This

incensed him so bitterly that, finding out that by some oversight Sir Percy had not taken out a license for the performance, in respect of which admission money was to be payable, he with incredible meanness gave information of the omission to the authorities, who issued summonses at the Westminster Police Court against Sir Percy Shelley as proprietor, Mr. Hamilton Aïdé as author of the play to be performed, and Mr. Horace Wigan as stage manager. It had been Bethell's intention to stop the performance altogether, but having regard to the fact that it was in aid of a charity and that the Prince and Princess were to attend, the magistrate consented to postpone the hearing of the summonses till after the performance. Bethell was thus for the moment frustrated; but his malignity was eventually gratified, for on the hearing of the summonses all three defendants were convicted and fined, an event which, together with the attendant circumstances, so disgusted Sir Percy that

shortly afterward he gave up his residence and with it the theater.

Only inferior in interest to the Byron letters are the recently published editions of Charles Lamb's works and correspondence, which, however, exhaustive as they are, do not contain one delicious saying of Lamb's that is, I believe, very little known. Among the lesser luminaries of the northern circuit when Pollock and Brougham were the bright particular stars was Samuel Warren, afterward famous as the author of "Ten Thousand a Year," in which, by the way, he gives a "dry-point" portrait of Brougham, under the name, I think, of Counselor Quicksilver. One of Warren's friends on circuit was a barrister who afterward took orders and became the most popular preacher at a Midland watering-place. Though no longer connected with the bar, this gentleman still maintained his friendship with Warren, who used occasionally to visit him and dilate with pardonable pride on the

grandees to whose tables his fame as an author had gained him admission and on the celebrities he used to meet there. On one of these occasions his host asked Warren whether he had ever chanced to come across Charles Lamb, to which Warren replied that he had once met him at breakfast at Lord Lyndhurst's. "Did he say anything good?" inquired the host. "Not that I remember," answered Warren. "Very odd," rejoined the host. "Surely he must have said something worth recalling?" "Well," responded Warren after a pause, "now I come to think of it, he did say something, though I don't know that it's worth repeating." "Never mind," was the answer, "let us hear what it was." "Well," resumed Warren, "I had been telling some story in French; it was really a good story, but somehow it didn't come off, probably because the French wasn't quite up to the mark; so when nobody laughed, by way of getting over the failure, turning to Lamb, who was

sitting next me, I added carelessly, 'Not that I know much French—for a gentleman!'" "Ah," expectantly exclaimed the host, prepared for a treat, "and what happened then?" "Well," answered Warren, "there's very little in it, but when I said that I didn't know much French for a gentleman, Lamb, who hadn't uttered a word the whole of breakfast, suddenly stuttered out, 'N-nor I f-for a b-b-black-g-guard!'"

My closing remarks shall be devoted to what may be described as the transfiguration of London during the last half-century. London, as I first remember it, was as inferior in many ways to its modern representative as the latter still is to Paris and Vienna. It was probably at that time the dullest and dingiest metropolis in the world, though even now in the matter of lighting it is far behind some of our great provincial towns. My earliest acquaintance with its street life dates from an eventful day when I was taken by my nurse to see the Duke of Wellington



lying in state, of which spectacle I can only remember, and that dimly, the great black velvet pall and the colossal tapers. But shortly afterward my eldest sister and I were taken for an almost daily walk in the principal West End thoroughfares, the characteristics of which I can well recollect. The first thing that struck and not unnaturally terrified me was the utter chaos of the crossings. There were no regularly told-off policemen to regulate the traffic and protect the timid and inexperienced pedestrian in those days, and the process of reaching the opposite side of Regent Street was unpleasantly like a panic-stricken stampede. If a policeman did intervene it was only by accident, and "merely to oblige," the force being then at the height of its renown for that "conspicuity of absence" with which it has always been more or less identified, though of late years with much less foundation. The policeman of that day was in appearance a fearful and wonderful being. His head-gear was a

“chimney-pot” hat of sham beaver, decorated with strips of very shiny leather; while instead of a tunic he wore a swallow-tail garment cut like a dress-coat, set off in the summer by white duck “continuations.” Facially, he was either clean-shaven or decorated with mutton-chop whiskers, and his aspect when mounted, and at exercise, flashing a sword, was singularly comic and incongruous.

The “growlers” were also of a decidedly archaic type, externally minus springs and internally liberally strewn with dirty and trampled straw, which emitted a faint, sickly odor that had often a peculiarly nauseating effect. On all the panels were emblazoned, in the boldest style and the crudest coloring, the royal arms; while the “jarvies” themselves were for the most part bottle-nosed ruffians, who regarded any remuneration short of a double fare as an insult, and became positively murderous in looks as well as in language if tendered the then legal

minimum of sixpence. The omnibuses were also of a very inferior description, carpeted, like the "growlers," with malodorous straw, and fitted with greasy cushions that boasted their own particular "bouquet." There were, I think, very few omnibus fares under sixpence, and the vehicles were, as a rule, wretchedly underhosed.

