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FAMOUS MEN

OF

MODERN TIMES:

BY THE AUTHOR OF

PETER PARLEY'S TALES.

BOSTON:
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P R E F A C E.

IN the following pages, the author has attempted to give the lives of several great men of modern times; **MEN OF POWER**—those who still live among us by their writings, their fame, their examples, and thus continue to exert an influence upon society. It is desirable that the means of forming just opinions respecting those of whom we often think and speak,—with whose minds we hold frequent and sympathetic communion,—should be in our hands, so that we may be fully and fairly apprized of the nature of that influence which is around us, and modifying or moulding our thoughts and feelings.

This, at least, is desirable in respect to the young; and if those of more mature minds may not stand in need of such aids, those of less experience may be benefited thereby. It is mainly for such that this volume is designed.

In drawing the following portraits of some of the master spirits of mankind, an endeavor has been made

to present not only the chief events of their lives, but glances at the times and circumstances in which they acted: numerous characteristic anecdotes are introduced; and in respect to authors, it has been attempted to furnish the means of forming a just estimate of their works, as well in a literary, as a moral point of view. Believing that biography is at once a most attractive and useful kind of reading, the author has sought to avail himself of the full strength of his subject, to attain two objects—the pleasure and profit of his readers.



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WALTER SCOTT.



Born Aug. 15, 1771; died Sept. 21, 1832.

FAMOUS MEN.

WALTER SCOTT.

THE lives of very few great men present so much to excite our interest, respect, and gratitude, as that of Sir Walter Scott. He was a man of genius, yet such was the kindness of his heart, the simplicity of his manners, and his good common sense, that he always kept himself within the reach of common minds, and within the sympathy of his fellow-men. Great as he was, he was still one of us, and though the events of his life were not of a startling character, there is a continuous thread of occurrences, from his childhood to his grave, that is exceedingly interesting to follow. The early part of his life, containing the events which shaped his genius, are, at once, in the highest degree amusing and instructive. In the brief space allotted to us in this volume, we shall endeavor to give such facts and anecdotes as may put the reader in possession of the means of forming a just estimate of his character.

He was born at Edinburgh, Aug. 15, 1771. When about two years old, his nurse was one night wakened by his screams, and, on examining him, his right leg was found to be in a state of paralysis, and as cold

as marble! For two years after this event, he was very feeble. When four years old, he was stronger, and able to go about on crutches.

We are told that, when a child, the nurse having offended him, he slyly took a litter of puppies, and threw them all into the water cistern, where they were drowned. Oppressed with the consciousness of his misdeed, when dinner came, he could not eat; this caused inquiry, and thus the sad truth came to light. We are also told that young Walter was fond of a thunder-storm, at a very early age. On one occasion, a furious tempest of this kind was raging in Edinburgh. Such was the violence of the wind, thunder, and lightning, that the servants huddled together in great affright, the children of the family being with them. All were so filled with terror as not to observe the absence of Walter, for some time. At last he was missed, and the domestics were sent in all directions to find him. They searched in vain for a long time; when one of them, happening to go into the back garden, found him on his back, the rain pelting him in the face,—but instead of sharing the general terror, he was in the greatest glee, kicking up his heels, and at every flash of lightning, calling out, “bonnie! bonnie!”

Scott's father was a *writer to the signet*, in Edinburgh, a lawyer who prepares cases for the higher Scottish courts. He was a sharp, sensible man; attentive to the affairs of his profession; rigid in his religious opinions and habits, and prudent in his ways of living. His wife was a small, plain, well-educated woman, of very good sense, and as rigid as her

husband in her feelings and principles. She was, however, very charitable, loved poetry, and was fond of paintings. It appears, that she was, on the whole, a superior woman. This couple had ten children, of whom Walter was the fourth. None of them attained eminence, except the subject of our present story.

When Walter was about four or five years old, in the hope of benefitting his still feeble health, he was sent to Sandy Knowe, an estate on the Tweed, and placed under the care of his maternal grandfather. He was a fine old farmer, whom Scott himself afterwards describes in the following words :—

“ Wise without learning—plain and good,
And sprung of Scotland’s gentler blood;
Whose eye in age, quick, clear, and keen,
Showed what in youth its glow had been:
Whose doom, contending parties sought,
Content with equity unbought.”

Walter’s grandmother was now very aged, but the boy here found an Aunt Jenny, who was an old maid, or a widow without children. She was a woman of great cleverness, and possessed, at once, an immense stock of old tales and legends, with great talent in telling them. This lady became much attached to young Walter, and the more, perhaps, that he was feeble, and in his lameness, unfortunate. He was, therefore, committed to her care, and it is, doubtless, to the impressions made by her narratives, that his genius took the direction, which, in after life, gave him so much fame, and the world so much gratification. At all events, Aunt Jennie, from the first, devoted herself to the “ puir lame laddie,” with all the

earnestness of a mother's love. She watched and cherished him, guarded him from accidents, and coddled him with little dainties ; told tales to amuse his waking hours, and sung him to sleep at night. For a course of years she persevered in these kind attentions ; often making the greatest sacrifices of personal ease and comfort, for the sake of her nephew. She was most amply repaid by his restoration to health and his lasting gratitude.

There were two of Walter's cousins with him at Sandy Knowe, younger than himself. When his health had improved a little, he became a famous play-fellow. He used to limp about, using often but one crutch ; but he was frequently the leader of the party ; wherever he went, the lesser imps were seen trotting after him. His own description of himself, at this period, is the best we can give :

“For I was wayward, bold and wild,
A self-willed imp, a grandam's child ;
But half a plague and half a jest,
Was still endured, beloved, carest.”

The impression made upon Walter's mind by the objects around him, at this time, were deep and lasting. The farm-house where he dwelt, was situated at the foot of some lofty crags, upon which were the ruins of an ancient tower. He has introduced in Marmion the following sketch of the scene, with allusions to his childish feelings :

“It was a barren scene, and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled ;
But ever and anon between,
Were velvet tufts of loveliest green.

And honey-suckles loved to crawl
Up the lone crag and ruined wall ;
I deemed such nooks the sweetest shade
The sun in all his rounds surveyed ;
And still I thought that shattered tower
The mightiest work of human power."

The region in which young Walter was placed was well calculated to impress his youthful fancy with wild legends and romantic tales, for it abounded in scenes celebrated in song and story. Aunt Jenny did not fail to relate to him all these marvels, and pointed to the very places where they were said to have transpired. Such was the beginning of Walter Scott's education.

When he was five or six years old, his grandfather died, and Aunt Jenny removed to Kelso. Walter accompanied her, and as there was a school-house near, she determined to send him there. The first time a child enters a school-room, the scene is quite appalling. In looking round, he observes a crowd of children seated on benches, with an aspect declaring that no boy's play is going on here. He notices among them a serious and severe looking man, seated or standing, holding some instrument, perhaps of discipline, in his hand. The child proceeds,—the master's eye falls upon him; he feels indescribably queer, and putting his thumb into his mouth, by way of making himself at home, goes to his seat.

Such is the scene on ordinary occasions; but there was something peculiarly formidable to young Walter, in his initiation at school; for the master was a "big, queer-looking, uncouth man, with an enormous

wig, one blind eye, and the worst temper of any man in Great Britain." Beside all these redoubtable qualities, he bore the tremendous title of Launcelot Whale!

At this school, Walter remained about a year. He did not associate much with the other scholars at this time; in the school, he was studious, and when it was over, he was generally seen passing rapidly on his crutches through the group of other children, to his home. He used often to amuse himself, at this time, by riding about the country on a pony.

Scott's parents were anxious to do everything in their power to recover the health, and remove the lameness of their son. It being recommended that he should try the waters of Bath, in England, he went thither,—his faithful and devoted Aunt Jenny being his attendant. The expedition was made, and was, perhaps, of some benefit; for soon after, that is, in 1779, at the age of eight years, we find him at the high school in Edinburgh.

When he first went there, however, he was so feeble as to be carried in the arms of a servant. After a while, he improved, and was left more to take care of himself. He was regarded by his school-fellows as rather a dull boy; but if they imposed upon him, his crutch usually made them repent their impertinence. There is an amusing anecdote told of him at this time. As the boys of the school were one day poking their heads through the iron railing around George's Square, young Walter must needs put his through, too. It chanced that his head was unusually large, and though he contrived to get it in, he

could not get it out. There was a good deal of pulling and hauling, squeezing and crying ; but all would not do, and the young rat was held fast in the trap, till a blacksmith came with his tools, and let him out.

Young Walter's health now mended fast, and from a puny child, he soon became a daring, active, and somewhat rowdy boy. In the time of snow-ballings he signalized himself by his feats ; and in the frays that took place between the different parties, into which the boys of Edinburgh were divided, he took a leading part. He has himself given us an account of one of these adventures in which he was engaged, which is too amusing to be omitted. Here it is.

" It is well known in the south, that there is little or no boxing at the Scottish schools. About forty or fifty years ago, however, a far more dangerous mode of fighting in parties or factions, was permitted in the streets of Edinburgh, to the great disgrace of the police, and danger of the parties concerned. These parties were generally formed from the quarter of the town in which the combatants resided ; those of a particular square or district fighting against those of an adjoining one. Hence it happened, that the children of the higher classes were often pitted against those of the lower ; each taking their side according to the residence of their friends.

" So far as I recollect, however, it was unmixed either with feelings of democracy or aristocracy, or indeed, with malice or ill-will of any kind towards the opposite party. In fact, it was only a rough mode of play. Such contests were, however, maintained with great vigor, with stones, and sticks, and fisticuffs

when one party dared to charge, and the other stood their ground. Of course, mischief sometimes happened; boys are said to have been killed at these *bickers*, as they were called, and serious accidents certainly took place, as many cotemporaries can bear witness.

"The author's father, residing in George Square, on the southern side of Edinburgh, the boy's belonging to that family, with others in the square, were arrayed into a sort of company, to which a lady of distinction presented a handsome set of colors. Now, this company or regiment, as a matter of course, was engaged in weekly warfare with the boys inhabiting the cross-causeway, Bristo street, the Potter Row; in short, the neighboring suburbs. These last were chiefly of the lower rank, but hardy loons, who threw stones to a hair's breadth, and were very rugged antagonists at close quarters.

"The skirmish sometimes lasted for a whole evening, until one party or the other were victorious; when, if ours were successful, we drove the enemy to their quarters, and were usually chased back by the reinforcement of bigger lads, who came to their assistance. If, on the contrary, we were pursued, as was often the case, into the precincts of our square, we were, in our turn, supported by our elder brothers, domestic servants, and similar auxiliaries.

"It followed, from our frequent opposition to each other, that though not knowing the names of our enemies, we were yet well acquainted with their appearance, and had nick-names for the most remarkable of them. One very active and spirited boy might be

considered as the principal leader in the cohort of the suburbs. He was, I suppose, thirteen or fourteen years old, finely made, tall, blue-eyed, with long fair hair, the very picture of a youthful Goth. This lad was always first in the charge, and last in the retreat,—the Achilles at once, and the Ajax of the cross-cause-way. He was too formidable to us not to have a cognomén; and, like that of a knight of old, it was taken from the most remarkable part of his dress, being a pair of old green livery breeches, which was the principal part of his clothing; for, like Pentapolin, according to Don Quixote's account, Green Breeks, as we called him, always entered the battle with bare arms, legs and feet.

"It fell that once upon a time, when the combat was at the thickest, this plebeian champion headed a charge so rapid and furious that all fled before him. He was several paces before his comrades, and had actually laid his hands on the patrician standard, when one of our party, whom some misjudging friend had entrusted with a *couteau de chasse*, or hanger, inspired with zeal for the honor of the corps, worthy of Major Sturgeon himself, struck poor Green Breeks over the head, with sufficient strength to cut him down.

"When this was seen, the casualty was so far beyond what had ever taken place before, that both parties fled different ways, leaving poor Green Breeks, with his head plentifully dabbled in blood, to the care of the watchman, who, honest man, took care not to know who had done the mischief. The bloody hanger was thrown into one of the meadow ditches, and

solemn secrecy was sworn on all hands ; but the remorse and terror of the actor were beyond all bounds, and his apprehensions of the most dreadful character. The wounded hero was, for a few days, in the infirmary, the case being only a trifling one. But though inquiry was strongly pressed on him, no argument could make him indicate the person from whom he had received the wound, though he must have been perfectly well known to him.

“ When he recovered and was dismissed, the author and his brothers opened a communication with him, through the medium of a popular gingerbread baker, of whom both parties were customers, in order to tender a subsidy in the shape of smart money. The sum would excite ridicule were I to name it ; but sure I am that the pockets of the noted Green Breeks never before held as much money of his own. He declined the remittance, saying that he would not sell his blood, but at the same time reprobated the idea of being an informer, which he said was *clam*, meaning base or mean ; with much urgency, he accepted a pound of snuff for the use of some old woman,—aunt, grandmother, or the like,—with whom he lived. We did not become friends, for the *bickers* were more agreeable to both parties, than any more pacific amusement ; but we conducted them ever after under mutual assurances of the highest consideration for each other.”

Scott was remarkable through life for the energy of his will. When he set about a thing, he went to it in good earnest, and usually with success. This trait of character, which he displayed in his youth,

was the secret of his after fame. Though he was club-footed, he determined to learn to dance, and such was the earnestness with which he set about it, that, in a short time, he became the best dancer of the party; a thing quite remarkable, when we know the fact that he had no ear for music.

We must not omit to mention, while we tell of Scott's frolics, that he had a strong religious feeling, even from childhood. He would never indulge in an oath, and was very strict in saying his prayers at the stated times. Often his brother Thomas, who went to school with him, and was required to be his guardian, would hurry Walter, and when the latter was longer at his prayers than Thomas' patience could bear, the latter would go to his door and say, "'Deed Wattie, canna ye come awa?'" "I canna come till I hae said my prayers," replied Walter. "Why can ye no pray when ye come hame to breakfast, man?" was the answer.

It does not appear that Scott was a very industrious student, or that he was a proficient at the high school. He was, however, fond of books, and spent a great deal of time in reading for his amusement. The works he preferred were romances and histories of the olden times. His mother encouraged his love of books, and asked him to read to her, which he often did. His favorite position was on his back on the carpet, his lame leg over his left one, and on it his book, as if it were a desk. Here he would lie for hours, engrossed in his volume; often, in this attitude, he read to his mother. He used to read in bed for hours, both morning and evening. He was frequently

so absorbed in his book, as to be inattentive to everything around him.

About this time, Scott became acquainted with some remarkable characters, both at his father's house and in the society which he met. Many of these furnished outlines for the heroes and heroines, who figured in after days in his novels. He frequently went to see his Uncle Rutherford, an eminent physician of Edinburgh, who had a good library, to which Walter was much devoted. He would often bring his book to the table at breakfast, and when his uncle begged him to lay it down till he had done eating, he would say, "Please let me read through this paragraph." It often happened, however, that the end of the paragraph was not found till he was again and again reminded that his breakfast was waiting.

Scott was also, even thus early, a famous storyteller. It was a frequent custom with him and some of his companions to get together, and recount long stories of giants and dwarfs, ghosts and knights, fierce battles and fairy enchantments. Often, during the holidays, would he and his chosen mates withdraw to some quiet nook upon Arthur's Seat, or Salisbury Crags,—lofty peaks, almost overhanging the city of Edinburgh,—and there spend hours, and almost days, fabricating and imparting these wild, but boyish romances.

When he was about ten years old, he was one day in the room, as some one spoke of the heavy rains that had fallen. "It is Caledonia weeping for the poverty of her soil," said the boy; thus giving an evidence of the poetic turn of his mind. About this time,

as he was coming home from school, he was overtaken by a thunder-storm. His mother, who was expecting him, was alarmed at his non-appearance ; and when, after the storm had cleared away, he came home, she began to reprimand him severely. He then said that he took shelter in one of the public stairways, common in Edinburgh, and while there, wrote some lines which he drew from his pocket, and showed to her. As they are the first of his attempts at poetical composition, we give them to the reader :

Loud o'er my head what awful thunders roll, ers
And vivid lightnings flash from pole to pole ; nd
It is thy voice, my God, which bids them fly ; 'S,
Thy voice directs them through the vaulted sky ; :.
Then let the good thy mighty power revere,
And hardened sinners thy just judgments fear.

In 1783, Scott was transferred to the University of Edinburgh ; but the next year, he broke a blood-vessel, which reduced him to the verge of the grave. He was, for a long time, so weak as not to be allowed to speak a loud word, and he was allowed to eat nothing but a spoonful of rice at long intervals. He was permitted, however, to read as much as he pleased, and, having access to a large mass of books of fiction, in a circulating library, he says of himself, that, being denied everything else, he became a "glutton of books." He continued feeble for two years, which time he spent in reading, with no other design than amusement. He, however, perused many works of history, travels, and voyages ; and thus, as his memory was very retentive, he stored his mind with a great amount of miscellaneous knowledge.

About the year 1786, Scott saw Burns, the poet; and as he has told us of his feelings on the occasion, so, and given us a good portrait of that extraordinary man, we quote his words:—"I was a lad of fifteen, when he first came to Edinboro', but had sense and feeling enough to be much interested in his poetry, and would have given the world to know him; but I went very little acquaintance with any literary people, and still less with the gentry of the west country, the Walte sets that he most frequented. Mr. Thomas Grier- his bo. I was, at that time, a clerk of my father's. He begged to see Burns, and promised to ask him to his lodgings for dinner, but had no opportunity to keep his word; otherwise, I might have seen more of this distinguished man. As it was, I saw him one day at the late venerable Professor Ferguson's, where there were several gentlemen of literary reputation, among whom I recollect the celebrated Mr. Dugald Stewart. Of course, we youngsters sat silent, looked and listened. The only thing I remember, which was remarkable in Burns's manner, was the effect produced upon him by a print of Banbury's, representing a soldier lying dead on the snow, his dog sitting in misery on one side; on the other, his widow, with a child in her arms. These lines were written beneath:

'Cold on Canadian hills, or Minden's plain,
Perhaps that parent wept her soldier slain—
Bent o'er her babe, her eye dissolved in dew;
The big drops mingling with the milk he drew,
Gave the sad presage of his future years,
The child of misery, baptized in tears.'

"Burns seemed much affected by the print or

rather, the ideas which it suggested to his mind. He actually shed tears. He asked whose the lines were ; and it chanced that nobody but myself remembered that they occur in a half-forgotten poem of Lang-horne's, called by the unpromising title of 'The Justice of the Peace.' I whispered my information to a friend present, who mentioned it to Burns, who rewarded me with a look and a word, which, though of mere civility, I then received and still recollect with great pleasure.

" His person was strong and robust ; his manners rustic, not clownish ; a sort of dignified plainness and simplicity, which received part of its effect, perhaps, from one's knowledge of his extraordinary talents. His features are represented in Mr. Nasmyth's picture ; but, to me, it conveys the idea that they are diminished, as if seen in perspective. I think his countenance was more massive than it looks in any of the portraits. I would have taken the poet, had I not known what he was, for a very sagacious country farmer, of the old Scottish school, i. e., none of your modern agriculturists, who keep laborers for their drudgery, but the *douce gude man*, who held his own plough. There was a strong expression of sense and shrewdness in all his lineaments ; the eye alone, I think, indicated the poetical character and temperament. It was large, and of a dark cast, and glowed,—I say literally *glowed*,—when he spoke with feeling or interest. I never saw such another eye in a human head, though I have seen the most distinguished men in my time.

" His conversation expressed perfect self-confidence,

without the slightest presumption. Among the men who were the most learned of their time and country, he expressed himself with perfect firmness, but without the least intrusive forwardness ; and when he differed in opinion, he did not hesitate to express it firmly, yet, at the same time, with modesty. I do not remember any part of his conversation distinctly enough to be quoted, nor did I ever see him again, except in the street, when he did not recognise me, as I could not expect he should. He was much caressed in Edinburgh, but, considering what literary emoluments have been since his day, the efforts made for his relief were extremely trifling."

In his earlier rambles, Scott often travelled on foot, attended by two companions—one, a youth about ten or twelve years old, named George Walkinshaw, the other an old dog named Snap. The first was rather simple, and the last uncommonly sagacious. It is said that old Snap, who was always accustomed to sleep at his master's bedside, when the latter wanted any particular servant, and would only name him,—would set out and find him, and bark at him, until he went to his master. On account of this, and other similar proofs of wisdom, above his race, George had a kind of reverence for the brute, and was accustomed to say that he was not altogether *canny*; by which he meant to insinuate that he was a little bewitched.

With these two friends, young Walter would trudge over hill and valley, sometimes being absent for weeks. A few articles of necessity were packed in a bundle, and strapped to George's back. In this guise they wandered from house to house. When

they came to a tenement that they desired to enter, George went in first to see how the land lay. If it appeared that his master would be welcome, the latter entered. His fancy for tales and legends induced him to seek for the houses of aged people, and particularly where there were old women, having the reputation of being good story-tellers. With such people as these, he would sit down, and wheedle out of them all the tales they could tell. These were packed away in his capacious memory, and were woven up in his romances, when he became an author.

Scott never permitted his real character to be known in these rambles. He appeared like a plain country lad, and treated the people he met in such a simple, sincere and familiar way, as to gain their hearts. He was always welcome, after an introduction. Thus, he not only secured much kindness and amusement, but he obtained vast stores of valuable knowledge, touching local history, and the manners, customs, and feelings of country people. It was the good sense and right feeling of Scott, which dictated this course of conduct, and which, by the acquisitions he consequently made, enabled him to surpass all other writers of his time, in drawing pictures of common life. It is pleasant to see such results, not as the compensations of genius, but of virtue.

It is delightful to go in imagination, with our hero, over the picturesque hills and valleys of Scotland,—to see him stumping bravely and cheerfully on,—now climbing the steeps, leaving even George and old Snap behind; now pausing to pluck a flower; now looking with a poet's eye down from some height, and

but by-and-by he heard something rattle in the parcel, which gave him considerable annoyance. On reaching the blacksmith, he delivered the parcel, and expressed some curiosity to know the contents. The smith examined it, and then said, "It is one of your aunt's pattens, and tippence to mend it!"

In 1792, Scott was admitted to the bar, and entered upon practice. He still indulged his taste, however, for literature; and in 1776, published his first book, a thin quarto, consisting of translations from the German poet, Burger. In 1797, he married Miss Carpenter, by whom he received a small fortune, and in 1799, he was appointed sheriff of Selkirkshire. He had now a competence, but having a desire for the luxuries which wealth affords, he sought to increase his income, and paid considerable attention to business. His heart, however, was with the muses, and he, by no means, satisfied the ambitious wishes of his friends, by the rank he held as a lawyer. He passed for a man of talents and of great literary acquisitions, but was not rated as among the leaders at the bar. He cultivated literary society, and again tried his hand at authorship.

About the year 1800, he published the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, which was his first successful book. This gave him, at once, a high standing among the literary men of the day. Then followed the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, in 1806, which established his reputation as a poet; *Marmion*, in 1808; the *Lady of the Lake*, in 1809; *Don Roderick*, in 1811; *Rokeby*, in 1813; the *Lord of the Isles*, in 1814. During the period in which these several works were

issued, Scott was, by far, the most popular poet of the day. Though he received the office of chief clerk of the court of sessions, in 1806, and contrived to attend carefully to all his duties, his thoughts were chiefly devoted to literature.

Besides the works we have mentioned above, Scott produced other poems. Although, at the present day, his poetical compositions are not esteemed as of the highest order, and have been overshadowed by his admirable romances, still they are very captivating; and, at the time they appeared, one after another, cast successive flashes of delight over the whole of Europe. The publication of a new poem, by "the Author of the Lay of the Last Minstrel," was hailed as a joyous event; and it is probable that no work, produced in the compass of the last hundred years, has actually caused more innocent, unalloyed pleasure, than the Lady of the Lake. Every person who has read that charming work, with a just appreciation of it, owes a lasting debt of gratitude to the genius of Walter Scott.

It is seldom that two such triumphs as were achieved by Scott, are allotted to one man. He had now acquired the reputation of the first among living poets; his name was in the breath of fame; all the world spoke his praises. Yet, while he was the ruling star, and admiring millions were gazing upon its brilliancy, a dazzling meteor shot across the heavens. Byron's Childe Harold was published in 1812, and every eye was arrested by the new luminary. Scott doubtless, felt this event as an eclipse, for, he now

turned his attention to another species of writing, and, in 1814, published *Waverly*.

This work was anonymously produced, without any of the ingenious heraldry by which new works are usually forced upon the attention of the public. The author was, no doubt, utterly unaware of its extraordinary merit, and, probably, was inclined to think lightly of it. It produced no sudden sensation, and attracted no particular attention. But it was like a spark kindling into a conflagration. Every person of real taste, who read *Waverly*, was astonished and delighted. The voice of praise came first as a murmur, and then it rose like a shout of nations, over the land, far and near. Thus encouraged, the author went on. *Guy Mannering*, the *Antiquary*, the *Black Dwarf*, *Old Mortality*, the *Heart of Mid Lothian*, followed in rapid succession,—all these being produced in the compass of four years.

The authorship of these works, though they were now, by far, the most popular productions of the age, was kept as a kind of half-way secret. The author was called the “Great Unknown,” and there was not a little speculation, as to who this wonderful person might really be. Still, Scott was generally regarded as the author. The veil of mystery, however, continued to be worn, and contributed, no doubt, to heighten the interest of the splendid fictions, which continued to be lavished upon the world, by the author of *Waverly*.

During this period, Scott had been engaged with the Ballantines and with Constable, eminent book-sellers in Edinburgh, as a private partner in the pub-

lishing of books on a large scale. His own original productions, and others which he edited, were the chief subjects of their speculation. The sale of these was enormous, and the sums of money received directly by Scott as author, and indirectly as a partner, from the mercantile share of the business, were enormous. Seduced by the prospects before him, he began to buy large tracts of land on the Tweed, and finally commenced the building of a vast baronial Hall, which he entitled Abbotsford. Upon this, and the costly furniture with which he embellished it, he lavished the money he acquired.

Still, things went swimmingly on. His reputation increased rather than diminished. His health was good,—his genius unflagging,—the stores of legendary lore, upon which he drew, seemed to be exhaustless. Novel after novel was produced; and such was the confidence of himself and his partners in their business, that he received bills and obtained cash upon them, for works not yet even written or named!

During a long period, Scott's life was now one of energetic and continuous labor, mixed with the most exciting and gratifying pleasures. He lived at Abbotsford, with all the lavish hospitality of a baron of the olden time. His fame called around him the first society in Europe. He rose early in the morning, and, for five or six hours, devoted himself, with all his energy of body and mind, to writing. He would not permit himself to be intruded upon during this part of the day. His thoughts came with gushing rapidity, and the words were ready as fast as the pen

could put them down. Thus, he was able to produce a great number of pages every day. The amount he produced in the year was amazing.

After his writing was done for the day, he gave himself up to exercise for a time, usually taking long walks or rides. He also received his visitors, who were numerous, often taking them with him in his rambles. At evening, he sat down to dinner, where several strangers, beside a large number of inmates were usually entertained. On all these occasions, Scott was the life of the company. About this period, our countryman, Washington Irving, paid him a visit; and we take the liberty to copy a part of his account of what he saw,—making slight changes, for the purpose of connecting the narrative.

"Late in the evening of the 29th August, 1816, I arrived at the ancient border town of Selkirk, where I put up for the night. I had come down from Edinburgh, partly to visit Melrose Abbey and its vicinity, but chiefly to get a sight of the '*mighty Minstrel of the North.*' I had a letter of introduction to him, from Thomas Campbell, the poet, and had reason to think, from the interest he had taken in some of my earlier scribblings, that a visit from me would not be deemed an intrusion.

"On the following morning, after an early breakfast, I set off, in a post-chaise, for Abbotsford. As we approached, the noise of the chaise disturbed the quiet of the establishment. Out sallied the warden of the castle, a black greyhound, and, leaping on one of the blocks of stone, began a furious barking. His alarm brought out a whole garrison of dogs,—

'Both mongrel, puppy, whelp and hound,
And curs of low degree;'

all open-mouthed and vociferous.

"In a little while, the 'lord of the castle' himself made his appearance. I knew him at once, by the descriptions I had read and heard, and the likenesses that had been published of him. He was tall, and of a large and powerful frame. His dress was simple and almost rustic,—an old green shooting-coat, with a dog whistle at the button-hole, brown linen pantaloons, stout shoes that tied at the ankles, and a white hat that had evidently seen service. He came limping up the gravel walk, aiding himself by a stout walking-staff, but moving rapidly and with vigor. By his side jogged along a large iron-gray stag-hound, of a most grave demeanor, who took no part in the clamor of the canine rabble, but seemed to consider himself bound, for the dignity of the house, to give me a hearty reception.

"Before Scott had reached the gate, he called out, in a hearty tone, welcoming me to Abbotsford, and asking news of Campbell. Arrived at the door of the chaise, he grasped me warmly by the hand. 'Come, drive down, drive down to the house,' he said; 'ye're just in time for breakfast, and afterwards shall see all the wonders of the Abbey.' I would have excused myself, on the plea of having just had my breakfast. 'Hout man,' cried he, 'a ride in the morning, in the keen air of the Scotch hills, is warrant enough for a second breakfast.'

"I was accordingly whirled to the portal, and in a few moments, found myself seated at the breakfast

table. There was no one present but the family, which consisted of Mrs. Scott, her eldest daughter Sophia,* then a fine girl about seventeen; Miss Ann Scott, two or three years younger; Walter, a well-grown stripling; and Charles, a lively boy, eleven or twelve years of age.

"After breakfast, Scott proposed a ramble, to show me something of the surrounding country. As we sallied forth, every dog in the establishment turned out to attend us. There was the old stag-hound, Maida, that deserves to be mentioned as a noble animal, and a great favorite of Scott's; and Hamlet, the black greyhound, a wild, thoughtless youngster, not yet arrived at the years of discretion; and Finette, a beautiful setter, with soft, silken hair, long pendant ears, and a mild eye,—the parlor favorite. When in front of the house, we were joined by a superannuated greyhound, who came from the kitchen, wagging his tail, and was cheered by Scott, as an old friend and comrade.

"We rambled on among the scenes which had been familiar in Scottish song, and rendered classic by the pastoral muse, long before Scott had thrown the rich mantle of his poetry over them. What a thrill of pleasure did I feel when first I saw the broom-covered tops of the Cowden Knowes, peeping above the gray hills of the Tweed; and what touching associations were called up by the sight of Ett-

* Sophia was married to Mr. Lockhart, but she, with Charles and Ann, are dead. Walter, who holds a commission in the army, is now Sir Walter, (1843.)

rick Vale, Galawater and the Braes of Yarrow! Every turn brought to mind some household air—some almost forgotten song of the nursery, by which I had been lulled to sleep in my childhood, and with them, the looks and voices of those who had sung them, and who were now no more.

“I found Scott was quite an enthusiast on the subject of the popular songs of his country, and he seemed gratified to find me so alive to them. Their effect, in calling up in my mind the recollections of early times and scenes in which I had first heard them, reminded him, he said of the lines of his poor friend Leyden, to the Scottish muse :

‘In youth’s first morn, alert and gay,
Ere rolling years had passed away ;
Remembered like a morning dream,
I heard the dulcet measures float,
In many a liquid winding note,
Along the bank of Teviot’s stream.

Sweet sounds ! that oft have soothed to rest
The sorrows of my guileless breast,
And charmed away mine infant tears ;
Fond memory shall your strains repeat,
Like distant echoes, doubly sweet,
That on the wild the traveller hears.’

“Our ramble took us on the hills, commanding an extensive prospect. ‘Now,’ said Scott, ‘I have brought you, like the pilgrim in the Pilgrim’s Progress, to the top of the Delectable Mountains, that I may show you all the goodly regions thereabouts. Yonder is Lammermuir and Smalholme ; and there you have Galashiels, and Torwoodlee and Galawa-

ter; and in that direction you see Teviotdale and the Braes of Yarrow ; and Ettrick Stream, winding along like a silver thread, to throw itself into the Tweed.'

" He went on thus to call over names celebrated in Scottish song, and most of which had recently received a romantic interest from his own pen. In fact, I saw a great part of the border country spread out before me, and could trace the scenes of those poems and romances, which had, in a manner, bewitched the world. I gazed about me for a time, with mute surprise,—I may almost say with disappointment. I beheld a mere succession of gray waving hills, line beyond line, as far as my eye could reach ; monotonous in their aspect, and so destitute of trees, that one could almost see a stout fly walking along their profile ; and the far-famed Tweed appeared a naked stream, flowing between bare hills, without a tree or a thicket on its banks ; and yet, such had been the magic web of poetry and romance thrown over the whole, that it had a greater charm for me than the richest scenery I beheld in England.

" I could not help giving utterance to my thoughts. Scott hummed for a moment to himself, and looked grave ; he had no idea of having his muse complimented at the expense of his native hills. ' It may be partiality,' said he, at length ; ' but to my eye, these gray hills, and all this wild border country, have beauties peculiar to themselves. I like the very nakedness of the land ; it has something bold, and stern, and solitary about it. When I have been for some time in the rich scenery about Edinburgh, which is like ornamented garden-land, I begin to wish myself

back again among my own honest gray hills ; and if I did not see the heather, at least once a year, *I think I should die !*' The last words were said with an honest warmth, accompanied by a thump on the ground with his staff, by way of emphasis, that showed his heart was in his speech.

" We had not walked much further before we saw the two Miss Scotts advancing along the hill-side to meet us. The morning studies being over, they had set off to take a ramble on the hills, and gather heather blossoms, with which to decorate their hair for dinner. As they came bounding lightly, like young fawns, and their dresses fluttering in the pure summer breeze, I was reminded of Scott's own description of his children in his introduction to one of the cantos to Marmion :

' My imps, though hardy, bold and wild,
As best befits the mountain child,
Their summer gambols tell, and mourn,
And anxious ask, will spring return,
And birds and lambs again be gay,
And blossoms clothe the hawthorn's spray ?

Yes, prattlers, yes, the daisy's flower
Again shall paint your summer bower ;
Again the hawthorn shall supply
The garlands you delight to tie ;
The lambs upon the lea shall bound,
The wild bird carol to the ground,
And while you frolic light as they,
Too short shall seem the summer day.'

" As they approached, the dogs all sprang forward and gambolled around them. They played with

them for a time, and then joined us, with countenances full of health and glee. Sophia, the eldest, was the most lively and joyous, having much of her father's varied spirit in conversation, and seeming to catch excitement from his words and looks. Ann was of a quieter mood, rather silent, owing, in some measure, no doubt, to her being some years younger.

"At dinner, Scott had laid by his half-rustic dress, and appeared clad in black. The girls, too, in completing their toilet, had twisted in their hair the sprigs of purple heather which they had gathered on the hill-side, and looked all fresh and blooming from their breezy walk.

"Scott was full of anecdote and conversation during dinner. He made some admirable remarks upon the Scottish character, and spoke strongly in praise of the quiet, orderly, honest conduct of his neighbors, which one would hardly expect, said he, from the descendants of moss trooper borderers, in a neighborhood famed in old times for brawl and feud, and violence of all kinds. He said he had, in his official capacity of sheriff, administered the law for a number of years, during which there had been very few trials. The old feuds, and local interests, and rivalries, and animosities of the Scotch, however, still slept, he said, in their ashes, and might easily be roused.

"In the morning, Scott was occupied for some time, correcting proof-sheets, which he had received by the mail. The novel of Rob Roy was, at that time, in the press, and I supposed them to be the proof-sheets of that work. The authorship of the Waverly

novels was still a matter of conjecture and uncertainty; though few doubted their being written by Scott. One proof to me of his being the author was that he never adverted to them.

“It is time, however, to draw this rambling narrative to a close. Several days were passed by me in the way I have attempted to describe, in almost constant, familiar and joyous conversation with Scott. It was as if I were admitted to a social communion with Shakspeare, for it was one of a kindred, if not equal genius. Every night I retired with my mind filled with delightful recollections of the day, and every morning I rose with the certainty of new enjoyment. The days thus spent, I shall ever look back to as among the very happiest of my life; for I was conscious at the time of being happy.”

It was a few years subsequent to this, that is, in the summer of 1824, that the writer of these pages became acquainted with Sir Walter. The first time I saw him, was in the Court of Sessions. He was seated at a small table, his large and massive form bent quite over it, while he was sedulously engaged in writing. I saw the side of his face, and knew him at once, by the likenesses I had seen. He was here in his capacity of clerk of the court—the white-wigged members of which sat in a high seat, railed off from the room. Here was Scott, the mighty man of the age, discharging clerical duties to a bench of portentous judges, whose wigs were objects of almost as much consideration as their heads!

Being introduced to Scott, he arose from the table, and I was struck with the robustness of his figure

and appearance. He was more than six feet high, deep and broad chested, his head of remarkable height and small circumference. His eyebrow was projecting, and hedged with coarse, reddish gray hair ; his eye was deep-set, small and piercing ; his features were coarse, but his expression sagacious and keen. The skin of his face was coarse and dappled with freckles. His voice was deep and rough, but hearty. His speech smacked of the broad Scottish dialect.

I saw him frequently afterwards. On one occasion, I met him at the house of his son-in-law, Mr. Lockhart, then living in Edinburgh, a lawyer of high standing, and since renowned for his literary works, which had already attracted general attention. Nothing could be more quiet and simple than Sir Walter's manners. He abounded in anecdote, relating his stories with the least possible ostentation.

He spoke of Miss Edgeworth, and related an amusing scene which took place upon her first introduction to Abbotsford. A wild man, from the Highlands, had for some reason gone thither, and Sir Walter had taken so much notice of him as to entertain him, and at evening requested him to sing a Gaelic song. The man consented, but required the whole party to sit down in a circle upon the floor, in the dining-room, when he commenced his strain with truly stentorian lungs. While all, including Sir Walter, were engaged in this way, Miss Edgeworth was announced and introduced into the room !

Sir Walter spoke of several American writers ; of Irving, whom he claimed to have introduced to Mur-

ray, the London publisher, thus setting him forward in the path of fashion and success ; of Charles Brockden Brown, the author of *Wieland*—whom he regarded as possessing a genius superior to his model, Godwin ; and of Cooper, whose “Pilot” had been recently published, and which Sir Walter had just read. He expressed great admiration of the work ; and when I told him that Mr. Cooper published nothing under his own name, until after he was thirty years of age, he remarked—“A man is generally foolish who does otherwise.”

We sat at the dinner table for some hours after the ladies had withdrawn. The news of Byron’s death had just reached Edinburgh, and the noble poet became the subject of conversation. Sir Walter spoke of him with great feeling ; indeed, with a melancholy and touching interest. When we went to the drawing-room, Mrs. Lockhart was requested to sing. She was a small, lively lady, rather handsome, and of much grace and graciousness of manner. She sung several Scottish songs, accompanying herself upon the harp. Sir Walter seemed to relish the songs greatly ; he beat time vigorously with his lame foot, and struck into the chorusses—but neither in tune nor time. His heart was affected by the sentiment of the song and the music, though his defective ear could not accurately appreciate the measure or the melody. His eyes often rested with fondness upon his daughter, who gave him back a look of recognised and returned affection. These beautiful lines were brought forcibly to my mind by the scene :

"Some feelings are to mortals given,
With less of earth in them than heaven :
And if there be a human tear,
From passion's dross refined and clear—
A tear so limpid and so meek—
It would not stain an angel's cheek—
'T is that which pious fathers shed
Upon a dutious daughter's head."

I was most agreeably impressed with Sir Walter's manners; he was kind and condescending to me, and his demeanor toward Mr. Lockhart was that of a father to a son. Charles Scott, then a youth, and since dead, was present, and having been recently at a school in Wales, one of the party present, a great mimic, gave us an address in Welsh. He stood in a chair, making the bald, broad pate of Mr. William Blackwood, the bookseller and publisher of the magazine, his desk, and one of Mrs. Lockhart's music books, his notes. The whole scene was amusing, and Sir Walter joined very heartily in the laugh.

Mrs. Lockhart told me some pleasing anecdotes of her father. It seems she was much in the habit of taking long walks with him, when they lived at Abbotsford. Scott had himself a knack of recognising horse-shoes, and he had learned to know, at sight, the track of every horse in the neighborhood, by the size and shape of the impression his shoe made in the path. This art he had also taught Mrs. Lockhart.

On one occasion, Southey, the poet, had come to pay Sir Walter a visit at Abbotsford. The two were walking at a distance of some three or four miles from Abbotsford, when coming to a bridle path, Scott saw

the track of a horse that he knew. Saying nothing of his observation or his art, he stopped, and assuming a mysterious air, said to Southey,—“ We Scotch pretend to second sight. I foresee that we shall have a friend to dinner; and I think his name will be Scott ! ” “ It is some invited guest, I suppose,” said Southey. “ I assure you, not,” said Sir Walter ; “ the man himself shall tell you that I could not know of his visit before this moment.”

The two passed on, and when they arrived at Abbotsford,—behold, there was one waiting,—a remote kinsman of Sir Walter, who had come to pay him a visit ! On inquiry, he stated that this was accidental, and that Sir Walter knew nothing of his intention. Mr. Southey’s wonder was greatly excited, but it was finally appeased by Sir Walter’s telling him that he had been able to prognosticate the arrival of the stranger, by recognising the foot-prints of his horse, leading in the direction of Abbotsford.

When Mrs. Lockhart had finished the anecdote, Sir Walter, who had heard it, stated that he found his kinsman Scott in his library, when he returned with Mr. Southey. The old man was engaged in poring over a volume of Johnson’s quarto dictionary. “ I am afraid,” said Sir Walter, “ that you are reading a very dry book.” “ Na, na ! ” said he, “ they be bra stories—but unco short ! ”

Late in the evening I walked with Sir Walter to his house. He used a stout oaken cane, with a thick iron ferrule. He moved with great vigor, and kept me in full exercise. I have never seen a great man who had less self-assertion, self-declaration, than Sir

Walter Scott. I was an humble individual, having no particular claims upon his kindness ; yet he treated me in a manner to make me feel at ease in his presence,—as if I were with one who understood the feelings of others, and would not offend them by a word or look.

It will be remembered that this was in June, while the courts were in session, rendering it Sir Walter's duty to be in attendance there. After the court dispersed, he was accustomed to return to Abbotsford. His habits there have already been described.

Scott's fame continued to increase, attended by an uninterrupted tide of prosperity ; he appeared to be a most happy man. His life proceeded with the splendor and brilliancy of a gorgeous dream. It has seldom fallen to the lot of man to hold a position so enviable, and yet be so much beloved. Beneath this fair seeming, however, the elements of trouble were gathering for the tempest. His expenditures had been enormous ; all he received for his works was lavishly expended upon Abbotsford—in the construction of the vast edifice, and in filling it with a wonderful collection of curiosities and antiquities of every kind—in its furniture—its library—its entertainments. But this was not all. In 1826, the Ballantynes and Constable went down in a crash of bankruptcy, bearing Sir Walter with them ; and he, as a partner, was left to pay debts to the amount of seven hundred thousand dollars !

It cannot be denied that Scott had incurred these tremendous responsibilities somewhat presumptuously. He had not speculated merely upon his pop-

ularity, but he had even put at hazard all his possessions, as well as health and life itself. But to his honor be it spoken, he shrunk not from the fearful crisis. "Give me time," said he to his creditors, "and I shall be able to pay you every farthing." Having relinquished his property to his creditors, he said to a friend, in a deep, thoughtful tone, "It is very hard thus to lose all the labors of a lifetime, and be a poor man at last. But if God grant me life and strength a few years longer, I have no doubt I shall be able to pay it all."

He set to work in good earnest; and, during the three years that followed the events we have just detailed, he performed an amount of literary labor, and reaped an amount of profits, probably altogether unparalleled. Among his productions were the *Life of Napoleon*, in seven volumes; the first and second series of the *Chronicles of the Canongate*, five volumes; a juvenile history of Scotland, addressed to Hugh Littlejohn, intended for his grandson, John Lockhart, in nine volumes; the *History of France*, in three volumes; *Anne of Geirstein*, in three volumes; *Sermons by a Layman*, and *Essays on Gardening*, one volume; a *History of Scotland* in two volumes, for Lardner's *Cyclopædia*; and letters on Demonology and Witchcraft, one volume.

Such were the almost superhuman efforts Scott made in behalf of his creditors. What must have been the powerful energy of the feeling of integrity that could call forth such giant labors! In three years, that is, from 1827 to 1830, he produced about thirty original volumes; making more than ten a

year. Nor is this all. During this period, he was editing an edition of his novels, to which he added copious notes ; and such was the demand for these works, that one thousand persons,—one hundredth part of the population of Edinburgh,—were occupied in their mere manufacture. Nineteen of these volumes were edited and published in a single year ! The profits resulting from Scott's labors, during these three years, amounted to about two hundred and fifty thousand dollars !

It was now evident that Scott would accomplish the formidable task he had undertaken, unless some fatality should intervene ; and such was his devotion to his object, that he seemed to be under the influence of a mania. He resigned his office of clerk, and spent ten, twelve and sometimes fourteen hours a day, in writing. But his powerful constitution at last gave way, under this dreadful pressure. His speech began to be affected ; his contracted right foot became painful, and there were signs of a general paralysis. The best medical advice was called in ; but such was the fever of thought into which Sir Walter had wrought himself, that it was almost impossible for him to stop. Dr. Abercrombie, of Edinburgh, one day besought him to moderate his efforts ; when the invalid replied, "I tell you what it is, doctor ; when Molly puts the kettle on, she might as well say don't boil !"

His disease, however, increased so rapidly that he at last consented, though with great reluctance, to seek health in the gentler climate of Italy. A free passage was offered him in a national ship, and he

set out with his daughter, Miss Ann Scott. On his way to Malta, he had the pleasure to see a volcanic island, which had been thrown up from the sea, and which has since disappeared. At Malta he was honored by a public reception ; and in an address, he was requested to immortalize the place by writing its history. He was requested to sit for his portrait ; but as he could not spare the time, an artist was employed to obtain his lineaments by looking at him through a key-hole !

At Naples, he was invited to the court levee, where, by a queer whim, he appeared in the dress of the Scotch archers. The courtiers took this for a field marshal's uniform, and wondered in what battles Sir Walter had won his military rank ! Wherever he went he was noticed as one of the great lights of the age. Proceeding to Germany, he called at a bookstore in Frankfort, to purchase pictures of some of the interesting objects he had seen in his route. After showing views of abbeys and castles of various countries, the bookseller, not knowing the name of his customer, selected and held up, as if it must strike every one with interest—a *view of Abbotsford* ! Scott, smiling sadly, remarked, “ I have a faithful picture of that,”—meaning in his heart,—and walked away !