As regards the streets, many were even then laid with paving-stones, and the jolting and clatter of the vehicular traffic were appalling. I don't suppose that in those days there was a single india-rubber tire in London, and of course neither asphalt nor wood pavement, so that the din was far more distracting than at present, even allowing for the enormous increase of traffic.

Perhaps the greatest change that has taken place in London since those days, or indeed a much later period, is in the matter of hotels and restaurants. Down to the early sixties there was no really large hotel in the whole of the West End of London,

the Clarendon, in Bond Street, which has now disappeared, and Thomas's, in Berkeley Square, being about the most capacious, though Claridge's, in Brook Street, was then, as now, perhaps the most select, being nearly always chosen as the resting-place of foreign royalties. As regards West End restaurants, I think Verrey's, in Regent Street, was then the only one of the first class, and that was seldom frequented except by foreigners, unless it might be for luncheon by ladies up for the day from the country or the distant suburbs. Luncheon, dinner and supper parties at a restaurant were then unheard-of entertainments among the upper and upper-middle classes, who would have regarded anything of the kind as shockingly bohemian, if not something worse.

The theaters, again, even over the whole London area, were few and far between—down to 1860 Drury Lane, the Lyceum, the Olympic, the Haymarket, the St. James's (when open), the Adelphi, the Princess's, and

the Strand, eight in all, being the only ones of any vogue; whereas nowadays the number of theaters is positively bewildering. The opera, however, was a far more splendid affair than at present, Her Majesty's attracting audiences little less brilliant than Covent Garden; but of course that was the epoch of transcendently fine singers, all of whom made London their headquarters for the whole of the season.

The park has vastly improved in appearance since the early sixties, when, I think, there was not a single flower to be seen the whole year round between the Marble Arch and Hyde Park corner, but in other respects it has not altered for the better. The earlier morning ride may be more sensible in the summer months, but it is far less brilliant than its predecessor, which extended from 12 to 1; while the discontinuance of the evening ride (5 to 7:30), with its wonderful medley of prominent statesmen, prelates, ambassadors and dandies, set off by some of the most

beautiful women that have ever graced the country, is little short of a calamity. That, too, was still the day of full-dress riding costume—tall hats, single-breasted cut-away coats, and, mostly, tight-fitting dark-blue “strapped” trousers, finished off by superlatively polished black boots; while any lady equestrian who had ventured to discard the natty little tall hat for a “billycock,” and the perfectly close-fitting habit for a “sack” covert coat, would have been regarded as the acme of “bad form.”

I shall doubtless be accounted a mere *laudator temporis acti* when I venture the opinion that in London, at all events, there was far more beauty among women and far more distinction of appearance (to say nothing of good looks) among men than are to be met with in the present day. Every woman in those days, so far from being, as now, a slavish imitator, seemed to have a distinctive charm and *cachet* of her own; and, above all, it had happily not become *de*

*rigueur* to torture a naturally sweet and gentle voice into the shrill "tinny" sort of "clack" which nowadays renders the Row only a degree less distracting than the Zoölogical Gardens parrot-house. The lawns, now crammed on Sundays like the Epsom Downs on a Derby day, were then entirely unfrequented, the fashionable parade on Sundays till the early seventies being the Broad Walk, Kensington Gardens, from four to seven. So far as I recollect, the park was virtually deserted by society on Sundays, who repaired to the Botanical and the Zoo (by ticket) when preferring a more exclusive resort than the Gardens.

In the matter of society, strictly so called, the present indiscriminate jumble of patri-cians and plutocrats was almost unknown, at all events before the later seventies. The *haute juiverie* were still in a sense beyond the pale, and the bare idea of one of them being honored with an English peerage would forty years ago have caused

little short of a revolution among the *vieille noblesse*. These democratic changes may be salutary, but they have certainly not added to the prestige of the Painted Chamber, which bids fair before very long to become a chamber of commerce, and that not of the highest order!

These desultory pages must now be brought to a close. It is perhaps audacious in one whose span of life falls short of sixty years to place his recollections and experiences before the public, but it is not always old age that proves the most interesting recorder. In the course of little more than half a century of a by no means eventful life I have chanced to come into contact with persons and events of some importance and interest, and I question whether many of the same age can claim, as I can, to have known a man who had talked to a survivor of the Jacobite campaign of 1745, to have spoken to another who had witnessed Nelson's funeral, to have



dined opposite a third who had been in the Copenhagen expedition of 1807, and to have met at luncheon a lady who was present at the famous Brussels ball that preceded the Battle of Waterloo. At the same time, I am well aware that for the small and privileged class who, so to speak, were born and bred behind the scenes, jottings of this description can have little interest. To such, however, they are not addressed, but rather to the less initiated yet intelligent majority, who may possibly derive from them, if not instruction, at least some trifling entertainment.



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