He pursued his journey, but, on the fourth of June, he was rendered insensible by a shock of paralysis. Being bled by his servant, his life was saved for the time—but he remained insensible for a long period. He was brought at last to England, and finally to Scotland. At Edinburgh, he seemed to revive a little ;

he recognized a few friends; and being aware that he was going to Abbotsford, he manifested a great desire to reach that place. When he came to a point where he could get a sight of the longed-for home, his anxiety was extreme. He raised himself up—but, at once, as if overtired, sank into a state of apathy.

He did not recognise any one, till, after a few days, his old friend and factor, Laidlaw, appeared at his bedside. He shook him warmly by the hand, and said, "*I know I am at Abbotsford.*" In a short time he revived a little. He had himself borne into his garden, and afterwards into his library. Here he requested paper and pens to be set before him, and then asked to be alone; he attempted to take up the pen, but the palsied fingers refused their office. He sat back in his chair, with a look of the utmost melancholy. Laidlaw, who saw him, said, "I hope you are happy now, sir." "No;" said he; "there is no more happiness for Sir Walter!"

During this period, his chief pleasure was in having the poems of Crabbe read to him,—a great and well-merited compliment to that admirable writer. But he continued gradually to sink, and at last his great mind was shrouded in insensibility. His powerful frame struggled with death for some days, but at last it yielded, and on the 21st September, 1832, Sir Walter Scott expired. His age was exactly sixty-one years, one month, and six days.

The writer of this sketch was in Edinburgh at this time. The intelligence of Scott's death, long expected as it was, passed, like a dark cloud, over the

land. The public prints were dressed in mourning; many of the vessels in the harbors throughout England, were hung at half-mast. The funeral took place on the 26th. Even nature seemed to participate in the general gloom. I was, on that very day, on the borders of Loch Achray,—so sweetly sung in the *Lady of the Lake*:

“The minstrel came once more to view
The eastern ridge of Benvenue;
For ere he parted, he would say
Farewell to lovely Loch Achray.
Where shall he find in foreign land,
So pure a lake, so sweet a strand?
There is no breeze upon the fern,
No ripple on the lake;
Upon her eyry nods the erne,
The deer has sought the brake.
The small birds will not sing aloud,
The springing trout lies still,
So darkly glooms yon thunder-cloud,
That swathes, as with a purple shroud,
Benledi’s distant hill.”

On the day of Scott’s burial—at the very hour he was borne along to the tomb—this lake—the Trossachs—Ben Ain, Benvenue,—the scenery which has become enchanted ground through the magic power of his minstrelsy,—were dressed in clouds, weeping, as if in sympathy with mankind, and mourning the departure of that mighty spirit which had wreathed their brows with imperishable fame.

It is hardly necessary to say anything more of the character of Sir Walter Scott. His noble struggle to pay his debts, in which, though he was at last successful, he sacrificed his life, will ever remain as an evidence

of his high sense of honor and integrity. He was, not only a great man, but a noble gentleman. He was, indeed, an ornament to human nature. It is gratifying to know that his self-immolation was not in vain ; his debts have been paid ; Abbotsford is dis-encumbered, and is now in the possession of the family ; Sir Walter Scott, the eldest son of the author of Waverly, being at its head. The certainty of these happy results dawned on the last days of Scott, and lighted his path down to the grave.

If every man owe a debt of gratitude to him who affords him pleasure, then the world lies under a weight of obligation to Walter Scott, which cannot be conceived. Nor is pleasure the only result of his writings. He has contributed to enlighten and elevate the human race more than any other modern writer. Millions of individuals have been kept from pursuing coarse gratifications, by reading his books, and led to find enjoyment in intellectual pursuits. Millions have had their minds invigorated, their hearts purified and softened, by the productions of his genius. The language in which he wrote is for all after time a more powerful instrument of thought. He has elevated the standard of human intellect, and improved the civilization of the world. He has been one of the great benefactors of his race.

If he possessed not a geniussuperior to that of Byron, he was a greater and better man. His works are more numerous and of a more popular cast, and, with few exceptions, they are of a beneficial tendency. Scott was a man of principle, and deeply reverenced religion. If not a religious man, in the best acceptance

of the term, his life was a wholesome rebuke to those who fancy that it is witty to scoff at sacred things ; that genius can excuse immorality ; that vice implies talent ; that virtue is synonymous with dulness. The example and writings of Byron had led to a fearful laxity of morals, as well in conversation as in conduct ; showing itself in society and literature. It is due to the memory of Scott, to observe, that his life and productions have furnished a powerful barrier against the false philosophy and corrupt practices, which flowed from his great rival's life and writings.



BYRON.



IN A GREEK COSTUME.

Born Jan. 22, 1788; died April 19, 1824.

B Y R O N .

GEORGE GORDON, afterwards Lord Byron, was born in London, 22d January, 1788. He was of an ancient and renowned family, but his father, a captain in the British navy, was poor, considering the notions and habits of the English aristocracy, to which he belonged.

Owing to an accident attending his birth, one of Byron's feet was distorted,—a defect which was never removed, and which rendered him, to some extent, a cripple for life. This was a source of pain and mortification to him as long as he lived. It is curious that Sir Walter Scott, who was the cotemporary of Byron, a rival poet, and holding the public admiration divided between them, had also a lame foot, and was, though in a greater degree, a cripple.

In 1790, Byron's mother, who had separated from her husband, retired, with her son George, to Scotland, and established herself in humble lodgings in the fine old town of Aberdeen. She was a proud woman, hasty, violent and unreasonable; she had neither sense nor principle sufficient to restrain her temper. It burst forth on a great many occasions, and the youthful Byron was often its victim. Un-

happily he inherited his mother's inflammable temper; and, instead of being subdued and softened by the harshness with which he was treated, he was rendered by it more passionate. What was only natural infirmity, and which kind, gentle treatment, applied in his childhood, might have cured, was therefore cultivated, increased, and confirmed. Thus his mother, in indulging her own evil passions, trained up her child for a life of misery; for an abuse of his splendid abilities, and an early termination of his career. Alas! for those who are so unfortunate in early life, as to be deprived of the kind and gentle guardianship of a sensible and virtuous mother!

Byron's father took no care of him; being greatly in debt, he retired to France, where he died in 1791. When Byron was five years old, he was sent to a day-school, his mother paying five shillings sterling, a quarter, for his tuition. Having learned his letters, in about a year, he was placed under the instruction of a clergyman, named Ross, who taught him to read. He afterwards had other means of instruction at Aberdeen, till he was about ten years old; when his grand uncle, Lord Byron, died, leaving the vast estate of Newstead Abbey, in Yorkshire, with the family title, to him. Though but ten years of age, he was now a lord, and his weak mother lost no opportunity of seeking to puff him up with pride, by reminding him of his rank.

Byron now enjoyed the best means of instruction, and after a time, he was sent to a famous school at Harrow, ten miles northwest of London. The chief object of this school is to fit young men for the Uni-

versity ; it was founded in the time of Elizabeth, by a man named Lyon, who made it a principle that archery should be one of the amusements of the scholars. It was formerly the custom to have an annual trial of skill in this art, and the best marksman was rewarded with a silver bow. This practice is now disused. Many celebrated men have received their preparatory education at Harrow.

At this school, Byron was wild and irregular in his habits, but he gave signs of a frank and generous nature, and endeared himself to many of his companions. He made considerable advances in his studies, but he lacked patience, and was inferior to many others in scholarship. He exerted himself by fits and starts, allowing weeks to pass in idleness ; then, by a powerful effort, he made some amends. He read a great deal, but wholly for amusement, though he laid up some stores of miscellaneous knowledge.

During the vacations, his mother treated him with alternate harshness and kindness ; now abusing him in the fiercest manner, and now pampering him with excessive indulgence. Even before he was fifteen years old, she introduced him to masquerades and other fashionable fooleries. If it had been her design to ruin her son, she could hardly have taken a more sure course to accomplish her object.

About this time, Byron became acquainted with Mary Chaworth, a pretty girl, two years his senior, and heiress to the estate of Annesley, which lay contiguous to Newstead. There was a romance in this, aside from that which always dwells in the fancy of a young lover. Byron's great uncle had killed Mr.

Chaworth, an ancestor of Mary, in a duel. He was tried for it by the house of lords, and acquitted ; but his own conscience and public opinion still lay heavy upon him. He was reduced to a state of gloom, verging on insanity, and shutting himself up in the abbey, lived the life of a recluse.

It was natural, from these circumstances, that a barrier to the intimacy of the two families should exist, and it was, perhaps, the feeling of this that quickened the fancy of Byron for the youthful heiress of Annesley. What so calculated to arouse the affection of a lover, as a romantic difficulty, founded on some bloody quarrel of high and haughty ancestors ? Here, indeed, were the essential elements of many a thrilling tale of love. But, however Byron's sentiments were inspired, he often met Mary Chaworth in his walks, and, for a time, his whole soul seems to have been absorbed in the hopes of these interviews, and the bliss they afforded, when realized. It was in these scenes he spent his first vacations at the Harrow school.

It appears that Byron's affection was by no means reciprocated. At this time he was a fat, shy, awkward school-boy, and made no very favorable impression on the young lady. He, indeed, never told her his feelings, and as time advanced, she was engaged, and married to Mr. John Musters. This event was to Byron a severe blow, and the disappointment he suffered constituted one of the rooted sorrows of his life. The depth of his feelings may be inferred from the following lines, which he wrote in reference to this period :

STANZAS TO ——, ON LEAVING ENGLAND.

'T is done, and shivering in the gale,
The bark unfurls her snowy sail ;
And whistling o'er the bending mast,
Loud sings on high the fresh'ning blast ;
And I must from this land be gone,
Because I cannot love but one.

As some lone bird without a mate,
My weary heart is desolate ;
I look around and cannot trace
One friendly smile or welcome face,
And even in crowds am still alone,
Because I cannot love but one.

And I will cross the whitening foam,
And I will seek a foreign home ;
Till I forget a false, fair face,
I ne'er shall find a resting place ;
My own dark thoughts I cannot shun,
But ever love, and love but one.

I go,—but wheresoe'er I flee,
There's not an eye will weep for me ;
There's not a kind, congenial heart,
Where I can claim the meanest part ;
Nor thou, who hast my hopes undone,
Wilt sigh, although I love but one.

To think of every early scene,
Of what we are, and what we 've been,
Wouldwhelm some softer hearts with wo ;
But mine, alas ! has stood the blow ;
Yet still beats on, as it begun,
And never truly loves but one.

'T would soothe to take one lingering view,
And bless thee in my last adieu ;

Yet wish I not those eyes to weep
 For him that wanders o'er the deep ;
 His home, his hope, his youth, are gone,
 Yet still he loves, and loves but one."

Some time after this, Byron was invited to dine at Annesley. When the infant daughter of his fair hostess and former favorite was brought into the room, he started involuntarily, and could scarcely retain his emotion. To the feelings of that moment, we are indebted for the following beautiful and touching stanzas :

" Well ! thou art happy, and I feel
 That I should thus be happy too ;
 For still my heart regards thy weal,
 Warmly as it was wont to do.

Thy husband 's blest—and 't will impart
 Some pangs to view his happier lot ;
 But let them pass—Oh ! how my heart
 Would hate him, if he lov'd thee not !

When late I saw thy favorite child,
 I thought my jealous heart would break ;
 But when the unconscious infant smiled.
 I kissed it for its mother's sake.

I kiss'd it—and repressed my sighs,
 Its father in its face to see ;
 But then it had its mother's eyes,
 And they were all to love and me.

Mary, adieu—I must away :
 While thou art blest, I 'll not repine ;
 But near thee I can never stay,
 My heart would soon again be thine.

I deemed that time, I deemed that pride,
 Had quenched at length my boyish flame ;

Nor knew, till seated by thy side,
My heart in all, save hope, the same."

We have anticipated our story, for these last events occurred when he was nearly twenty years old. We must go back to the year 1805, when, at seventeen years of age he was admitted to Trinity College, Cambridge. This ancient seat of learning is situated fifty miles north of London, and contains thirteen colleges, constituting the University. The establishment, which dates back for twelve hundred years, has a library of one hundred thousand volumes, and affords ample aids to instruction. It is next to the University of Oxford in renown, and like that, has sent forth many famous men.

Here Byron spent several years of his life, devoting himself by alternate spasms to study and pleasure. He was very dissipated and addicted to eccentric amusements. He caused a good deal of disturbance, by keeping a bear and several bull-dogs. He cultivated poetry, which, from the age of ten years, he had been in the habit of composing; and drew around him all the collegians most distinguished for wit and talent, and attached them to himself by his noble and generous qualities. To the friendships thus early formed, he was much devoted during the remainder of his life.

In 1806, while yet at college, he printed a thin volume of poetry, for circulation among his friends, but which never was regularly published. In 1807, he published his "Hours of Idleness," an octavo volume of poems, which led to some curious results. At that time, the Edinburgh Review was in high repute.

many of the ablest writers of England and Scotland being among its contributors. When Byron's volume appeared, the Review fell upon it in the following merciless strain :

" The poesy of this young lord belongs to the class which neither gods nor men are said to permit. Indeed, we do not recollect to have seen a quantity of verse with so few deviations in either direction from that exact standard. His effusions are spread over a dead flat, and can no more get above or below the level, than if they were so much stagnant water. As an extenuation of this offence, the noble author is peculiarly forward in pleading minority. We have it in the title-page, and on the very back of the volume ; it follows his name, like a favorite part of his *style*. Much stress is laid upon it in the preface ; and the poems are connected with this general statement of his case, by particular dates, substantiating the age at which each was written. Now, the law upon the point of minority we hold to be perfectly clear. It is a plea available only to the defendant ; no plaintiff can offer it as a supplementary ground of action. Thus, if any suit could be brought against Lord Byron, for the purpose of compelling him to put into court a certain quantity of poetry, and if judgment were given against him, it is highly probable that an exception would be taken, were he to deliver for poetry the contents of this volume. To this he might plead *minority*, but as he now makes voluntary tender of the article, he hath no right to sue, on that ground, for the price in good current phrase, if the goods be unmarketable. This is one

view of the law on the point, and we dare say, so will it be ruled.

"Perhaps, however, in reality, all that he tells us about his youth, is rather with a view to increase our wonder, than to soften our censures. He possibly means to say, 'See how a minor can write. This poem was actually composed by a young man of eighteen, and this by one of only sixteen!' But, alas! we all remember the poetry of Cowley, at ten, and Pope, at twelve; and, so far from hearing, with any surprise, that very poor verses were written by a youth from his leaving school till his leaving college, inclusive, we really believe this to be the most common of all occurrences; that it happens in the life of nine men in ten who are educated in England, and that the tenth man writes better verse than Lord Byron.

"His other plea of privilege, our author brings forward in order to waive it. He certainly, however, does allude frequently to his family and ancestors,—sometimes in poetry, sometimes in notes; and while giving up his claim on the score of rank, he takes care to remind us of Dr. Johnson's saying, that when a nobleman appears as an author, his merit should be handsomely acknowledged. In truth, it is this consideration only, that induces us to give Lord Byron's poems a place in our Review, beside our desire to counsel him, that he do forthwith abandon poetry, and turn his talents, which are considerable, and his opportunities, which are great, to better account.

"With this view, we must beg leave seriously to assure him that the mere rhyming of the final syll-

Lord Brougham. How little reliance is to be placed upon critics, after this! The Edinburgh Review, by the pen of the most famous man now known in Europe, denounces Byron as a driveller, and foresees, as well as foretells, that these poems, characterized as utterly contemptible, are “the last we shall have from him!”

Byron was touched to the quick, and prepared himself for a vindictive retort. In 1809, he produced his “English Bards and Scotch Reviewers,” a stinging satire, not only upon the authors of the Edinburgh Review, but upon most of the distinguished literary characters of the day. It fell like a thunderbolt upon the public, especially upon the astounded critics. No doubt, Byron had been roused by the contempt heaped upon him. This induced him to collect his powers and put them to the most vigorous exercise. It is highly probable, that, but for the unjust and unstinted castigation he had received, neither he nor the public had ever known the full extent of his wonderful ability. Thus, in this, as in a thousand other instances, harsh and unjust depreciation wrought to the real advantage of the abused and injured object.

At the time of the publication of the satire, Byron had left Cambridge, by no means having fairly improved his college advantages. Being entitled to a seat in the House of Lords, he had just made his appearance there. He always complained that on this occasion, somewhat trying of course to a young and sensitive man, none of his family friends,—none of those who owed him support,—appeared, to introduce him, or give him countenance. We may as well add

here, that after his return from Greece, in 1812, he made two speeches in the House of Lords, which were respectable, but he gained no decided credit. Though he had undoubtedly made up his mind to try a political career, he soon abandoned this purpose, probably in consequence of his success as a poet.

In July, 1809, he left England in company with his friend Hobhouse, and in a tour of two years, he travelled through Portugal, Spain, Greece and Turkey. Here he witnessed some of the most beautiful scenery in the world, and became familiar with places abounding in historical associations of the deepest interest. Here he enriched his mind with romantic incidents and poetic images, and sowed the seed of those touching, but melancholy reflections which shadow most of his after productions. His travels finished his poetical education; and we may observe that nearly everything he wrote subsequent to this event, is tinged with the atmosphere of the countries he visited, and bears more or less upon the narratives he gathered in "the clime of the East,"—in "the land of the sun!"

Soon after his return, that is, in March, 1812, Byron published the two first cantos of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage. Though the measure was totally different from that of the current poetry of the time, and the tone of the poem at once sceptical and misanthropic, such were its wonderful beauties, that it bore the author, at one bound, to the pinnacle of fame. He said of himself, at this time, "I went to bed a common man, and when I got up in the morning, I found myself famous." He was immediately ranked among the won-

derful men of the day ; letters of gratulation poured in from all sides ; the great, the rich, the powerful—lords and ladies—the flush and the fair—all crowded upon him their attentions and flatteries. It was hardly in human nature to resist the seductions of such adulation,—it surely was not in Byron's ; and, completely intoxicated, he yielded to the delicious current upon which he was launched. Down he glided, giving himself up to every species of indulgence, dissipation and debauchery.

There was at this time, in London, a person of talent and literary pretensions, but not of very good reputation, by the name of Lady Caroline Lamb. She was, however, a woman of rank and fashion, and her house was the rendezvous of the choice spirits of London. She was captivated by the fame of Byron, and, it would seem, fascinated also by his person. For a time, the poet appears to have been pleased with her notice, and was often seen at her parties. She also visited Byron in the guise of a page, fancifully and beautifully attired. This intoxication soon passed away on the part of Byron, and the lady took revenge by writing a novel, in which the hero, under the name of Glenarvon, a monster of vice and crime, is intended to stand as the representative of her ungrateful lover. She speaks of him as possessing “an imagination of flame, playing round a heart of ice,”—and, perhaps, thus fairly draws the outline of Byron's real character.

At a subsequent period of his life, and while in Italy, Byron wrote a rhyming list of his acquaintances in London, at this time—abusing nearly all in the most

shocking terms. A single couplet, harsh and withering, was devoted to Lady Caroline. This list constituted part of that autobiography which Byron gave to Moore, some years before his death. Moore sold this to Murray, the bookseller, for two thousand pounds; but after Byron's death, taking back the autobiography of the great poet, he magnanimously repaid the money, and burnt the manuscript. It was so personal, so abusive, and so wicked, that it was impossible for persons of respectability to be concerned in its publication. The list, however, to which we have referred, was copied by Lady Caroline, together with some other chapters of the volume, which was lent her by Moore, or Murray the publisher. These were shown at her *soirees*, and thus their character became, at least, partially known. The lady was obliged to suppress the passages thus surreptitiously obtained.

Though steeped in dissipation and involved in the whirl of fashionable society,—the observed of all observers,—the great object of interest and attraction wherever he went,—flattered and sought by the little and the great,—Byron continued to write, and produced in succession, the Giaour, Bride of Abydos, and in 1814, the Corsair. Such was his reputation, that fourteen thousand of the latter were sold in a day,—a fact, affording an unparalleled evidence of the lively and pervading interest he had excited. In May, he produced the splendid ode upon the downfall of Napoleon, of which, as it refers to an interesting topic in this volume, we here insert three stanzas. It must be remembered, however, that Byron writes

with the hate then burning against Napoleon in every British bosom.

“ ‘T is done—but yesterday a king !
And arm’d with kings to strive ;
And now, thou art a nameless thing,
So abject, yet alive !
Is this the man of thousand thrones,
Who strew’d our earth with hostile bones,
And can he thus survive ?
Since He, miscall’d the Morning Star,
Nor man, nor fiend hath fallen so far.

Ill-minded man ! why scourge thy kind,
Who bowed so low the knee ?
By gazing on thyself grown blind
Thou taught’st the rest to see !
With might unquestion’d—power to save,—
Thine only gift hath been the grave
To those that worshipp’d thee ;
Nor till thy fall could mortals guess
Ambition’s less than littleness !

Thanks to that lesson—it will teach
To after-warriors more
Than high philosophy can preach,
And vainly preached before.
That spell upon the minds of men
Breaks, never to unite again,
That led them to adore
Those Pagod things of sabre sway,
With fronts of brass, and feet of clay.”

Notwithstanding Byron’s success,—although the world’s homage, rank, youth, a fine person, resplendent genius, were his,—he was still unhappy: a painful, but wholesome proof, that if the bliss sought is unlawful, however great and delicious

may be the draught, it yet turns to bitterness in the soul. Byron's experience may teach us the lesson, that while the humble man is often content, and therefore happy, the one who soars as superior to other men, as the eagle is above the owl, is often the victim of wasting disquietude and unappeasable sorrow. It teaches us that genius abused is a curse to its possessor,—like a fire given to shed light and warmth, which, however, turns back its blaze, to scorch the hand that holds it.

During his fits of gloom, Byron frequently shut himself up at Newstead. By his profligacy, he had incurred heavy debts, which, though his income was large, weighed heavily upon his spirits. He appears to have had a false shame at the idea of earning money, and so gave away the proceeds of his poems. He now cast about for extrication from his embarrassments, by marriage; and accordingly offered his hand to Miss Millbank, a great heiress in prospect, but of no ready money. Though twice refused, he was at last accepted, and was married October, 1814.

He rather increased than mitigated his difficulties by this step; his door was beset by duns, and in the first year of his marriage, he had nine executions in his house. He became irritable and unreasonable; and his wife, being a person of cold heart and manners, did little to soften him. She bore him a child, afterwards named Ada, and now Lady King; but this could not unite the hearts of the parents. Difficulties grew up between them, and in January, 1816, she, with her child, left her husband's house, and he saw them no more. Out of humor with himself, the

world, and especially his own country,—which had offered him rank and wealth and showered down upon him a flood of honors,—he took his leave, with the determination never to return to England,—a resolution which he sternly kept. In parting from his native shore, he poured out his feelings in the following verses, constituting the opening of the third Canto of Childe Harold :

“Is thy face like thy mother’s, my fair child ?
Ada, sole daughter of my house and heart ;
When last I saw thy young blue eyes, they smiled,
And then we parted—not as now we part,
But with a hope.

Awaking with a start,
The waters heave around me, and on high
The winds lift up their voices ; I depart,
Whither I know not ; but the hour’s gone by,
When Albion’s lessening shores could grieve or glad mine
eye.

Once more upon the waters ! yet once more !
And the waves bound beneath me as a steed
That knows his rider. Welcome to the roar !
Swift be their guidance, wheresoe’er it lead !
Though the strained mast should quiver as a reed,
And the rent canvass, fluttering, strew the gale,
Still must I on ; for I am as a weed
Flung from the rock, on ocean’s foam to sail
Where’er the surge may sweep, the tempest’s breath pre-
vail.”

The poet took his course to Belgium, which had just been the scene of the most stirring events. The battle of Waterloo had recently been fought, and Napoleon was overthrown. The night previous to this

dreadful conflict, there was a famous ball in the city of Brussels. Wellington himself, with all the chivalry of his army, was there, not yet apprized that danger was so near. Bonaparte, according to his custom, had pressed on with astonishing rapidity, and having defeated the allied forces in two engagements, now wheeling upon the British army, surprised them with his approach, while their officers were engaged in the revelry of the dance. Byron describes the scene in the following stanzas, which are among the finest ever penned :

“ There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium’s capital had gather’d then
Her beauty and her chivalry, and bright
The lamps shone o’er fair women and brave men ;
A thousand hearts beat happily ; and when
Music arose with its voluptuous swell,
Soft eyes look’d love to eyes which spoke again,
And all went merry as a marriage bell ;
But hush ! hark ! a deep sound strikes like a rising knell

Did ye not hear it ? No ; ‘t was but the wind,
Or the car rattling o’er the stony street ;
On with the dance ! let joy be unconfined ;
No sleep till morn, when youth and pleasure meet,
To chase the glowing hours with flying feet—
But hark, that heavy sound breaks in once more,
As if the clouds its echo would repeat ;
And nearer, clearer, deadlier than before !
Arm ! arm ! it is—the cannon’s opening roar !

Oh ! then and there was hurrying to and fro,
And gathering tears and tremblings of distress ;
And cheeks all pale, which but an hour ago
Blushed at the praise of their own loveliness ;
And there were sudden partings, such as press

The life from out young hearts, and choking sighs
 Which ne'er might be repeated ; who could guess
 If ever more should meet those mutual eyes,
 Since upon night so sweet, such awful morn should rise !

And there was mounting in hot haste ; the steed,
 The mustering squadron, and the clattering car,
 Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
 And swiftly forming in the ranks of war ;
 And the deep thunder peal on peal afar ;
 And near the beat of the alarming drum
 Roused up the soldier ere the morning star ;
 While throng'd the citizens with terror dumb,
 Or whispering with white lips—"The foe ! they come ! they
 come !"

The poet passed down the Rhine, of which he has afforded us the following enchanting picture :

" The castled crag of Drachenfels
 Frowns on the wide and winding Rhine,
 Whose breast of waters broadly swells
 Between the banks which bear the vine ;
 And hills all rich with blossom'd trees,
 And fields which promise corn and wine,
 And scatter'd cities crowning these,
 Whose far white walls along them shine,
 Have strew'd a scene, which I could see
 With double joy, wert *thou* with me.

And peasant girls, with deep blue eyes,
 And hands which offer early flowers,
 Walk smiling o'er this paradise ;
 Above, the frequent feudal towers
 Through green leaves lift their walls of gray,
 And many a rock which steeply lowers,
 And noble arch in proud decay,
 Look o'er this vale of vintage-bowers ;
 But one thing want these banks of Rhine—
 Thy gentle hand to clasp in mine !

I send the lilies given to me ;
Though long before thy hand they touch,
I know that they must withered be—
But yet reject them not as such ;
For I have cherished them as dear,
Because they yet may meet thine eye,
And guide thy soul to mine even here,—
When thou behold'st them drooping nigh,
And know'st them gather'd by the Rhine,
And offer'd from my heart to thine.

The river nobly foams and flows,
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round :
The haughtiest breast its wish might bound,
Through life to dwell delighted here ;
Nor could on earth a spot be found
To nature and to me so dear,
Could thy dear eyes, in following mine,
Still sweeten more these banks of Rhine.”

Byron proceeded to Geneva, where he remained for some time. His favorite companions here were Shelley, the poet, and his wife,—the daughter of the famous Mary Wolstoncraft, after her marriage to Godwin, the author of *Caleb Williams*. She was a woman of great talent; and it is said, that, in a wager between Shelley, Byron, and some others, including this lady, as to which should write the most terrible and appalling tale, the prize was awarded to the latter by unanimous consent,—each having put forth his best efforts.

Byron delighted to sail upon lake Leman, one of the finest pieces of water in the world, and to ramble over its lovely shores. He often went to Coppet,

about four miles from Geneva, to visit Madame De Staël. He also visited the gloomy castle at the eastern extremity of the lake, and learnt its history, one incident of which he has commemorated in the thrilling poem, entitled the Prisoners of Chillon. Thus Byron became familiar with the sublime scenery, which he so happily describes :

“ Clear, placid Leman ! thy contrasted lake,
With the wild world I dwell in, is a thing
Which warns me with its stillness to forsake
Earth’s troubled waters for a purer spring !
This quiet sail is as a noiseless wing,
To waft me from distraction : once I loved
Lone ocean’s roar, but thy soft murmuring
Sounds sweet as if a sister’s voice reproved,
That I with stern delights should e’er have been so moved.

It is the hush of night, and all between
Thy margin and the mountains, dusk, yet clear,
Mellow’d and mingling, yet distinctly seen,
Save darken’d Jura, whose capt heights appear
Precipitously steep ; and drawing near,
There breathes a living fragrance from the shore,
Of flowers yet fresh from childhood ; on the ear
Drops the light drip of the suspended oar,
Or chirps the grasshopper one good-night carol more.

Ye stars, which are the poetry of heaven !
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires,—tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o’erleap their mortal state,
And claim a kindred with you ; for ye are
A beauty and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a
star.

* * * *

The sky is changed! and such a change! Oh night,
 And storm and darkness, ye are wond'rous strong,
 Yet lovely in your strength, as is the light
 Of a dark eye in woman! Far along,
 From peak to peak, the rattling crags among,
 Leaps the live thunder! Not from one lone cloud,
 But every mountain now hath found a tongue,
 And Jura answers, through her misty shroud,
 Back to the joyous Alps, who call to her aloud!

And this is in the night:—most glorious night!
 Thou wert not sent for slumber! let me be
 A sharer in thy fierce and far delight,—
 A portion of the tempest and of thee!
 How the lit lake shines, a phosphoric sea,
 And the big rain comes dancing to the earth!
 And now again 't is black,—and now the glee
 Of the loud hills shakes with its mountain-mirth,
 As if they did rejoice o'er a young earthquake's birth."

We have introduced these passages, not only because of their transcendant beauty, but as giving the reader paintings, by the author's own matchless hand, of what was going on in his bosom. He was self-exiled, self-wrecked in the sea of society, and disgusted with life; still God had set a mirror in his bosom that was capable of casting such glorious reflections as these. Great then as was the evil mixed up in Byron's moral character, we cannot fail to look with admiration upon his genius as a splendid thing, illustrating the glory and goodness of that Being, who bestows such powers, not for the possessor merely, but to elevate all mankind, by a participation in their immortal fruits.

We must also feel, in considering this subject, the wonderful capacities of human nature, and the wickedness of degrading it by our vices. We must admire that dispensation of a kind Providence, which, while it denies to the mass of mankind the possession of genius, yet enables all to share its benefits. Perhaps no man who has lived, other than Byron, could have written the lines we have quoted, yet we can all enjoy them. All may rise upon the poet's buoyant wing to the highest pitch of human conception.

Byron, at last, went to Venice, where he lived several years in vicious indulgence. He then visited Rome, and in 1820 took up his residence at Ravenna, one hundred and fifty miles north of Rome, maintaining a scandalous intimacy with the Countess Guiccioli. Here, she and her friends became implicated in some plot against the Pope's government, which being discovered, they took refuge in Pisa, in Tuscany.

Byron continued, as the humor prompted, to write, and produced a variety of poems, during these years spent in Italy. They are marked with all his power, but they are deeply tinged with the immorality and vice into which he had sunk. Having shaken off his English habits of respect for decency and virtue, he now indulged in frequent sneers at both. There were also great inconsistencies in his conduct, often betraying a pitiable weakness. While he was writing as if to spite the world, and particularly to pour forth his contempt of England, he was living in the most abstemious manner to prevent growing fat, and to preserve a genteel figure; and was also suffering excruciating torture to remedy the deformity of his

foot! The real fact is, that, pretending to banish England as unworthy of his thoughts, he yearned to go back—to be reconciled to his country—to be once more at home. While he reviled the land of his nativity, he was dying with home-sickness. Such is the weakness even of greatness; such the real littleness to which that strutting vice, pride, reduces us.

In 1823, Byron received flattering overtures from the Greek committee in London, if he would go to Greece, and lend his name and fame to aid that oppressed country, in its struggle for freedom. He yielded to these offers, and set out for Greece. He reached Missolonghi in Jan., 1824, and devoted himself with great energy to the cause he came to serve. He gave his money liberally, and was prodigal of his personal exertions. In all this, he not only showed devotion and sincerity, but he surprised every one by the good sense and practical wisdom which he displayed.

In the beginning of February he got wet through; on the evening of the 15th he was seized with a dreadful convulsive fit, and was for some time speechless and senseless. Soon after the paroxysm, while stretched on his bed, faint with bleeding, a crowd of mutinous Suliotes, whom he had engaged to fight for their country, burst into his apartment, brandishing their arms, and furiously demanding their pay. Sick and nerve-shaken as he was, Byron is said to have displayed great calmness and courage on this trying occasion; and his manner soon inspired the mutineers with respect and awe.

On the 9th of April, he again got wet, and a fever

set in, at a time when he was dispirited at seeing that his efforts were unavailing, to inspire a feeling of harmony among the wrangling leaders of Greece. His danger was seen by his physician, and bleeding was advised ; but Byron obstinately refused to allow it. His mind at last wandered. His last words had reference to his wife, his child, and his sister. He was evidently aware of his approaching death. He ordered his servant to bring him pen, ink and paper, and appeared to suffer great agony that he could not collect his mind for the purpose of communicating his last wishes and directions. In a state of partial delirium, he threatened Fletcher, his servant, with torment in a future world, if he did not take down his instructions accurately. His words now became unintelligible, and what he intended to communicate is left to conjecture. He fell into a state of lethargy, and died twenty-four hours after, on the 19th April, 1824, aged thirty-six years.

His death produced a great sensation throughout the civilized world. This arose not from his literary reputation only ; his position in Greece, aiding the cause of an oppressed people in a struggle for liberty, contributed to heighten the interest which was felt in the event. The authorities of Missolonghi honored his memory with a public funeral : the grief of those who had been his familiar friends, including his servants, knew no bounds. The press throughout Europe paid a united tribute to his memory, in which all but his talents was forgotten. Sir Walter Scott, in a splendid eulogy, penned immediately after hearing of his death, compared his departure to the “with-

drawal of the sun from the heavens, at the moment when every telescope throughout the world was levelled to discover either its brightness or its spots."

In person, Lord Byron was of middling stature; his head was so remarkably small that not one man in ten could wear his hat. It was, however, finely formed, with a lofty forehead. His lips were large and full, his eye deep, his hair thin, brown and curling. When excited, his countenance bore a remarkable expression of soft, yet melancholy sentiment. Though crippled in one of his feet, the defect was scarcely observed in his gait, and it did not prevent his being a vigorous swimmer. When in Greece, he swam across the Hellespont, from Sestos to Abydos, a distance of four miles. He has celebrated the feat in some indifferent lines, in which he alludes to the crossing of the same water by Leander, to meet the maiden Hero. He closes in the following verse—

“ ‘Tis hard to say who fared the best,
Sad mortals! thus the gods still plague you—
He lost his labor, I my jest,
For he was drowned, and I’ve the ague.”

He was abstemious in eating, often making his dinner of biscuit and water. He was vain of his skill in boxing and pistol shooting, and more proud of his descent than his talents. While writhing under the reprobation which his vices called down upon his head, he affected to despise the world. While he professed to be a sceptic and lived as if there were no God, he yielded to superstitious impressions. Having all the means of happiness, he was still wretched; with powers to do infinite good, it is

certain that if, on the whole, his existence prove not a curse to mankind, it will arise from no good intentions of his own. His talents were indeed great, but his moral character was detestable. Though he had generous impulses, they flowed from no principle, and were rooted in no virtue. We never see him rising above his instincts ; to these he yields himself, be they good or ill. No deed of his life displays him as acting in obedience to a higher law than his own bosom furnishes, or as guided by that motive which constitutes the essence of virtue, a love to God.

Byron had doubtless a capacity for friendship, and appears to have taken much satisfaction in sustaining the intimacies begun in early life. He had little intercourse with his sister Augusta, from whom indeed he was separated even in childhood. He seemed attached to his mother, and while abroad, wrote her long and frequent letters. He however attributed his wayward temper, and much of his misery in life, to her treatment of him in childhood. She died while he was in Italy, but the event made but little impression upon him.

Byron, as we have intimated, was essentially an unhappy man. The details of his life, as given by his kind and favoring biographer, Moore, constitute one of the darkest and most painful pictures in the sad annals of suffering genius. His very triumphs were converted into fruitful sources of misery. His history affords abundant lessons upon the evils which result from a neglected education ; the dangers which attend the path of success ; the unsatisfactory nature of unlawful enjoyments ; the depth to which exalted and godlike genius may be plunged by vice and self-

abandonment. There is enough in his story to reconcile us all to a humble lot in life, and to a sincere utterance of Agur's prayer, " Give me neither poverty nor riches ;" applying it as well to intellectual as pecuniary wealth.

As a poet, Byron claims the highest place among the moderns. No one has ever surpassed some of his pictures of human passion, or his delineations of nature. Those of his works which are free from impurity are the Hebrew Melodies, the Prisoners of Chillon, and the Lament of Tasso. Most of his other productions require to be read with caution, and many of them are totally unfit for perusal. They are nearly all linked with the image of the author, and often charm us by an interest, at once powerful and irresistible. This characteristic is set forth in a poem which depicts him as standing upon the borders of the Styx, and about to depart for the regions of departed spirits, in Charon's boat—and speaking in the following terms :

But though my form must fade from view,
And Byron bow to fate resigned,
Undying as the fabled Jew,
Harold's dark spirit stays behind.
And he who yet, in after years,
Shall tread the vine-clad shores of Rhine,
In Chillon's gloom shall pour his tears,
Or raptured see blue Leman shine—
He shall not—cannot, go alone—
Harold unseen shall seek his side :
Shall whisper in his ear a tone,
So seeming sweet, he cannot chide.
He cannot chide ; although he feel,
While listening to the magic verse,
A serpent round his bosom steal,
He still shall hug the coiling curse.

BONAPARTE.



Born Aug. 15, 1769; died May 5, 1821

NAPOLEON BONAPARTE.

THIS wonderful man was born at Ajaccio, a town of about seven thousand inhabitants, on the eastern side of the island of Corsica, and now its capital. His birth took place August 15, 1769. The father of Napoleon was Charles Marie Bonaparte, a respectable lawyer of Ajaccio. His mother, Letitia, was a woman of great beauty and energy of character. Both were natives of Corsica.

This island had belonged to the Genoese, but they basely sold it to the French, a little before the birth of Napoleon. The Corsicans revolted, and resisted the occupation of their country by the French. Led by the brave and patriotic General Paoli, they were, for a time, successful. Bonaparte's father took part in the struggle with Paoli, and his wife attended him in all his various movements and marches. For several months, she was constantly flying from one town or village to another, to escape the French, always travelling on horseback. Nothing was so much dreaded as falling into the hands of the enemy. Such was the life led by Napoleon's mother, until about a month before he was born, when the Corsicans finally submitted to their new masters.

Napoleon was the second son,—Joseph, afterwards king of Spain, and long a resident of the United States, being the first. He was named Napoleon, after some old Corsican saint. While a child, he appears to have been considered rather remarkable. He soon acquired a complete ascendancy over his mild and amiable brother Joseph, and was looked to as likely to be the stay of the family.

The following anecdote of Napoleon, in his childhood, is furnished by his mother:—“One night, he was walking in our garden, like a man who is meditating some great thing. It was raining violently; his brothers had sought shelter in the saloon, where they were playing. I knocked at the window several times, and made him signs to come to me. He shrugged his shoulders with an appearance of ill-humor, and continued his walk. He was drenched with the rain, but he did not mind the storm, and continued his walk, with his head uncovered, and his eyes fixed on the ground. Sometimes he stopped before the little fountain in the garden, and appeared to delight in seeing it run, and to arrest its precipitancy with his hand. Some claps of thunder were heard, which caused him a nervous shudder, but it did not seem to be fear. He then crossed his arms over his chest, and looked at the heavens, courageously waiting for another peal of thunder. I sent my servant to order him to come in. He said to him with coldness, but respectfully, ‘Tell my mother that it is warm, and I am taking an airing.’ When the servant again entreated, he precipitately turned his back on him, and accelerated his step. It was only



Young Napoleon in the thunder-storm.

when the storm had ceased, that he came in, wet to the skin.

“‘ That was not right, my child,’ I said to him ; ‘ you have disobeyed me.’

“‘ I could not help disobeying you,’ he answered. ‘ I do not know what kept me in the garden ; but if I am to be a soldier, I must accustom myself to rains and to storms. I am not a girl, I am a man.’

“‘ You are a child, my son, and a disobedient child. If you intend to be a soldier, you will learn that it is necessary for you to obey.’

“‘ But I will command,’ said he, with an expression that much excited our risible faculties.

“‘ Before you command,’ I replied, ‘ you will be compelled to obey; and for a long time. When you enter the service, you will not be a general.’

"He advanced towards me, took my hand in his, and pressed it, thus tacitly acknowledging that I was right, but not willing to confess it. Already, at that age, he was so proud!"

"'What were you thinking about during your walk?' I said to him, whilst I pressed my lips to his wet hair.

"'I do not know; I do not remember. I was thinking of a great many things. Ah! I was endeavoring to recollect a dream I had last night—a dream that pleased me very much. I dreamed that I was a bishop; that is grand, is it not, a bishop? Do bishops go to the wars?'

"'No, my child, that is expressly forbidden them.'

"'Then I will be a soldier, when I am no longer a child. At fifteen you are no longer a child; are you, mother?'

"'I think you are something of a child still.'

"He paused a few moments, and, looking on the ground, he said,—

"'At fifteen I will be a man.'

"He then extricated himself from my arms, and ran into the garden."

When Napoleon was ten years old, his father, having now a large family, and being in straitened circumstances, was glad to accept the good offices of Marboeuf, the French governor of the island, who, taking an interest in the youth, obtained for him a place at the military school at Brienne, about seventy-five miles south-east of Paris, whither he went in 1779.

Napoleon remained at this place five years and a

half. His native speech was of course Italian, and he, being a Corsican, was regarded by the other boys as a foreigner. He had no relations in France,—and while he was poor, he was, like the Corsicans generally, rather proud. All these circumstances united, prevented Napoleon from forming those friendships and intimacies which usually arise at school. At the same time, they doubtless contributed to favor his turn for study and reflection. He devoted himself with great assiduity to his books, and appears to have made the impression upon his school-fellows, that he was rather taciturn and solitary in his disposition.

The annual report, made by the inspector-general, in 1784, has the following remarks upon young Napoleon :—" Distinguished in mathematical studies, tolerably versed in history and geography, much behind in his Latin, and in belles-lettres, and other accomplishments; of regular habits, studious and well-behaved, and enjoying excellent health."

Many stories have been told of his assuming authority over his comrades at this period, thus displaying an instinct for command, and pointing out the future conqueror. But there appears to be no good ground for these tales, except that, in one instance, when the snow had fallen very thick on the ground, the boys were at a loss what to do to amuse themselves. Napoleon proposed to make entrenchments with the snow, and to perform a sham attack; this was adopted, and he was the leader. There was, upon the whole, nothing extraordinary in his school-life. He was an intelligent, steady, studious lad, and nothing more.

There is no doubt that, even at this early period, Napoleon had a great deal of sensitive pride, with some conceit,—and being teased and tormented by the other boys, on account of his foreign origin and speech, he doubtless made frequent displays of these qualities. Yet he was rather mild and quiet at this period of his life. His susceptibility, however, was very great. One day, the quarter-master, who was a man of harsh disposition, and never took the trouble of considering the physical and moral shades of character in each individual scholar, condemned Napoleon, by way of punishment for some slight offence, to wear the hair coat, and take his dinner on his knees at the door of the refectory. Napoleon was so mortified by this disgrace that he was seized with violent retchings, and suffered a severe nervous attack. The head master of the school, happening accidentally to pass by, relieved him from his punishment, and reproved the quarter-master for his want of discernment.

Napoleon left Brienne in October, 1784, and entered the military school at Paris. Here he was shocked at the expensive habits of the students, and though but fifteen years of age, he there wrote a letter to his superior, Father Berton, pointing out the folly of this system of luxury, and proposing a plan much better calculated to form the character and habits of those who are to suffer the hardships and privations attendant on military life. This remarkable letter is still preserved; and it is a curious fact that in the school at Fontainebleau, which Napoleon established when he became emperor, he followed the

principles which he had laid down at this early period.

This letter, together with his spirit of observation, his active and inquisitive character, and his censoriousness, appears to have attracted the attention of his superiors of the school, and to have excited their apprehension. Accordingly, they hastened the period of his examination, as if anxious to get rid of a troublesome guest. He appears, at this period, to have been remarked for a wild energy of speech, attended with strange amplifications, as if his mind were crowded with an exuberance of thoughts and associations.

In 1785, he left the Paris school, receiving a commission as sub-lieutenant in a regiment of artillery. He was soon promoted to a lieutenancy, being stationed at Valence. His father had just died, and a rich old uncle, who had taken charge of the family, made a provision by which he received twelve hundred francs a year. This, with his pay, enabled him to live comfortably and go into company. He now entered cheerfully into the sports and amusements of his brother officers; at the same time, he sedulously pursued the studies connected with his profession. While at Valence, he wrote an essay upon the question, "What are the principles and institutions by which mankind can obtain the greatest possible happiness?" This was sent anonymously to the Academy of Lyons, which adjudged to him the prize attached to the best essay on the subject. Many years after, when at the height of his power, he happened to mention the circumstance; Talleyrand, hav-

ing found the forgotten manuscript, among the archives of the academy, presented it to him one morning. Napoleon, after reading a few pages of it, threw it into the fire, and no copy having been taken of it, we do not know what his early ideas might have been, as to the happiness of mankind.

At this period, Bonaparte's manners and person appear to have been very engaging. He was small of stature and very thin, but his movements were graceful, and his countenance very striking. His hair was jet black, and worn long; his eyes were hazel, deep and expressive; his countenance was pale, but marked with thought and tinged with melancholy. His society was much sought after, and he appears to have exercised a good deal of influence over his companions.

The French Revolution had now broken out. The officers of his regiment, like those of the army in general, were divided into royalists and democrats. Bonaparte took the popular side, and his example and arguments influenced many of his brother officers. In 1792, he became a captain, and soon after went to Paris. Being there in June, he witnessed the attack of the mob upon the Tuilleries, and saw them break into the palace, while the king appeared at one of the windows, wearing the red cap, which he had adopted to please the rabble. The scene affected Napoleon greatly, and he remarked to Bourienne, who was with him at the time, "It is all over, henceforth, with that man." He returned to the coffee-house, and remained extremely grave and thoughtful the rest of the day. The sight had made a deep impression

them ; and wise men use them ; for they teach not their own use : that is a wisdom without them, and won by observation. Read not to contradict, nor to believe, but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted ; others to be swallowed,—and some few to be chewed and digested. Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man. And, therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory ; if he confer little, have a present wit ; and if he read little, have much cunning to seem to know that he doth not. Histories make men wise, poets witty, the mathematics subtle, natural philosophy deep, morals grave, logic and rhetoric able to contend."

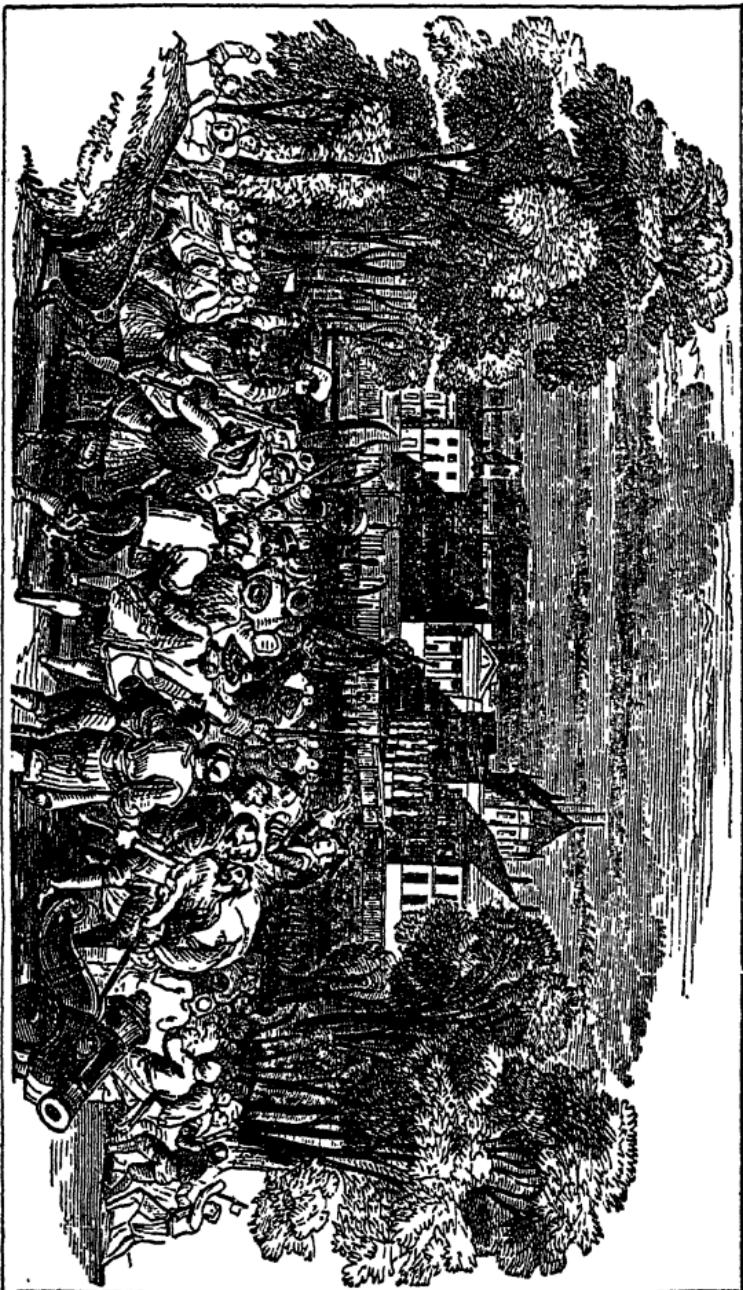
" Prosperity is not without many fears and distastes, and adversity is not without comforts and hopes. We see in needleworks and embroideries, it is more pleasing to have a lively work upon a sad and solemn ground, than to have a dark and melancholy work upon a lightsome ground. Judge, therefore, of the pleasure of the heart by the pleasure of the eye. Certainly, virtue is like precious odors, most fragrant when they are incensed or crushed ; for prosperity doth best discover vice, but adversity doth best discover virtue."

However admirable these passages may be, a celebrated writer remarks, that Bacon's greatest performance is the first book of his *Novum Organon*. All the peculiarities of his great mind are found there in the highest perfection. Every part of the book blazes with wit, but with wit which is employed only to illustrate and decorate truth. No book ever made

so great a revolution in the mode of thinking, overthrew so many prejudices, introduced so many new opinions; yet no book was ever written in a less contentious spirit.



The mob of Paris proceeding to the Tuilleries.



and, with a sagacity beyond his years, he appeared to foresee the mighty events that were speedily to follow.

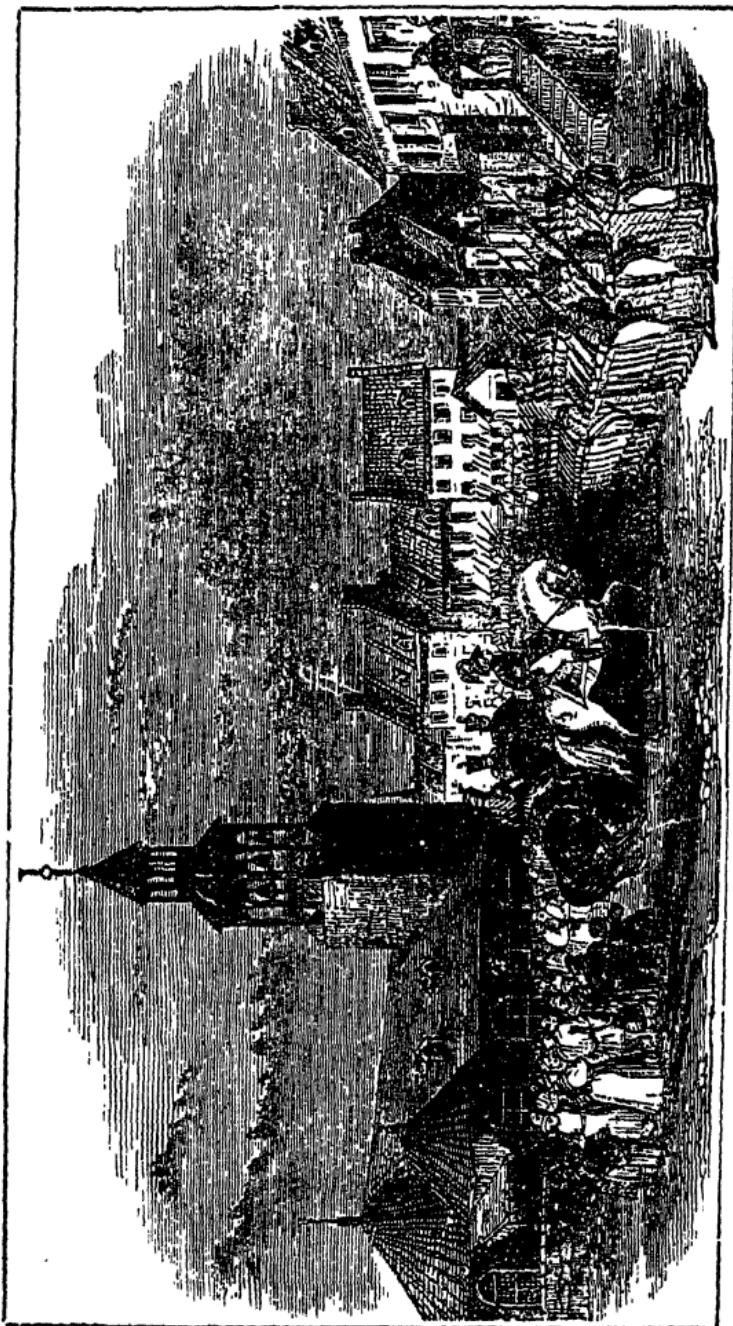
Soon after this, he went to Corsica, and engaged, for a short space, in a struggle going on there, taking the side of France. In 1793, he established himself, with his mother and sisters, at Marseilles. During his short residence here, he wrote and published a pamphlet, entitled the "Supper of Beaucaire," a dialogue between men of different parties. The purpose of it was to recommend union and obedience to the French convention, against which the people of Marseilles were then in a state of revolt. The language of this remarkable pamphlet is strongly republican, though much less extravagant than was common at that day.

In September, 1793, Bonaparte was at Paris, and went to join the besieging army before Toulon, with the rank of lieutenant-colonel of artillery. This place had declared for the king, and was aided by the English, Spanish, and Neapolitan fleets, together with foreign land forces. Bonaparte devised a scheme of operations, which, though at first rejected, was finally adopted, and resulted in the surrender of the place. The fleets sailed away, carrying fourteen thousand of the inhabitants with them. Many, however, were left behind, and four hundred of them, being collected in a public square, by order of the deputies of the convention, were cut in pieces by discharges of cannon, loaded with grape-shot.

Bonaparte was wounded by a bayonet, in the attack upon Toulon, which, with his services in the siege,

led to his promotion, and he was made a brigadier-general of artillery, in February, 1794. In this capacity, he served in the campaign against the Piedmontese, and subsequently visited Genoa, under a commission of inquiry into the state of things there. About this time the revolution of 27th and 28th July took place at Paris, and Robespierre, with his fiendish associates, became the victims of the guillotine, which they had used so freely against all who stood in their way. On Napoleon's return to head quarters, he was placed under arrest for some unknown cause, and it was with some difficulty that he obtained his release. He appears, at this moment, to have come near to that fate, which put an end to the career of so many of the leading actors in the fearful scenes of this sanguinary period.

In 1795, Bonaparte was at Paris, where he led a retired life, and appeared to be in a state of considerable depression. He was, however, studying the shifting signs of the political sky, and holding himself ready to take advantage of any event propitious to his fortunes. The convention had now formed a third constitution, since the outbreak of the revolution, and were seeking to perpetuate their power under it. Being unpopular in Paris, and little respected by any portion of the people, it was necessary to sustain their power by military force. Through the recommendation of Barras, who had known Napoleon at Toulon, the latter was appointed to the command of the troops in Paris. He immediately encompassed the garden of the Tuilleries, where the convention held its sittings, and in a fierce attack, made by thirty thousand



Preparing to defend the convention.

of the National Guard, he was completely victorious. This quelled the disturbance; Paris became quiet and submissive, and Bonaparte, for services so important, was made general of the interior, being second in command, and soon after, the first.

It was about this period, that a handsome and interesting boy, twelve or thirteen years old, came to his house one day, saying that his father, named Beauharnais, had been a general under the republic, but that he was now dead, and he wished that his sword might be given up to him. Bonaparte was touched by this request of the boy, and ordered it to be granted. When the youth took the sword, he kissed the blade and shed tears. The general was greatly interested in this youth, whose name was Eugene, and who afterwards became a celebrated soldier.

In a short time, Madame Beauharnais called to thank Napoleon for granting her son's request, and as the latter was greatly captivated by her winning manners and agreeable person, he cultivated the acquaintance, and soon offered himself to the widow in marriage. She went with him one day to consult her friend, M. Raguideau, about it. While she was holding the interview with M. Raguideau, in an inner room, Napoleon waited in an adjoining one. The door was ajar, and he could hear the adviser attempt to dissuade Madame Beauharnais from "*marrying a man who had nothing but his cloak and his sword.*" Soon after Napoleon had been crowned as emperor, he sent for M. Raguideau, and said, "Well, what think you now of 'marrying one who has nothing but his

cloak and his sword ? ” This was the first intimation that Raguideau had of his having been overheard.

Madame Beauharnais married Napoleon, notwithstanding the cautious advice of her friend, on the 9th March, 1796. He was then twenty-six years old, and she several years older. Three days after this, he set out to take command of the army of Italy, to which he had been appointed. He was now for the first time at the head of an army, having never been engaged in a general action, and having never seen one. His design was to drive out the Austrians, who held Venice subject to their dominion, and exercised a commanding sway throughout the several states of Italy. He met the combined forces of Piedmont and Austria, at the foot of the Apennines ; he had 35,000 troops, and the enemy 95,000. A series of brilliant actions followed, in which the wonderful military genius which marked Napoleon, began to be displayed. In a few months two armies that opposed him were defeated ; the king of Sardinia made peace with the Directory, and the Austrian army retired beyond Italy into the Tyrol. This was the result of the first Italian campaign of 1796.

The Austrians now made a great effort, and sent a fine army of 50,000 men into the field, under the famous general Wurmser. He was met by Napoleon on the borders of Lombardy, and in six weeks, by a succession of the most extraordinary military movements on the part of the French, the latter had nearly annihilated the German forces. In the autumn of the same year, a new general and a new army came from Austria, and after several bloody and obsti-

nate battles, they were beaten, and Bonaparte was master of the north of Italy.

The war, however, was not yet ended. Army after army continued to pour in from Austria, and, co-operating with the troops of the Pope, the most desperate struggle ensued. It was not till after the sixth campaign, that, the Austrians being driven out of Italy, and Napoleon, having crossed the mountains, was within eight days' march of Vienna, that peace was agreed upon between the two countries. This took place at Leoben, April 18th, 1797; and Napoleon thus became the arbiter of Italy.

Bonaparte now enjoyed an interval of repose, which he passed with his wife at Montebello. This palace is situated a few miles from Milan, on a gently sloping hill, commanding an extensive prospect of the fertile plains of Lombardy. The ladies of the highest rank, as well as those celebrated for beauty and accomplishments, were daily paying their homage to Josephine, who received them with as much ease and grace, as if she had been born for exercising the courtesies which devolved upon the wife of so distinguished a person as Napoleon had now become.

Negotiations proceeded amid gaiety and pleasure. The ambassadors of Austria, and of other states of Germany, and of the various Italian states,—the throng of generals, the bustle of important business, mingled with festive entertainments, balls, hunting parties, gave the scene the appearance of a splendid court. It was such in point of importance. Many states awaited with anxiety the result of the deliberations; destined to hear from the voice of Napoleon the terms on which

their national existence was to be prolonged or terminated.

Napoleon had now all that the world considers essential to happiness. He was welcomed on every side as the "Deliverer of Italy." Honor and power were his beyond that of kings. He was in the flower of his youth. Yet he himself in after years would frequently say, that the happiest period of his life was, when, as a young officer of artillery, without money and without family influence, he wandered about Paris, to find a cheap place to dine.

The negotiations were at length brought to a close, and peace was finally settled by the treaty of Campo Formio, October 17, 1797. A large part of Italy was formed into a new state, called the Cisalpine Republic. Venice was given up to the emperor of Austria, and soon after Genoa was formed into the Ligurian republic.

Bonaparte had now finished, for the present, his career in Italy. He took a most affecting leave of his soldiers, the companions of his earliest success, who witnessed his departure with sorrow. His own position was a perilous one. He returned to France in a situation which admitted no middle place. He must rise yet higher, or sink forever.

In all these important transactions in Italy, Bonaparte acted as if he were uncontrolled by any authority at home; often indeed he openly disobeyed the instructions of the Directory, for which he had little respect, calling them a collection of lawyers and rhetoricians. However, he ostensibly sided with them against their enemies at home, and took the precaution to obtain their sanction to his proceedings. In

the cabinet, amid diplomatists and ministers, he displayed the most astonishing knowledge and judgment; and being now but twenty-nine years old, his military ability, united with his talent in council, rendered him a subject of wonder and admiration to all Europe. The German officers, who had learnt the art of war according to the old tactics, had been sadly puzzled at the novel manœuvres introduced by him in the Italian campaigns; and the gray-haired statesmen, assembled for the adjustment of treaties, and who considered the whole art of diplomacy to consist in artifice and trick, were as much confounded by his keen sagacity and direct action.

In Dec., 1797, Bonaparte arrived at Paris, where he was the great object of interest and attention. He was received with the greatest honors by the Directory; splendid public festivals were given to the conqueror of Italy. Politicians, poets, artists, marshals, musicians and fair ladies crowded around him, and heaped upon him every species of adulation. He was not, however, seduced by these flatteries. His manners were cool and distant, as if he had no sympathy with those around him. Every one felt his superiority, and was impressed with the idea that he was a mysterious, inscrutable individual, whose thoughts were his own, as if he were the only man on the face of the globe. While everybody in Paris was acting as if it were one continued holiday, because Bonaparte was there, he alone seemed to be looking beyond these things and indifferent to them. If, indeed, he ever condescended to use the powers of pleasing which he possessed, it was generally to

obtain some influence which might promote his future plans.

The Directory becoming at last a little uneasy at the presence of a man so idolized by the soldiery, and so much an object of pride to the people, gave him the command of the expedition to Egypt, which was fitted out and despatched with the utmost secrecy. It sailed in May, 1798, and carried land forces amounting to 30,000 men. Having taken possession of Malta, in their way, the army proceeded to Egypt, where they were followed by the British fleet under Lord Nelson.

We need not detail the exploits of the French in Egypt. It will be sufficient to say, that Bonaparte soon made himself master of that country, and proceeded as far as Palestine. He was everywhere successful, except at Acre, where he was baffled by the British under Sir Sidney Smith. His victory at Aboukir over the Turkish forces completed his operations in Egypt, and hearing of the unsettled state of things in France, he privately took his departure, with two frigates, and fortunately escaping the British vessels, he landed at Frejus, Oct. 9, 1799. He proceeded directly to Paris, being everywhere received with the greatest enthusiasm by the people. His journey was little less than a triumphal procession. Bells were rung, illuminations and fêtes took place everywhere. The messenger who brought the news of his arrival in Paris, was hailed as if he had borne intelligence of a glorious victory.

Again Napoleon was the observed of all observers; but he shunned society, and led a retired life, appear-

ing to take little interest in public affairs, while, in fact, he was very busy in gaining information as to the state of parties, the feelings of the people, and the character of leading men. At length his plans were formed, and he resolved to strike a decisive blow for dominion.

The people had become tired of the existing government, and Napoleon determined to overthrow it, and place himself at the head of the nation. Accordingly, on the 10th November, 1799, accompanied by a number of officers, he repaired to the palace of St. Cloud, about six miles from Paris, where the legislative assembly held their sessions. He entered the hall of the Council of Five Hundred, and after a violent speech, a scuffle took place, and he was forced back. Some troops, who were held ready, now entered the hall, and the members were easily dispersed,—some going out by the doors, and others leaping from the windows. The final result of these decisive measures was the abolition of the Directory, and the placing of the executive power in the hands of three consuls, of whom Bonaparte was one. He soon made himself *First Consul*, thus becoming possessed of the chief authority.

One of the first acts of the First Consul was to propose peace to Austria and England. It was declined by both powers. The proposal was made to England, in a letter written by Bonaparte, directly to King George III., and not by means of ministers, as correspondence between two governments is usually conducted.

The command of the French army, in Germany,

was given to Moreau; that of Italy, Bonaparte reserved for himself. On the 6th of May, 1800, he left Paris to place himself at the head of sixty thousand men, which had been assembled with great secrecy, in Switzerland. For the execution of his plans, it was necessary that this large army, with its cannon, its ammunition, and its baggage, should march over the Alps,—the highest chain of mountains in Europe,—by a path scarcely wide enough for a goat. An officer of engineers was sent to survey Mount Bernard, one of the peaks of this lofty range.



Bonaparte crossing the Alps.

With great difficulty he ascended to the top, and then returned to make his report to the first consul. "Is the route practicable?" said Bonaparte. "It is barely possible to pass," replied the engineer. "Let

us forward then," said Napoleon; and the extraordinary march commenced.

On the 15th of May, Bonaparte, at the head of the main body of the army, marched from Lausanne to the little village of St. Pierre, at which point everything resembling a road ended. An immense and apparently inaccessible mountain, its head among general desolation and eternal frosts, now stood in his way. Precipices, ravines, and a boundless extent of snows, which a breath of air might cause to roll down the sides of the mountain in masses capable of burying armies in their descent, seemed to forbid access to all living things, save only the sure-footed chamois.

But these had no terrors for the First Consul and his troops. The cannon were placed in the trunks of trees, hollowed out for the purpose. Each was dragged by a hundred men. The carriages were taken to pieces and fastened to the backs of mules, or carried by the soldiers. The ammunition was transported in the same manner.

While one half of the soldiers were thus engaged, the others were obliged to carry the muskets, cartridge-boxes, knapsacks, and provisions of their comrades, as well as their own. Each man so loaded was estimated to carry from sixty to seventy pounds weight, up icy precipices, where a man entirely unincumbered could scarcely ascend. The musical bands played from time to time at the head of the regiments, and in places of unusual difficulty the drums beat a charge, as if to encourage the soldiers to encounter the opposition of nature itself. Proba-

bly no troops but the French could have endured such a march, and no general but Bonaparte would have required it.

The army having preceded him, he now set out alone, excepting his guide. As usual, he wore his gray surtout and his three-cornered hat. In spite of the weather, which was wet and dismal, he preserved his good nature. Shaking the rain-water from his hat, he said laughingly to his guide, "There, see what I have done in your mountains,—spoiled my new hat. However, I will get another on the other side."

Near the summit, a body of courageous monks have fixed their dwellings among the everlasting snows, that they may afford succor to any forlorn travellers in these dreadful wastes. They are called the monks of Saint Bernard. Hitherto the soldiers had no refreshment, save when they dipt a morsel of biscuit in the snow.

The good fathers of the convent, who possess large magazines of provisions, distributed bread and cheese and a cup of wine to each soldier as he passed, which were more acceptable, according to one who tells the story and shared the fatigues, than would have been the gold of Mexico.

The descent on the other side of the mountain was even more difficult than the ascent had been. It was, however, accomplished without any material loss. On the morning of the 16th May, the advanced guard of the army took possession of the village of Aosta, in Piedmont,—a country pleasant in itself, but rendered delightful by its contrast with the horrors which had been left behind.

The appearance of this immense army, descending from the Alps by ways hitherto deemed impracticable, seemed like enchantment to the Austrians. Bonaparte did not allow them much time to recover from their surprise. After various lesser engagements, on the 14th of June, he gained the great battle of Marengo. This decided the fate of Italy. On the 2d of July, the first consul re-entered Paris, having been absent less than two months, in which short space of time he had regained all that the French had lost in Italy during his absence in Egypt!

He now renewed to Austria his offer of peace. But British money again prevailed, and the offer was declined. On the 3d of December, 1800, the Austrian army was entirely defeated at Hohenlinden, by the French, under Moreau. The affairs of the emperor were now in a desperate condition. He was compelled to sue for peace. This was granted him upon terms much less mortifying than his former obstinacy and present defenceless condition gave him any reason to expect. It is called the peace of Luneville, and was signed February 9, 1801.

England alone remained at war with France. The possession of Egypt was the point in dispute. France wished to retain it, but England insisted that it should be restored to the Turks. This difficulty was at length removed. The French army in Egypt, cut off from receiving any succors from France, was obliged to agree to leave the country. On the 27th of March, 1802, peace was concluded at Amiens, between France and England.

Bonaparte now had time to devote himself to the

internal affairs of the country. He founded various institutions, and promoted improvements in the capital and throughout the country. In 1804, he caused the Duke D'Enghien, a Bourbon prince, to be shot, as a warning to the Bourbons, who were believed to have employed a number of assassins in Paris to take his life. In the same year, December 2, 1804, he was crowned as emperor, by the pope, with all the magnificence and ceremony which had attended the coronation of Charlemagne.

In all similar solemnities, the crown had been placed on the sovereign's head by the highest ecclesiastic present, as representing the Deity, by whom princes claim to rule. But not even from the head of the church would Napoleon receive the symbol of sovereignty. The crown having been blessed by the pope, Napoleon took it from the altar, and placed it on his head. He then placed the crown on the head of his empress.

The Cisalpine Republic was formed into the kingdom of Italy, of which Napoleon was invited to be the sovereign. At Milan, on the 26th of May, 1805, he placed on his own head the iron crown said to have been worn by the ancient kings of the Lombards. With the crown came back the distinctions of rank which had been abolished in France. The members of the Bonaparte family became *princes of the blood royal*; the most distinguished of the generals and statesmen were made *princes* and *dukes*.

The emigrants accepted with eagerness the invitation to return, which the emperor gave them. The halls of the palace were soon crowded with the an-

cient nobles, who courted the smiles of the new chief with as much servility as their ancestors had shown to gain like favors from the "grand monarch," Louis XIV.

The revolution was now at an end. A firm government was established, to the great joy of the nation in general, who were heartily tired of the bloody ferocity of the Jacobins, and the weakness of the Directory.

The peace which had been made with England was of short duration, and soon the war was rekindled throughout the continent. In the famous battle of Austerlitz, November 27, 1805, Napoleon defeated the Austrian and Russian armies, and dictated the terms of peace signed at Presburg, December 26, 1805. In October, 1806, he gained the splendid victory of Jena, and entered the capital of Prussia in triumph. Proceeding in his irresistible career, he defeated the Russians in the memorable engagements of Eylau and Friedland—which led to the peace of Tilsit, July, 1807.

This treaty was negotiated by the two emperors in person. The ceremonies of their first meeting were very similar to those practised in old times at a meeting of sovereigns. A raft was moored in the midst of the river Niemen, which formed the boundary between Russia and Prussia. The two emperors, in the midst of thousands of spectators, embarked at the same moment from the opposite banks of the river. They met in a large tent erected upon the raft, and embraced one another, amid the shouts of both armies. In former times, all these precautions were taken to

guard against treachery. On the present occasion, the dignity of the two sovereigns was to be preserved by their meeting at the exact boundary of their respective dominions.

After the first interview, the two monarchs laid aside ceremony, and associated together on terms of great intimacy. Napoleon exerted his powers of pleasing with great effect. The king of Prussia soon made his appearance at Tilsit, but was not admitted by Napoleon to the same footing of equality with Alexander.

Napoleon was much amused with their notions of the duties of a general. "I was," said he, "the most ignorant of the three, of military affairs. They could tell the exact number of buttons there should be on the front of a uniform coat, how many behind, and how the skirt should be cut. Not a tailor in the army knew better than Frederick, how much cloth it took to make a coat.

"Though I was profoundly ignorant upon these important points, yet, not to affront them, I answered as gravely as if the fate of a battle depended on the cut of a coat. If the French army had been commanded by a tailor, the king of Prussia would certainly have gained the day at Jena; but, as victories depend more on the skill of the general who commands the troops, than upon that of the tailor who makes their coats, the Prussians consequently failed."

The queen of Prussia, who possessed beauty, wit, and grace, exerted all her powers to win the good will of Napoleon, and to procure favorable terms for her husband. Napoleon, as he boasted to Josephine, was

proof against all her lady-like artifices, as wax-cloth against rain. Napoleon, upon one occasion, offered her a rose of uncommon beauty. The queen at first seemed to decline receiving the courtesy—then accepted it, adding the stipulation,—“At least with Magdeburg,”—a city of Prussia then in possession of Napoleon. “Your majesty will be pleased to remember,” said he, “that it is I who offer, and that your majesty has only the task of accepting.”

The exertions of the queen gained nothing for her husband. He was deprived of almost half his territories. A portion of these was given to the new king of Saxony, and the remainder was formed into the new kingdom of Westphalia, which Napoleon gave to his brother Jerome.

Every power on the continent, that had dared to resist the arms of Napoleon, was at this time humbled by repeated defeats. The insular situation of England, with the invincible spirit of the people, saved her from attack. This was the period of Napoleon’s greatest power.

As there were no more kingdoms to win in the north of Europe, Napoleon now turned his attention to the south. In concert with Charles IV. of Spain, he sent an army into Portugal. The royal family of Portugal took refuge in Brazil. The French army entered Lisbon, the capital of Portugal, November 30, 1807. In the following year, the king of Spain himself resigned his crown to the emperor, who bestowed it on his brother Joseph. Murat, who had married a sister of Napoleon, was promoted to the dignity of king of Naples.

While Bonaparte was maintaining a powerful struggle in Spain against the people of that country, aided by the English, the northern portions of the continent were again preparing for war. Austria took the field in 1809, and Napoleon, quitting Madrid, led his army into the heart of Germany. After a succession of splendid achievements, he entered Vienna, and shortly after, July, 1809, he gained the decisive victory of Wagram. This led to the treaty of Vienna, which was signed October 14, 1809. The continent was again prostrate at the feet of the conqueror.

A series of very extraordinary events followed : the pope was deposed ; Josephine was repudiated, and an alliance was formed with Maria Louisa, a daughter of the emperor of Austria, Francis II. Napoleon dispensed with the ceremonies of reception, usually practised on such occasions. Near Soissons, a single horseman, no ways distinguished by dress, rode past the carriage in which the young empress was seated, and had the boldness to return, as if to look more closely.

The carriage stopped, the door was opened, and Napoleon, breaking through all ceremony, introduced himself to his bride. He was as fortunate in his second wife as he had been in his first. The new empress possessed beauty and great modesty and simplicity of manners. She was fondly attached to Napoleon, and desired most to please and obey him.

Bonaparte, whose domestic conduct was exemplary, behaved with the utmost kindness to his princely bride. He required, however, the strictest attention

to etiquette. If it happened, for example, that he was prevented from coming to dinner at the appointed hour, he was displeased if he found her with a book, or engaged in any female occupation.

On the other hand, Maria Louisa expressed her surprise at her husband's dispensing with guards, and moving about with the freedom of a private individual. On the 2d April, 1811, a son was born, to whom was given the title of king of Rome.

The year 1811 was occupied in preparations for the Russian campaign; and in 1812, Napoleon marched to the north, with an army of four hundred thousand men. On the 7th September, was fought the bloody battle of Borodino, and the Russians retiring, left Moscow to its fate. On the 14th, the French reached the hill called Mount Salvation, which affords a fair view of the ancient capital of the Czars.

There lay the city before them, with its lofty steeples, its palaces embosomed in delightful groves, and its copper domes glittering in the sun. But all was silent as the desert. Napoleon waited in vain for the long train of officers and nobles, and substantial citizens, whom he expected to come forth to tender to him their submission, and to solicit his pardon and protection.

After waiting two hours, Napoleon received the strange intelligence that Moscow was deserted by its inhabitants. The signal was given to advance, and the French troops, with wonder at the silence and solitude which received them everywhere, took possession of the city. But this silence was soon interrupted. The Russian governor, before leaving the city, had

caused it to be set on fire in various places. As a large portion of the houses were built of wood, the flames spread with frightful rapidity.

The French troops were compelled to retreat before this new enemy, and hastily abandoned a city they had so lately entered in triumph. The emperor had established himself in the Kremlin, an immense pile of buildings, almost a town in itself, built in the centre of the city, and surrounded by massive stone walls. It was the ancient abode of the Russian monarchs.

The fire now threatened to destroy this; and at the solicitations of his officers, Napoleon consented to leave the city. This was a work of danger, for the streets were arched with fire, and the hot air was suffocating. At length he reached a place of safety, three miles from the place. During four days the fire remained undisputed master of the city, and consumed what it had cost centuries to raise.

On the 21st, the army re-entered Moscow. The inhabitants were exhorted to return. But the proclamations which were issued, made no impression on their minds. Napoleon flattered himself with the idea that Alexander would agree to a peace. But no answer was returned to the letter which he wrote with his own hand, offering it. To the proposals made to the Russian general, the answer was, that Russia would never negotiate with an army within her territories. The magazines of provisions had been destroyed by the fire. Winter was approaching, and the Russian armies threatened to cut off all communication with France.

There was no hope of safety but in a hasty retreat. On the 18th of October, the French army quitted Moscow. The history of this retreat is a relation of the most dreadful and protracted calamities. Compelled to keep in the most direct route, the army became a prey to famine. The winter coming on at an unusually early period, added greatly to their sufferings.

The Cossacks, a species of wild troops mounted on swift horses, hung upon their flanks, and continually harassed them, cutting off all who straggled from the ranks. Men and horses perished by thousands in the most miserable manner. But the confidence of the troops in the genius and good fortune of their emperor remained unshaken. So long as they had him with them, they did not entirely lose courage. On the 4th of December, however, Napoleon set out on a sledge for Paris, where he arrived on the 18th. As soon as the departure of the emperor was known to the troops, they gave themselves up to despair. All order and discipline were abandoned. Each one thought only of his own preservation. On the 12th of December, the remnant of the army arrived at Kowno, the same place where they had crossed the Niemen, six months before.

How different now was the state of the grand army ! Of the four hundred thousand men who engaged in this disastrous expedition, less than fifty thousand remained :—their uniforms replaced by women's pelisses, or what rags they could pick up ; their feet bare and bleeding, or protected by bundles of filthy clothes instead of shoes !

Napoleon made gigantic efforts to repair his fearful losses. He raised new armies; faced the enemy, and gained new victories. But Europe was now in battle array against him, and after a series of bloody conflicts, in the vicinity of Leipsic, he was forced to retreat, in October, 1812.

But the power of Napoleon was not yet at an end. He levied a force of three hundred thousand men. For the first time since the revolution, France was to become the theatre of war. She was at once threatened from all quarters. Russians were advancing from Switzerland to the number of one hundred and fifty thousand; Blucher led one hundred and thirty thousand Russians from Germany.

Bernadotte, the old companion of Napoleon, led an army of one hundred thousand Swedes by the way of Holland. The English, under Wellington, advanced from Spain. With these fearful odds against him, Napoleon did not lose his courage or his military genius. Europe was filled with wonder at the fertility of his resources. He disconcerted the plans of his enemies, and his brilliant successes seemed to make it appear possible that he would yet prevail.

Negotiations for peace were renewed, but without any good result. At length, a battle was fought on the heights near Montmartre, the result of which left Paris exposed to the enemy. On the 31st of March, 1814, Alexander and Frederick took possession of that capital. The sovereigns immediately issued a proclamation making known their determination to replace the Bourbons on the throne. Napoleon had yet an army at Fontainbleau. The soldiers were

devotedly attached to him, and would, with joy, have followed him once more to battle. But the marshals and officers of the highest rank considered the contest as hopeless, and would not listen to the proposal.

The allies had declared that they would not negotiate with Napoleon. He hoped that by his abdication he might secure the throne to his son. On the 4th of April, 1814, he formally abdicated in his favor; but this was of no avail. The allies decided that he should be confined to the island of Elba. He was to retain the title of emperor; was allowed all the honors usually belonging to that dignity; was to have his army and his navy; but all upon a scale proportionate to the size of his empire. This island was about sixty miles in extent, and contained about twelve thousand inhabitants.

Resigned to his fate, Napoleon prepared to depart for his new dominions. But first he had the sad task of bidding adieu to those who, of all the world, were most devoted to him, and to whom he was sincerely attached,—the celebrated Imperial Guard. On the 20th of April, 1814, the remnant of this chosen band were assembled in the yard of the palace of Fontainebleau. He embraced the general, and the eagle which was their standard, made a short address, and then departed, amidst the sighs and tears of the whole assembly. The scene is represented to have been touching in the extreme.

Bonaparte retired to Elba; Louis XVIII., brother of the murdered Louis XVI., being proclaimed king of France. But the mighty drama was not yet closed. On the first of March, 1815, Napoleon landed in

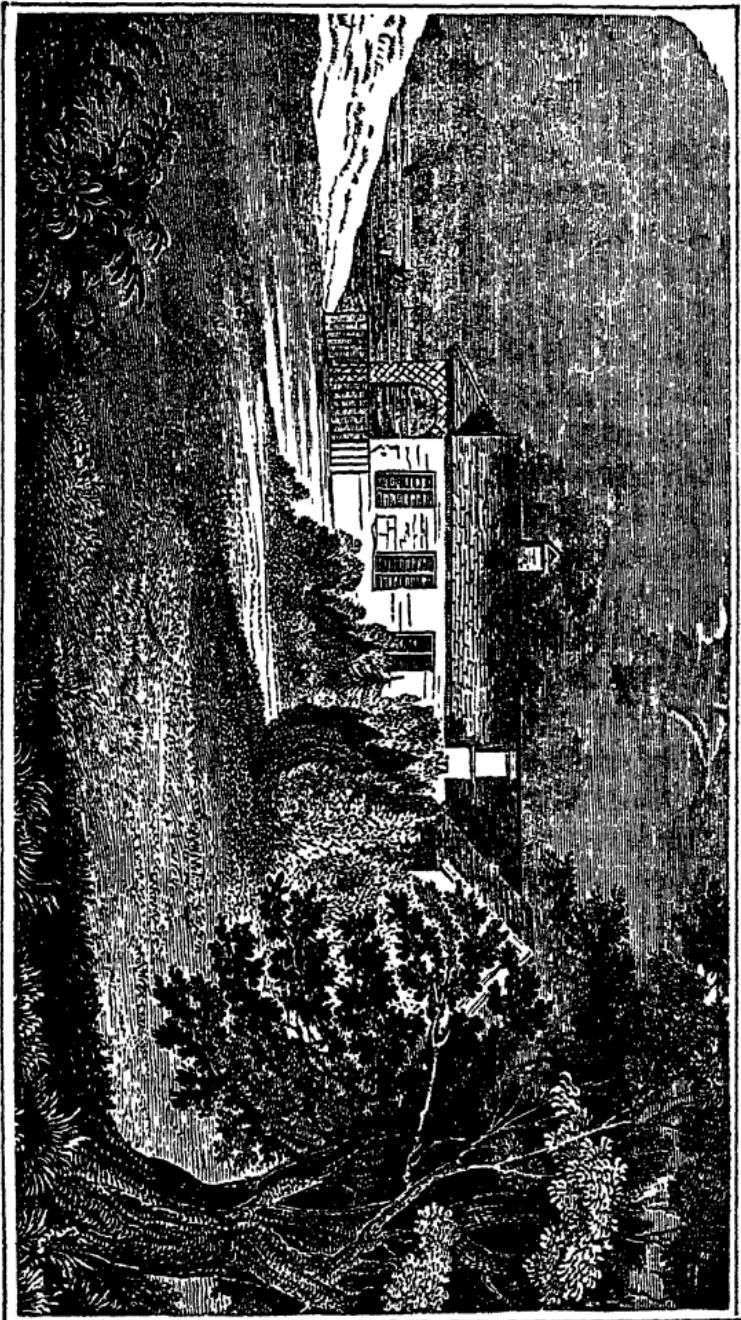
France, was enthusiastically received by the army, and in a few weeks was once more in Paris, at the head of the nation. The armies of Europe, which were about marching to their several homes, soon rallied, and Bonaparte met them again for a final struggle, in the field of Waterloo.

Though Napoleon had triumphed over all others, he had never been successful against the English. All Europe had submitted to him, save England alone. While he was master of the land, she was mistress of the sea. Never, in any case, had he obtained a decisive victory over English forces in any great battle. And now, for the first time, the most renowned general of England, Wellington, was to meet Bonaparte in action.

They met on the 18th of June, 1815, and after one of the most bloody of modern battles, fate decided against Napoleon, and thus put an end to his splendid career. From this time forward, his life was but a series of humiliations. On the 7th of July, the allied army re-entered Paris; on the 15th, Napoleon, a fugitive, went on board an English vessel, asking for an asylum in England. This was refused, and, agreeably to the decision of the allied powers, he was sent to St. Helena, a small island in the South Atlantic Ocean. Here he arrived on the 6th of August, 1815.

For a time, Napoleon was cheered with the hope of escape from exile and restoration to France. But as years wore away, this hope vanished. He then became restive, and being irritated by the petty tyranny of his keepers, his life was rendered unhappy. He spent much of his time in conversing with some

Longwood, Bonaparte's residence at St. Helena.



of his old officers, who shared his exile; but his health rapidly failed, and on the 5th of May, 1821, he died. Such was the end—such the career of Napoleon Bonaparte.

Our story must not close with the closing scene of Napoleon's extraordinary life. We must notice the removal of his remains to France, in the year 1841. This was done in compliance with the wish of the nation, by order of Louis Philippe, the present king. His son, the P. de Joinville, was sent to St. Helena, in a frigate; the remains of Napoleon were taken from the tomb; they were borne back to France, and with vast and imposing ceremony, amid the sighs and tears of millions, they were deposited in the Hospital of the Invalids.

We cannot do full justice to the character of Bonaparte, better than by introducing a series of authentic anecdotes, gathered from a variety of sources. We will, however, first give a brief sketch of his person and personal habits. His form has served as a model for the most skilful painters and sculptors; many able French artists have successfully delineated his features, and yet it may be said that no perfectly faithful portrait of him exists. His finely shaped head, his superb forehead, his pale countenance, and his usual meditative look, have been transferred to the canvass; but the versatility of his expression was beyond the reach of imitation. All the various workings of his mind were instantaneously depicted in his countenance; and his glance changed from mild to severe, and from angry to good-humored, almost with the rapidity of lightning. It may truly be said that he



Funeral of Napoleon at Paris.

had a particular look for every thought that arose in his mind.

Napoleon had beautiful hands, and he was very proud of them; while conversing he would often look at them with an air of self-complacency. He also fancied he had fine teeth, but his pretension to that advantage was not so well founded as his vanity on the score of his hands.

When walking, either alone or in company with any one, in his apartments or in his gardens, he had the habit of stooping a little, and crossing his hands behind his back. He frequently gave an involuntary shrug of his right shoulder, which was accompanied by a movement of his mouth from left to right. This habit was always most remarkable when his mind was absorbed in the consideration of any profound subject. It was often while walking that he dictated his most important notes.

He could endure great fatigue, not only on horseback, but on foot; he would sometimes walk for five or six hours in succession without being aware of it. When walking with any person whom he treated with familiarity, he would link his arm into that of his companion, or lean on it.

As soon as Napoleon arose in the morning, his valet-de-chambre shaved him and dressed his hair, while some person would read to him. He paid little attention to any but the German and English papers. "Pass over all that," he would say of the French papers; "I know it already. They say only what they think will please me." It was often surprising that his valet did not cut him in shaving, for, when-

ever he heard anything interesting, he would turn quickly round towards the reader.

When Napoleon had finished his toilette, which he did with great attention, for he was scrupulously neat in his person, he went down stairs to his cabinet. There he signed the orders on important petitions, which had been analyzed by his secretary on the preceding evening. On reception and parade days he was particularly exact in signing these orders, because he would be likely to see most of the petitioners, and they would ask him for answers. He next perused letters, ranging them according to their importance. He occasionally wrote the answers himself, but not often. He generally took breakfast at ten, the repast being very simple.

Napoleon was exceedingly temperate, and averse to all excess. He knew the absurd stories that were circulated about him, and he was sometimes vexed at them. It has been repeated, over and over again, that he was subject to attacks of epilepsy; but those who have been most intimate with him pronounce it untrue. His health was good and his constitution sound. He generally, in his latter days, slept seven hours out of the twenty-four, besides taking a short nap in the afternoon. Among the private instructions which Napoleon gave his secretary, one was very curious: "During the night," said he, "enter my chamber as seldom as possible. Do not awake me when you have any good news to communicate; with that there is no hurry. But when you bring bad news, rouse me instantly; for then there is not a moment to be

lost." This was a wise regulation, and Bonaparte found his advantage in it.

Napoleon was seen to less advantage in a drawing room, than at the head of his troops. His military uniform became him much better than the handsomest dress of any other kind. His waistcoats and small-clothes were always of white cassimere. He changed them every morning, and never wore them after they had been washed three or four times. He never wore any but white silk stockings. His shoes, which were very light, and lined with silk, were ornamented with gold buckles of an oval form, either plain or wrought. He also, occasionally, wore gold knee-buckles. During the Empire he was never known to wear pantaloons.

It appears also that he wore no jewels. In his pockets he carried neither purse nor money; but merely his handkerchief, snuff-box, and sweetmeat-box. He usually bore only two decorations,—the cross of the legion of honor, and that of the iron crown. His hat was of an extremely fine and light kind of beaver. The inside was wadded and lined with silk. It was unadorned with either cord, tassel, or feather—its only ornament being a silk loop, fastening a small tri-colored cockade.

Gallantry to woman was by no means a trait in Napoleon's character. He seldom said anything agreeable to females, and he frequently addressed to them the rudest and most extraordinary remarks. To one he would say, "Heavens, how red your elbows are!"—to another, "What an ugly head-dress you have got!" At another time he would say, "Your

dress is none of the cleanest. Do you never change your gown? I have seen you in that twenty times." He showed no mercy to any who displeased him on these points. He often gave Josephine directions about her toilette, and the exquisite taste for which she was distinguished might have rendered him fastidious respecting the costume of other ladies.

After he became emperor, he said one day to the beautiful Duchess de Chevereuse, in the presence of all the circle at the Tuilleries, "Ah; that's droll enough! your hair is red!" "Perhaps it is, sire," replied the lady; "but this is the first time a man ever told me so!"

While Napoleon was quite young, he conceived an attachment for Mademoiselle du Colombier, who, on her part, was not insensible to his merits. It was the first love of both; and it was that kind of love which might be expected to arise at their age, and with their education. "We were the most innocent creatures imaginable," the emperor used to say. "We contrived little meetings together; I well remember one which took place on midsummer morning, just as daylight began to dawn. It will scarcely be believed that all our happiness consisted in eating cherries together!"

When reviewing the second regiment of horse chasseurs, at Lobenstein, two days before the battle of Jena, Napoleon, addressing the colonel, said, "How many men are there here?" "Five hundred," replied the colonel; "but there are many raw troops among them." "What signifies that," said the emperor, in a tone which denoted surprise at the obser-

vation ; "are they not all Frenchmen ?" Then, turning to the regiment, " My lads," said he, " you must not fear death. When soldiers brave death, they drive him into the enemies' ranks." He here made a motion with his arm, expressive of the action to which he alluded. At these words a sudden movement among the troops, accompanied by a murmur of enthusiasm, seemed to foretell the memorable victory of Rosbach, which took place forty-eight hours after.

At the battle of Lutzen the army was chiefly composed of conscripts, who had never been in any engagement. It is said that in the heat of the action, Napoleon rode along the rear of the third rank of infantry, supporting and encouraging the young troops. " This is nothing, my lads," said he ; " stand firm. France has her eye on you. Show that you can die for your country ! "

After having given any one an important mission, or traced out the plan of any great enterprise, Napoleon used frequently to say, " Come, sir, be speedy, use despatch ; and do not forget that the world was created in six days." On occasions of this kind, he concluded by observing to the individual whom he was addressing, " Ask me for whatever you please, except time ; that 's the only thing that is beyond my power."

The ringing of bells always produced in Napoleon emotions, which were not easy to account for. When he was at Malmaison, and walking in the alley leading to the plain of Ruel, he would stop, lest the noise of his footsteps should drown any portion of the

delightful sound. He was almost angry with his friends, if they did not experience the impressions he did. So powerful was the effect produced upon him by the sound of these bells, that his voice would falter, as he said—"Ah! that reminds me of the first years that I spent at Brienne: I was then happy!" When the bells ceased, he would resume the course of speculations, carry himself into futurity, place a crown on his head, and dethrone kings, in imagination.

During the campaign of Russia, Napoleon one day rode by a burning village, and found a light-horseman of the Dutch guard, who stood only a few paces from a house which was nearly burnt to the ground, and who was about tying a coffee-kettle to a long pole. Napoleon, who could not imagine what the soldier intended to do, asked him, "Comrade! what are you doing there?" "Sire!" answered the soldier, "I am going to boil my coffee." Napoleon laughed aloud at this new method of boiling coffee, and said that it was not probable that any family in Paris boiled their coffee by so extravagant a fire as did this light-horseman in Russia.

Such was the extent and variety of Napoleon's genius, that he soared without effort to the loftiest abstractions of the art of governing, and descended with the same facility to the minutest details of management. He would cause an account of the number of workmen and the produce of their labor to be delivered to him every morning. He knew how long it took a tailor to finish a soldier's dress, a wheelwright to construct a carriage, or an armorer to fit up a mus-

ket. He knew the quantity of arms, in a good or bad state, contained in the arsenals. " You will find," he wrote to the minister of war, " in such an arsenal so many old muskets, and so many broken up. Set a hundred men at work there, and arm me five hundred men a week."

Napoleon, it is said, often talked a great deal, and sometimes a little too much ; but no one could tell a story in a more agreeable and interesting way. His conversation rarely turned on gay or humorous subjects, and never on trivial matters. He was so fond of argument, that in the warmth of discussion it was easy to draw from him secrets which he was most anxious to conceal. Sometimes, in a small circle, he would amuse himself by relating stories of presents and apparitions. For this he always chose the twilight of evening, and he would prepare his hearers for what was coming by some solemn remark.

It is related that the following scene occurred at the time Napoleon told Josephine of his determination to be divorced from her, and marry an Austrian princess. On the 30th November, 1809, the emperor and Josephine were dining together as usual ; she had uttered not a word during dinner, and he had broken silence only to ask one of the servants what o'clock it was. As soon as Napoleon had taken his coffee, he dismissed all the attendants, and Josephine remained alone with him. Josephine saw, in the expression of his countenance, what was passing in his mind ; and she knew that her hour was come. Napoleon approached her, took her by the hand, pressed it to his heart, and after gazing at her a few moments

in silence, uttered these fatal words: "Josephine! My dear Josephine! you know how I have loved you! To you, to you alone, I owe the only moments of happiness I have tasted in this world. But, Josephine, my destiny is not to be controlled by my will. My dearest affections must yield to the interest of France!" "Say no more!" exclaimed Josephine; "I understand you: I expected this, but the blow is not the less severe." She had not power to say more. She shrieked, and fell to the floor, and was carried to her room insensible. Upon recovery, she exclaimed, "Alas! I had good reason to fear ever becoming an empress!"

One of Napoleon's officers lost a beautiful watch. He made it publicly known by a bell-man of the place. An hour after, a young lad, belonging to the village, brought the watch, saying he had found it on the high road, in a wheel-rut. The circumstance was related, the same evening, to Napoleon, who was so struck with this instance of honesty, that he directed information to be procured respecting the young man and his family. Learning that they were poor but honest peasants, Napoleon gave three brothers of this family employment; and, what was most difficult to persuade him to do, he exempted the young man, who brought the watch, from the conscription.

Napoleon, on his return from the isle of Elba, arrived at the Tuilleries very late in the evening. His levee of the following day was, as may be supposed, exceedingly numerous. The emperor appeared the same as usual, just as though he had never left the palace, and had held a levee but yesterday; his coun-

tenance, attitude, dress, manners, all were unaltered. The force of sentiment prevailed over respect; and all rushed forward to meet him. The emperor himself was visibly moved; and he embraced several of the most distinguished persons. He then commenced his circuit as usual. His voice was mild, his countenance placid, and his manner affable; he spoke with kindness to every one. "How," said he, addressing a certain individual, in a mingled tone of pleasantry and affection,—"do I see the major-general of the white army within two paces of me?" Several of the individuals present seemed to be laboring under a little embarrassment, owing to the extraordinary events that had just taken place; as for Napoleon, he appeared as though nothing had happened. He did not forget that he had freed them all from their allegiance at Fontainbleau.

In the lack of other means of amusing himself at St. Helena, Napoleon had been somewhat interested in the construction of a pond and fountain in the garden of Longwood, which was stocked with small fishes. A mixture of copperas in the mastic, employed in cementing the basin, had affected the water. It so happened, a short time before his death, that the creatures, which had been in a good measure the object of Napoleon's attention, began to sicken and to die. He was deeply affected by the circumstance, and, in language strongly resembling the beautiful verses of Moore, expressed his sense of the fatality which seemed to attach itself to him. "Everything I love—everything that belongs to me," he exclaimed, "is immediately struck. Heaven and mankind unite

to afflict me." At other times he lamented his decay of energy. The bed, he said, was now a place of luxury, which he would not exchange for all the thrones in the universe. The eyes, which formerly were so vigilant, could now scarcely be opened. He recollects that he used to dictate to four or five secretaries at once. "But then," he said, "I was Napoleon—now I no longer live, I only exist." Often he remained silent for many hours, suffering, as may be supposed, much pain, and immersed in profound melancholy.

It will be seen by the account we have given, that the character of Napoleon presents many contradictions. In general, he was tyrannical, yet he often displayed instances of kindness and gentleness of feeling. He began as a republican, and ended as a despot. He affected to regard the rights of men, yet acted only for himself. He was educated as a Catholic, and died as a Catholic; yet in Egypt he professed Mohamedanism, and seems to have been deeply impressed with that faith. During his voyage from Egypt to France, he spent almost his whole time in reading the Koran and the Bible: apparently comparing the two. He was a violator of the most sacred laws, yet when his wife and mother had attempted to smuggle some valuable goods from Italy, which were seized at the custom-house, he refused to interfere, on the ground that the laws must be observed!

He was profuse in the expenditure of millions, yet sharp and severe in matters of mere pence. He was vexed at trifles, and calm amid the tempest of battle, or even the crushing downfall of his mighty

fortunes. He was usually cold and repulsive in his manners, yet he had powers of fascination, which gave him an irresistible hold on men's hearts. He was habitually harsh and insulting to women, yet he lived happily with his wives. He was incapable of friendship, yet he was the idol of the nation, and was loved as few men are loved by his officers. He poured out the blood of France like water, for his ambition, yet fathers and mothers gloried that their sons had died under his banner, and the nation mourned his exile, as if he were the very sun in the heavens suffering a long eclipse.

It might seem difficult, amid such inconsistencies, to select the ruling traits of Napoleon's character. It is easy to see, however, that ambition was the master passion, and that thing, which he called *glory*, his leading star. He was, in fact, selfish, in the worst sense of the word. He looked upon mankind as the tools and instruments by which he was to gratify his wishes; not as fellow-beings, claiming his sympathy, and having rights which must be the guides and limits of his actions. He truly loved no one; he had no perception of friendship, and if he had friends he made no return of the heart. Selfishness swallowed up everything. He sought the glory of France, only as a means of reflecting his own. He rewarded genius, because it could add rays of glory to his crown. He encouraged talent, that he might secure and use it. He promoted the arts, for he knew that they perpetuated in flattering forms and glowing hues the image of him who is munificent to the artist.

He was essentially a tyrant. When his sway was

acknowledged, like the gorged lion, he was pacific ; if resisted, he was fierce and remorseless. He had no sense of right, which restrained his actions ; there was in his soul no God, whom he loved, reverenced, or feared,—thus giving him a law above his will. His will was his only law ; necessity the only limit of his ambition.

It is not, then, for his moral qualities, that we are to admire Bonaparte. He was not, morally, a great man. He had no magnanimity, no true greatness of soul. In dealing with other men, he was a giant ; in dealing with himself, he was weak and contemptible. He could not conquer himself ; he could not act in the light of God's image, above himself,—and in the view of a vast universe, acknowledging a universal law,—exalted, inspired by a boundless benevolence. In soul, he was beneath the humblest Christian. In morals, in religious matters, his heart was eclipsed and his mind embarrassed. On these subjects he was weak and variable, and scarcely above an unenlightened heathen. The simple shepherd of Salisbury Plain, as depicted by Hannah More, was in these things a greater and a wiser man.

Of the amazing intellectual powers of Napoleon, however, there is no doubt. These are attested by his deeds. No other man has ever done so much, in the brief space of sixteen years. It was within this short period that he rose from obscurity to the greatest pitch of earthly power ever possessed by a human being. Within this space he conquered Egypt ; by six successful campaigns, against the best troops and ablest generals of Germany, he made himself master of

Italy ; thrice he humbled the most formidable powers of the continent, gaining a series of victories more brilliant than have been known in modern times ; he hurled down dynasties, and established new ones ; he annihilated thrones and erected others ; he took away and gave away crowns as if they were playthings.

It was not in action alone that Napoleon's power was displayed. He conceived and brought into existence an entirely new system of military tactics. Even at the age of twenty-six, he had by the might of his genius overthrown the science which the united mind of man, from Alexander down, had brought into the art of war. The military art, as framed by the genius of ages, was set aside and forever repudiated, by a soldier, not yet thirty.

In diplomacy, Napoleon showed a superiority to all around him. No man of the time, even here, was his master—or his equal. In a circle where Talleyrand and Metternich, the greatest diplomatists of modern times, were actors, he was felt to be the ruling spirit, whom it was idle to oppose, and hopeless to deceive.

Though he was always engaged in war, he still found time to attend to other concerns. He paid minute attention to the financial affairs of the country, and even of his own establishment. He inspected accounts, examined public works, held counsel with artists, saw foreign ministers, and entered into every kind of detail. He planned and caused to be executed roads, bridges, forts, fountains, squares, palaces, libraries, statues, and hospitals—all that could enrich, improve or embellish his dominions. With an indus-

try that never tired, an activity that kept all around him in a whirl, he attended himself to the details of these various works; while, at the same time, he was negotiating with princes and powers, fixing the boundaries of kingdoms, planning campaigns, and shaping out the destinies of two hundred millions of men!

Nor was this all: he was at the same time, day by day, month by month, fashioning the civil and criminal law of France; forming, in short, a code by which justice was to be administered throughout the land. Here, then, the soldier was closeted with lawyers, and here he was also the master. Every law, every paragraph was scanned by him, in these councils, and many of the best features of the "Code Napoleon," which is still the law of France, and an imperishable monument of the sagacity and wisdom of its founder, were of his suggestion.

Perhaps the powers of Napoleon were in no way more clearly evinced, than in the ascendancy he gained over mankind. All who came into his presence, felt his superiority; marshals, generals, ministers, peers, princes. It was not his history alone which impressed those who were around him. When he was exiled to Elba, Ney, one of his most gallant officers and able generals, gave his adhesion to the Bourbons. When Napoleon came back, Ney determined to oppose him: but the moment he was in the presence of the emperor, his knee irresistibly bent in homage to the spirit that seemed to rule all destinies.

Never was a man's power over a nation more severely tested than when Napoleon came back, de-

feated, from Russia. He returned to Paris, the bearer of his own story of misfortune. An army of almost half a million of men, sons, brothers, fathers, lovers—the chivalry of France, had perished in the snows of the north. There was hardly a family which had not now to mourn the loss of some near and dear friend. Millions of money, wrung from the people, had been lost; the banner of France had quailed; the conqueror was conquered; the once invincible emperor was a fugitive!

Here was a state of things to try the soul of a nation. How natural for sorrow to turn in anger against its author,—for disappointment to vent itself upon him who has occasioned it! Yet such was not the course of things now. Napoleon but stamped upon the earth, and thirty millions of people obeyed his call. There was no wavering,—no hesitation. Money, men, munitions, were lavished as if nothing had been lost—as if the country were inexhaustible; and in a few brief weeks, all that could be done by France, was done for Napoleon. There is no instance in history equal to this, as furnishing evidence of the sway which one man has acquired over the mind and heart of a populous and intelligent nation. It is a homage to the power, the mastery of Bonaparte, which is without a parallel.

Napoleon's reception on his return from Elba also evinces the ascendancy he had acquired over the hearts of the French people. And at a still later date, we have seen proofs that this ascendancy had not a slight foundation. Though Europe had risen in battle array, and banished him from the theatre of

his renown; though other kings had ruled over the nation; though a lone island was his grave, and his image had long been withdrawn from the sight, still, after a lapse of six and twenty years, his senseless form is borne back to France, and we see a nation in tears over his coffin! What legitimate prince was ever thus wept—what other man, public or private, has ever been honored with such a testimony to his dominion over the hearts of thirty-five millions of men?

But while we thus acknowledge the intellectual greatness of Napoleon, and ponder with admiration upon it as a spectacle of human capacity, calculated to exalt our views of man, we must still bestow the most emphatic condemnation upon his character and career. His aim was universal dominion, for no good or philanthropic purpose, but only to gratify the hungering and thirsting ambition of his soul. In attempting to realize this wicked dream, he sacrificed millions of human lives, and would, had it been required, have sacrificed half the human race. Nor was this reckless waste of happiness, this utter contempt of mankind,—their hopes, fortunes, feelings, pains, pleasures,—the only charge which we must lay to his account.

Universal dominion, at which Bonaparte aimed, involves a general prostration of the sense of rectitude in the hearts of men. Implying, as it does, universal despotism, it is a thing so wicked, so monstrous, that it cannot be, till the light of justice and truth is put out in the human bosom. Bonaparte, then, was warring, not against men's physical power alone, but

against the light of reason—the laws of justice written by the finger of God in men's hearts. England appears to have been the only European power that had not quailed before him. In that country there was a light that he could not extinguish ; a fire that he could not quench ; a power he could not subdue. It was the moral energy of England that finally crushed him. It was the good sense, the right feeling, the religious light which continued to nerve the arm, and guide the hand, and illuminate the soul of that nation, until, at last, roused by her spirit, all Europe was awake to the danger that threatened the world, and by one united but stupendous effort, it was averted.





GÖTHE.

JOHN WOLFGANG VON GÖTHE, or Goethe, was born at Frankfort, on the Maine, August 28th, 1749. His father was a doctor of laws, and an imperial counsellor of high standing. He was a great admirer of pictures, and had a considerable collection, embracing many fine specimens. He early directed the attention of his son to these, pointed out their beauties and defects, and thus excited his interest in them. This

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course, coöperating with a native tendency to love everything beautiful, in young Göthe, served to cherish and establish that admiration of the arts, which distinguished him through life.

When he was eight years old, the Seven Years' war broke out, and the Count de Thorane, one of the king's officers, was stationed at his father's house. He was a man of taste, and employed several young painters of Frankfort to execute pictures for him. At the interviews between the count and these artists, Göthe was present, took part in the conversations, and one picture, from the story of Joseph, was painted agreeably to his suggestions.

He now learnt the French language, and a French company, performing at Frankfort, excited his taste for the drama. While pursuing his studies at this period, he devoted himself, with singular versatility, alternately to drawing, music, the natural sciences, jurisprudence and the languages.

To assist his studies in the latter, he formed the plan of a novel, in which seven characters, brothers and sisters, corresponded with each other, in so many different languages. The youngest of these used Hebrew, and this led Göthe to study that language. In this manner he acquired a taste for oriental poetry, which is visible in his works.

At an early age, he fell in love, and, as often happens with boys, the object of his affection was much older than himself. Young as he was, his passion was so violent as to deprive him of sleep and rest; the consequence of this was a severe fit of sickness. With returning health, he devoted himself to a pre-

paration for the university of Leipsic, which he soon after entered.*

At this period, German literature was modelled upon that of France : it was stiff, heartless and bombastic. Göthe, who felt a thousand springs of thought and emotion bubbling through him, had no just models to guide him in giving them utterance. He resorted, therefore, to a plan of his own. Whatever gratified or grieved him ; whatever pleased or displeased him ; whatever occupied his mind intensely, he began to embody in a poem ; and thus, unconsciously, to write the history of his own mind and heart. This plan he pursued through life, and it constitutes one of the chief characteristics of his works. Instead of going out of himself for subjects of thought, he looked at the mirror of his own soul, and wrote down the reflections it gave forth.

In 1768, he left the college, his health being much impaired. During his illness, he was nursed by a lady, whose name was Klettenberg. She was a mystic, and his conversations with her led him to the study of cabalistic authors, and the subtle arts of alchemy ; and also to that of chemistry. He likewise read some religious works, and, in an unsettled state of mind, he framed a religious system of his own, which appears to have borne a resemblance to the heathen fancies of Plato.

He afterwards went to the university of Strasburg to study law, agreeably to his father's desire ; but his bias led him to devote his chief attention to chemistry and anatomy. Here, he became acquainted with Herder, one of the most original thinkers of his time.

He made Göthe better acquainted with the Italian school of painting, and inspired his mind with just views of poetry.

About 1771, he went to Wetzlar, where he found in his own love for a betrothed lady, and the suicide of a young man, named Jerusalem, the subject for his celebrated work, entitled the Sorrows of Werter. This was published in 1774, and, together with his drama of Götz of Berlichingen, issued the year before, gave him immediate celebrity. In 1775. he went to Weimar, on the invitation of the young Duke of Saxe Weimar, who had just begun his reign. In 1776, he was made privy counsellor of legation; in 1782, he was appointed president of the chamber, and raised to the rank of a nobleman.

In 1786, Göthe visited Italy, where he spent two years. He continued to receive various marks of confidence from the duke, and was afterwards honored by titles of distinction by Alexander of Russia and Napoleon. He died at Weimar, March 22d, 1832, at the age of eighty-three. He expired about eleven in the morning, without any apparent suffering, having, a few minutes before, called for paper that he might express his delight at the return of spring. His death was suitable to his character. He was a lover of everything beautiful in nature: it was thus he had ever been accustomed to express his emotions; nature was to him a deity, and to this, his last worship was addressed.

The life of Göthe was devoted to science and literature. He appears to have cared little for politics, and to have felt no deep interest in the great events

that swept by him. He seemed not to feel that he had a country, or to know the sentiment of patriotism. In his disposition he was aristocratic, and fond of the privileges which rank and title bestow.

Göthe spent a great part of his time at a pleasant cottage, near Weimar, which is now resorted to by



multitudes who delight to visit a spot consecrated by genius. His manners were pleasing to those who had claims upon his hospitality, and in whom he placed confidence; but a jealousy of his reputation rendered him cold and reserved to others. In general society, he never made literature a subject of conversation. He was accustomed to pay annual visits to Jena, which is situated in a romantic valley, and embellished with the most delightful environs. It has also a celebrated university, with a library of 100,000 volumes. Göthe was attracted to this place by the beauty of its scenery and its literary society.

He was favored by nature in his personal appearance, which was commanding and agreeable. His eye was exceedingly brilliant, his forehead high, and his brow widely arching. His expression was mild; his tones affable; his speech earnest and affecting.

His habits were in some respects singular. He would not allow the window of his bed-room or study to be thrown open to the wind, as he took a pleasure in its confined atmosphere. He was insensible to nauseous smells, save that of apples in a state of decay. This he could not endure; while Schiller, his friend and rival in fame, was, on the contrary, fond of it as a perfume. Göthe, on one occasion, went to make Schiller a visit; the latter being absent at the moment, Göthe sat down to await his return. After a short space, he felt a strange dizziness, which increased to such a degree, that he was obliged to leave the room. Schiller's servant, in searching for the cause of this, at last discovered some twenty apples, in various stages of decomposition, which his master had placed in his room, to perfume his wardrobe!

Göthe had a nice taste in the snuffing of candles, and at home or abroad, when he came into a room where candles were burning, he immediately proceeded to perform that operation. He has been known to quit a select society, on seeing the servants snuff the candles in what he deemed a slovenly and negligent manner. He was married to his housekeeper, at the age of fifty-one, by whom he had several children.

Though the personal character of Göthe does not seem to claim our respect, his genius has excited an

extensive and intense admiration. Among the forty millions who speak the German language, he is regarded as the great light of modern times. His works, which are numerous, amounting to about thirty octavo volumes, and treating upon a great variety of topics, are there regarded as among the richest of literary treasures. Göthe has also many admirers in other countries, and there are those in England and the United States who look upon him with a kind of idolatry.

No author of modern times has enjoyed, during his life, so many marks of homage, from the highest to the lowest, as he. While the treaty of Erfurth was in progress, the poet being there, Bonaparte entered into conversation with him upon the subject of Werter, and by his critical, yet complimentary remarks, showed that he was familiar with the work. The wife of a Silesian weaver being obliged to go to Saxony, and hearing that she had travelled more than half the way to Göthe's residence, whose books she had read with great delight, continued her long journey to Weimar for the sake of seeing him. Göthe declares that the true character of his works has never been more truly conceived than by this woman.

That the Duke of Saxe Weimar should have been the steadfast friend and admirer of Göthe, is testimony in favor of his abilities; but the following extracts from a letter, written by a youth of sixteen, and dated Weimar, Feb. 22d, 1822, evinces the pervading enthusiasm he had inspired. The passage is interesting not only as showing this, but as containing a lively picture of the poet's appearance and habits.

“For two months I walked past his house every day; but in vain. It was indeed a great delight to me even to see his daughter-in-law with her lovely children at the window; but I wanted to see Göthe himself. One Sunday I had been taking a walk; my way home lay at the back of Göthe’s house, by his garden. The garden gate stood open, and curiosity tempted me in. Göthe was not in the garden; but in a short time I saw his servant come in. I shut the garden gate for fear the man should see me. As I was thinking afterwards, very sadly, how all my endeavors to see Göthe had failed, I suddenly remarked another garden gate which likewise stood open; and as I entered at it, I soon perceived that this was the neighbor’s garden, the wall of which abutted on Göthe’s, so that the walks of both were clearly to be seen from it. The circumstance was so propitious that I suddenly took courage. I asked the man to whom this house belonged, whether Göthe often walked in his garden, and at what time of day. He answered, every day, when the weather was fine; the hour, however, was not always the same—that often at ten o’clock, if the sun was out, the privy counsellor was there; but that about noon, especially, he loved to be in his garden.

“Hereupon I questioned the good neighbor farther, to see how he stood disposed, and whether he would give me permission to visit his garden daily for half an hour, that I might see and watch the great poet, the man I so deeply reverenced. He answered me quite indifferently, Why not? he could have no objection! It is, however, wonderful, dear friend, that

people must pay half a gulden to see a bear, a tiger, or a wildcat; while the sight of a great man, the rarest thing in the world, is to be had for nothing! I went home full of joy; and that night could not close my eyes.

“ It seemed to me as if I, little dwarf as I was, had suddenly, through this hope of seeing a great man, grown a hand’s breadth at least. The morning, I thought, would never come;—the night seemed to me as long as a week, and longer. At length day broke, and brought the loveliest spring weather. When I saw the sun, I thought,—this is a fine day for Göthe; —and I was not mistaken.

“ It was past ten when I reached the garden. He was there already, walking up and down. My heart beat violently. When I saw him, I thought I beheld Faust and Gretchen in one person; at once so gentle and so majestic did he look! I had my eyes ever fixed upon him, that I might stamp his features well upon my heart. And thus did I look at him for a whole hour by the clock, with keen, unaverted eyes, without his once being aware of me—by which indeed he lost nothing. When I had thus, as it were, lost myself in him, he gave me the slip, and went into the house again, and up stairs into his study, which is quite separate, with windows looking into a back court.

“ Dearest friend, be well assured, Göthe’s greatness manifests itself in his whole form and aspect. He is still hale and active as a man of forty. His majestic gait, his straight and lofty forehead, the noble form of his head, his fiery eye, arched nose—all about him

cries aloud, Faust, Margarethe, Götz, Iphigenie, Tasso, and I know not what besides. Never did I see so handsome and vigorous a man of so advanced an age."

There are two difficulties with us in the way of a just appreciation of Göthe's poetical works. Most persons can only read him in a translation, which operates upon genius as a mist athwart the sun; and the peculiar character of Göthe's poems, groping as they do in the recesses of the soul, renders them at first obscure. His real meaning often oozes through the fingers of the translator, or if it be retained, it frequently seems too thin and shadowy to be detected.

A little reading of him, however, will show, that what often strikes us as obscurity, lies chiefly in the point of view from which he regards everything: instead of looking from himself outward upon the world, he looks from the outward world in upon himself. This reversal of position is the key to much that startles us in Göthe's works, and in German literature generally. After the eye is adjusted to this peculiar light, the strangeness and obscurity pass away in a degree, and we begin to find familiar ideas, with little more than a change of position, and perhaps in a new guise of language or association.

It is, doubtless, in respect to the universality of his genius, that Göthe was most remarkable: he is spoken of by his admiring countrymen as the *All-sided*; one whose vision, turned on either hand, was equally penetrating and perfect. To whatever subject he devoted himself, it was with energy and success. His treatise upon color is profound in its phi-

losophy, and touched with a feeling of poetry, suited to the subject. His essays upon the fine arts are among the best that have ever been penned.

Göthe's researches into science were unwearied. He seemed to forget to act, in his earnestness to observe: and this forms a clue to his life and character. He looked for nothing through faith, but for everything through observation. He pursued his investigations, everywhere; and was as ready to learn from an insect, as a planet. He seems almost to have fancied that he should be able to roll up the curtain behind which *life* is hidden, and reveal the mysteries of its birth. He had an aversion to everything supersensual—supernatural—to religion, except that which is taught by nature: yet he sought with intense study to pierce the mystery of existence, through this channel. In some observations suggested by the death of Wieland, and recorded by his friend Falk, he tells us the result of these researches: which is, in part, "that every sun, every planet, bears within itself the germ of a higher fulfilment, in virtue of which its development is as regular, and must take place according to the same laws, as the development of a rose tree, by means of leaf, stalk and flower." If such be the end of philosophy, how poor is the "lame and impotent conclusion :" and how superior, in real elevation of mind, is the humblest Christian to the proud philosopher!

While Göthe was distinguished in many branches of science, he even attained higher fame in polite literature, especially in poetry. Here, he has furnished us specimens in almost every play of humor

of the muse, from the lightest sonnet or song to the deepest tragedy. He appears to have been created a poet, not with a particular faculty to set forth certain harmonies of life and nature, but with all the faculties required to reflect whatever is beautiful in earth, air and sea. Yet Göthe did not study nature as a barren thing, having no relation to, or connection with, man. He looked upon the tree, the leaf, the blossom, and pronounced them beautiful; yet he felt that beauty was not in them, but in the mind. Beauty is a perception, an emotion, and resides only in that which perceives and feels. The rose itself is but the symbol of an idea; the real rose, so far as man is concerned, and all that he can know of it, consists only of his perceptions of its form, its hues, its fragrance. This blossom, then, is a thing of the mind, and the real force of nature lies not in the outward, but in the inner world—the soul.

With these views, Göthe looked abroad, and in studying nature, was but studying himself and mankind. As the unruffled lake takes images of the objects around it, so the soul receives impressions of what the senses present to the all-reflecting mirror of the bosom. It is in this deep world that life truly is—and there the poet turned his eye, and what he saw and felt, he has told us in his works. He has painted the outward world as it affected the inward man, and as a means of giving forth the history of the human soul; and this is poetry.

Beauty, in an extensive sense, may be regarded as the great source of bliss. Our purest pleasures are dipped from this fountain. Nature excites ideas and

emotions of beauty; and art, whose province is to set forth the happier combinations of nature, heightened by the delight we take in successful imitations, aims at the same point. A feeling of the beautiful, then, is the highest faculty of enjoyment. In some, this is limited to the appreciation of coarser gratifications; in others, its range is extended so as to see beauty everywhere, in the smallest flower, the humblest insect, the drop of dew, the beam of light. Göthe was one of these, and, with his intense feeling of the beautiful, came the power of painting it in words. Thus was his poetic faculty a vast mirror—glassing all the things that moved before him in the wheeling march of nature, with its planets and its stars, down to individual landscapes and separate flowers. With the same ease, and the same precision, he presents us the tempest with its battling elements, and the soft repose of the sequestered vale; the fearful convulsions of a fiend, and the little insect balanced on breezy wing before a flower. He touches to our ear, as well the pealing organ of the skies, as that of the softest string that trembles forth its melody in the summer wind.

Such appear to be the views of those who are best qualified to appreciate the poetry of Göthe; and even though we may not be able to see all the grounds of this exalted estimate, we cannot doubt that he has conferred a lasting obligation on the lovers of literature, especially in his own country. We, who have Shakspere, a man who penetrated farther into the mysterious union of the soul with the beautiful, than has any other human being,—cannot feel an equal debt

of gratitude to the great German poet. It may be many years before we can read his works in English with the advantage of translations which fully transmute his genius into our minds,—yet we may, doubtless, study him to advantage. He may aid us in cultivating spiritual pleasures ; in exalting our tastes ; in teaching us to find our gratifications in refined, and not in coarse pursuits. Some of his works are, indeed, exceptionable, as breathing a sceptical spirit, and there is a tendency in them all to overlook the religion of revelation in the worship of nature.

Indeed, while Göthe is, doubtless, a great poet of nature, it must be admitted that he goes no farther. Of man as bearing a relation to the Christian's God, he teaches us nothing but what we might learn from the pages of Grecian and Roman philosophy ; of man in his highest aspect, as a being endued with a moral power to contend with fate, to spurn the accidents of life, and triumph over misfortune, in his hopes, his aspirations and his faith—he presents us no examples, no guides, no helps. He has studied man only as he has plants, stones, and flowers,—a work of nature,—a link in the chain of creation. He has found him a being of wonderful capacities, an instrument of a thousand strings, to set forth in many-toned music the harmonies of life ; but as an immortal being, destined to a higher fulfilment, of which the whole natural world presents only types and symbols,—he knows him not. As a poet, then, he must ever remain far below Shakspeare and Milton ; and it is only as possessing, in common with these, and in an inferior degree, the power of setting forth the beauties of

nature, as reflected in the soul, that his poetry is to be cherished. Christianity furnishes not only the true philosophy of human life and human nature, but the deepest inspirations of poetry. All poetry, all philosophy, is comparatively bald, flat, earthy, that repudiates it. In missing this, Göthe missed the ladder to the skies, as well for the muse as the man.

Of his poetical works, his Faust and Wilhelm Meister are considered his masterpieces. He has left a great number of lesser poems, from which we extract a few specimens. If they do not seem fully to sustain the praises we have bestowed, we must refer the reader to the admirers of the poet, who affirm that in the original they are far more beautiful than they can be in a translation.

THE LOVED ONE EVER NEAR.

I think of thee, when the bright sunlight shimmers
Across the sea ;
When the clear fountain in the moonlight glimmers—
I think of thee.

I see thee, if far off the pathway yonder,
The dust be stirred ;
If faint steps o'er the little bridge to wander
At night be heard.

I hear thee when the tossing waves' low rumbling
Creeps up the hill ;
I go to the lone wood and listen, trembling,
When all is still.

I am with thee, wherever thou art roaming,
And thou art near !
The sun goes down, and soon the stars are coming—
Would thou wert here !

AT DEAD OF NIGHT.

At dead of night, I went, not always willing,
 A small, small boy, across the church-yard there,
 To the good father's kindly, quiet dwelling,—
 Star upon star shone o'er me all too fair,—
At dead of night.

When older grown, I nightly would be wending
 To that dear one, whose pleasure was my will ;
 The stars and northern-lights were sweetly blending—
 And going, coming, drank of bliss my fill
At dead of night.

Until at last the full moon smiled so brightly,—
 Smiles meant for me amid the gloom around—
 O then my thought, how willingly, how lightly,
 It round the past, as well as future wound,
At dead of night.

VANITY OF VANITIES.

I've set my heart upon nothing you see ;..
 Hurrah !
 And so the world goes well with me,—
 Hurrah !
 And who has a mind to be fellow of mine,
 Why, let him take hold, and help him drain
 These mouldy lees of wine.

I set my heart at first upon wealth .
 Hurrah !
 And bartered away my peace and health ;
 But ah !
 The slippery change went about like air,
 And when I had clutched me a handful here,
 Away it went there.

I set my heart upon woman next ;
 Hurrah !
 For her sweet sake was oft perplexed .
 But ah !

The false one looked for a daintier lot,
 The constant one wearied me out and out,
 The best was not easily got.

I set my heart upon travels grand,
 Hurrah!

And spurned our plain old father-land ;
 But ah !

Nought seemed to be just the thing it should,
 Most comfortless beds and indifferent food,
 My tastes misunderstood.

I set my heart upon sounding fame ;
 Hurrah !

And lo ! I 'm eclipsed by some upstart's name ;
 And ah !

When in public life I loomed quite high,
 The folks that passed me would look awry ;
 Their very worst friend was I !

And then I set my heart upon war,
 Hurrah !

We gained some battles with eclat,
 Hurrah !

We troubled the foe with sword and flame,
 (And some of our friends fared quite the same,)
 I lost a leg for fame.

Now I 've set my heart upon nothing, you see ;
 Hurrah !

And the whole wide world belongs to me,
 Hurrah !

The feast begins to run low, no doubt,
 But at the old cask we 'll have one good bout ;
 Come drink the lees all out !

THE ERL-KING.

Who rideth so late through the night-wind wild ?
 It is the father with his child ;

He has the little one well in his arm ;
He holds him safe, and he folds him warm.

My son, why hidest thy face so shy ?
Seest thou not, father, the Erl-king nigh ?
The Erlen king with train and crown ?
It is a wreath of mist, my son.

“Come, lovely boy, come, go with me ;
Such merry plays I will play with thee ;
Many a bright flower grows on the strand,
And my mother has many a gay garment at hand.”

My father, my father, and dost thou not hear
What the Erl-king whispers in my ear ?—
Be quiet, my darling, be quiet, my child ;
Through withered leaves the wind howls wild.

“Come, lovely boy, wilt thou go with me ?
My daughters fair shall wait on thee ;
My daughters their nightly revels keep ;
They ’ll sing, and they ’ll dance, and they ’ll rock thee to
sleep.”

My father, my father, and seest thou not
The Erl-king’s daughters in yon dim spot ?—
My son, my son, I see and I know,
'T is the old gray willow that shimmers so.

“I love thee ; thy beauty has ravished my sense,
And, willing or not, I will carry thee hence.”
O father, the Erl-king now puts forth his arm !
O father, the Erl-king has done me harm !

The father shudders ; he hurries on ;
And faster he holds his moaning son ;
He reaches his home with fear and dread,
And lo ! in his arms, the child was dead !

WRITTEN AT THE AGE OF SEVENTY-SEVEN.

When I was nothing but a child,
 My pleasant little face would shine ;
 The painters surely would have smiled
 To paint that little face of mine,—
 What then ? the pretty children, mind,
 To me, were from the heart inclined.

Now, like an old master, I sit in state,
 And they call me out in street and square ;
 And I'm to be had, like old Fritz the Great,
 On pipe-heads, and on china ware ;
 But the pretty children, they keep afar :—
 O dream of youth-time ! O golden star !

A PARABLE.

Poems are colored window glasses !
 Look into the church from the market square :
 Nothing but gloom and darkness there !
 Shrewd Sir Philistine sees things so :
 Well may he narrow and captious grow,
 Who all his life on the outside passes.

But come now, and inside we 'll go !
 Now round the holy chapel gaze ;
 'T is all one many-colored blaze :
 Story and emblem, a pictured maze,
 Flash by you :—'t is a noble show.
 Here feel as sons of God baptized,
 With hearts exalted and surprised.

ROBERT BURNS.



Born Jan. 25, 1759; died July 23, 1796.

ROBERT BURNS.

ROBERT BURNS,* eldest son of William Burness and Agnes Brown, his wife, was born 25th of January, 1759, in a clay-built cottage, raised by his father's own hands, on the banks of the Doon, in the district of Kyle and county of Ayr, and about two miles from the town of that name. The season in which this humble structure was reared, was severe and rough: the walls were weak and new; and some days after Robert's birth, a wind arose, which crushed the frail tenement, and the unconscious poet was carried unharmed to the shelter of a neighboring house.

He loved, when he grew up, to allude to this circumstance; and ironically claimed some commiseration for the stormy passions of one ushered into the world in a tempest. The rude edifice which we have mentioned is now an alehouse, and belongs to the shoemakers of Ayr; the recess in the wall, where the bed stood in which Burns was born, is pointed out to inquiring guests.

The mother of Burns was a native of the county of Ayr. Her birth was humble, and her personal attractions moderate; yet, in all other respects, she was a

* When Burns was about twenty-six years old, and had acquired some notoriety as a poet, he first began to write his name Burns, instead of Burness. It is one of the instances of that singularity by which he sought to distinguish himself.

remarkable woman. She was blessed with singular equanimity of temper; her religious feeling was deep and constant; she loved a well-regulated household; and it was frequently her pleasure to give wings to the weary hours of a chequered life by chanting old songs and ballads, of which she had a large store. In her looks she resembled her eldest son; her eyes were bright and intelligent; her perception of character, quick and keen. She lived to a great age, rejoiced in the fame of the poet, and partook of the fruits of his genius.

His father was from another district. He was the son of a farmer in Kincardineshire, and born on the lands of the noble family of Keith Marischall. The retainer, like his chief, fell into misfortunes; his household was scattered, and William Burness, with a small knowledge of farming, and a large stock of speculative theology, was obliged to leave his native place, at the age of nineteen, in search of better fortunes.

The elder Burns seems to have been but an indifferent judge of land; in a district where much fine ground is undercultivation, he sat down in a sterile and hungry spot, which no labor could render fruitful. He had commenced too on borrowed money: the seasons, as well as the soil, proved churlish; and "a stern factor," says Robert, "whose threatening letters set us all in tears," interposed, and he was compelled, after a six years' struggle, to relinquish the lease.

The life of William Burness was one continued struggle, which he carried on with the honorable pride common among his countrymen, hoping to bet-

ter his circumstances, and give his children a good education. Robert was first sent to a school about a mile distant, in his sixth year. Afterwards a young man was engaged by his father and some of the neighbors to teach their children in common, his employers boarding him in turns. When the family had removed to another situation, which deprived them of this advantage, the good man endeavored to instruct his children himself, after the hard day's work. "In this way," says Gilbert Burns, the second son, who wrote an interesting life of the poet, "my two eldest sisters got all the education they received. Robert obtained a little more school instruction by snatches, but the amount, altogether, was very inconsiderable. His chief acquisition was some acquaintance with French, and for this he was almost entirely indebted to himself. What other knowledge he obtained, he gathered from the few books, mostly odd volumes, which his father could contrive to borrow."

Of these early and interesting days, during which the future man was seen, like fruit shaping itself amid the unfolded bloom, we have a picture drawn by the poet's own hand, and touched off in his own vivid manner. "At seven years of age, I was," says he, "by no means a favorite with anybody. I was a good deal noted for a retentive memory, a stubborn, sturdy something in my disposition, and an enthusiastic idiot piety. I say idiot piety, because I was then but a child. Though it cost the schoolmaster some thrashings, I made an excellent English scholar; and by the time I was ten or eleven years of age, I was a critic in substantives, verbs, and participles.

The earliest composition that I recollect taking pleasure in reading, was the Vision of Mirza, and a hymn of Addison's, beginning,

'How are thy servants blest, O Lord!'

I particularly remember one half-stanza which was music to my ear—

'For though on dreadful whirls we hung,
High on the broken wave.'

I met with these in Mason's English Collection, one of my school-books. The two first books I ever read in private, and which gave me more pleasure than any two I have read since, were the Life of Hannibal, and the History of the Acts and Deeds of Sir William Wallace. Hannibal gave my young ideas such a turn; that I used to strut in raptures up and down, after the recruiting drum and bagpipe, and wish myself tall enough to be a soldier; while the story of Wallace poured a Scottish prejudice into my veins, which will boil along there till the floodgates of life shut in eternal rest."

Burns enjoyed other schooling than that we have mentioned, and which doubtless exerted a powerful influence over his mind. "In my infant and boyish days," he observes in a letter to Dr. Moore, "I owed much to an old woman who resided in the family, Jenny Wilson by name, remarkable for her ignorance, credulity and superstition. She had, I suppose, the largest collection in the country of tales, and songs concerning devils, ghosts, fairies, brownies, witches, warlocks, spunkies, kelpies, elf-candles, dead-lights, wraiths, apparitions, cantraips, giants, en-

chanted towers, dragons and other trumpery. This cultivated the latent seeds of poesie, and had so strong an effect upon my imagination, that to this hour, in my nocturnal rambles, I sometimes keep a lookout in suspicious places."

Here we have the poet, taking lessons in the classic lore of his native land, and profiting largely ; yet, to please a scholar like his correspondent, he calls his instructress an ignorant old woman, and her stories idle trumpery. The name of Jenny Wilson, however, deserves to be remembered by all lovers of the northern muse ; her tales doubtless gave color and character to many fine effusions. The supernatural, in these legends, was corrected and modified by the natural, which Burns's growing sense saw in human life, and found in the songs of his native land.

"The collection of songs," he adds, "was my *vade mecum*. I pored over them, driving my cart, or walking to labor, song by song, verse by verse, carefully noting the true, tender or sublime, from affectation and fustian. I am convinced I owe to this practice much of my critic craft, such as it is." The songs of Scotland which are thus complimented, are doubtless among the richest of all those popular collections of national poetry which are the offspring of unlettered minds, and it is not surprising that Burns should have found in them an abundant source of inspiration.

But he had not yet completed his irregular and unconscious studies. In his farther progress, his mother was his instructress. Her rectitude of heart made an impression too strong to be ever effaced from the mind of her son. This was strengthened by the

songs and ballads, which she commonly chanted, all of which wore a moral hue. The ballad which she most loved to sing, or her son to hear, is one called “*The Life and Age of Man*.” It is a work of imagination and piety, full of quaintness and nature : it compares the various periods of man’s life to the months of the year ; and the parallel is both ingenious and poetic.

In the depressed circumstances of the family, the youth and early manhood of the future poet were dark enough. “*The cheerless gloom of a hermit*,” he says himself, “with the unceasing moil of a galley slave, brought me to my sixteenth year.” His brother Gilbert writes, “To the buffetings of misfortune we could only oppose hard labor and the most rigid economy. We lived very sparingly. For several years butcher’s meat was a stranger in the house ; while all the members of the family exerted themselves to the utmost of their strength, and rather beyond it, in the labors of the farm. I doubt not but the hard labor and sorrow of this period of his life was in a great measure the cause of that depression of spirits with which Robert was so often afflicted through his whole life afterwards.”

Though Burns’s father may not have been profoundly skilled in farming, he was fertile in experiments. When he found that his farm was unproductive in corn, he thought the soil suitable for flax, and resolved, himself, to raise the commodity, while to the poet he allotted the task of manufacturing for the market. To accomplish this, it was necessary that he should be instructed in flax-dressing : accordingly, at midsummer, 1781, Robert went to Irvine, where he wrought

under the eye of one Peacock, kinsman to his mother.

His mode of life was frugal enough. He possessed a single room for his lodgings, rented perhaps at the rate of a shilling a week. He passed his days in constant toil as a flax-dresser, and his food consisted chiefly of oatmeal sent to him from his father's family. A picture of his situation and feelings is luckily preserved, of his own drawing : the simplicity of the expression and the pure English style are not its highest qualities. He thus writes to his father :

“ Honored sir :—I have purposely delayed writing, in the hope that I should have the pleasure of seeing you on new-year’s day : but work comes so hard upon us that I do not choose to be absent on that account. My health is nearly the same as when you were here, only my sleep is a little sounder, and on the whole I am rather better than otherwise, though I mend by very slow degrees.

“ The weakness of my nerves has so debilitated my mind that I dare neither review past wants, nor look forward into futurity : for the least anxiety or perturbation in my breast produces most unhappy effects on my whole frame. Sometimes, indeed, when for an hour my spirits are a little lightened, I glimmer a little into futurity ; but my principal, and indeed my only pleasurable employment, is looking backwards and forwards in a moral and religious way. I am quite transported at the thought that ere long, perhaps very soon, I shall bid an eternal adieu to all pains, and uneasinesses, and disquietudes of this weary life, for I assure you, I am heartily tired of it ; and, if I

do not deceive myself, I could contentedly and gladly resign it.

"As for this world," he continues, "I despair of ever making a figure in it. I am not formed for the bustle of the busy, nor the flutter of the gay. I shall never again be capable of entering into such scenes. Indeed, I am altogether unconcerned at the thoughts of this life. I foresee that poverty and obscurity probably await me, and I am in some measure prepared to meet them. I have but just time and paper to return you my grateful thanks for the lessons of virtue and piety you have given me, which were too much neglected at the time of giving them, but which I hope have been remembered ere it is yet too late."

This letter is dated December 27, 1781. No one can mistake the cause of his melancholy: obscure toil and an undistinguished lot on earth, directed his thoughts, in despair, to another world, where the righteous shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more. To plough, and sow, and reap, were poetic labors, compared to the dusty toil of a flax-dresser. With the lark for his companion, and the green fields around him, his spirits rose, and he looked on himself as forming a part of creation: but when he sat down to the brake and the hackle, his spirits sank, and his dreams of ambition vanished.

Some time before their father's death, and when their affairs were drawing to a crisis, the two brothers had taken another farm, which they stocked in the best way they could with the savings of the whole family. "It was," says Gilbert, "a joint concern among us. Every member of the family was allowed ordinary wages, for the labor he performed on the

farm. My brother's allowance and mine was £7 per annum each. And during the whole time this family concern lasted, which was four years, as well as during the preceding period at Lochlea, his expenses never in any year exceeded this slender income. His temperance and frugality were everything that could be wished."

The cloud that had long hung over the family of Burness, continued to darken, and while they were beset with poverty, distress, and all but despair, death entered the house, and took away its stay and staff. Worn out with toil, and disheartened with the constant rebuffs of fortune, William Burness died, in the beginning of the year 1784. He lived long enough to hear that a lawsuit, in which he had been engaged with his landlord, had been decided against him, and that he must leave his family in a state of beggary. So sad a life had thus so dark a close. Yet this picture of shadows is not without its lights. William Burness bore his misfortunes with pious dignity and resignation: he received the heavy dispensations of Providence with patience, and struggled manfully to alleviate his lot, and that of his family, by industry and economy. He failed, it is true, but he doubtless derived consolation from the consciousness of a steady effort to do his duty. And however dark his life, what favorite of fortune would not, at the close of his career, gladly have exchanged his lot for that of William Burness?

We must now follow the bereaved family to Moss-giel, to which they now removed, and leased a farm, in the hope of obtaining support. Robert took the lead,

as the head of the family, but Gilbert assisted with his industry and good sense. "Mossiel," says the latter, "lies very high, and mostly in a cold, wet bottom. The first four years that we were on the farm were very frosty, and the spring was very late. Our crops, in consequence, were very unprofitable; and, notwithstanding our utmost diligence and economy, we found ourselves obliged to give up our bargain, with the loss of a considerable portion of our original stock."

But during the period here referred to, matters of high moment had occurred, calculated to make even failures so distressing as this appear insignificant, from the brilliancy of the new prospects that had opened to the gaze of one of the brothers. By the close of the year 1786, Robert Burns had added a new name to the illustrious roll of the great poets of Britain.

Love, which throughout Burns's life continued an unfailing source of inspiration, also first impelled him to write. "You know," he observes, in a communication to Dr. Moore, "our country custom of coupling a man and woman together as partners in the labors of harvest. In my fifteenth autumn, my partner was a bewitching creature, a year younger than myself. My scarcity of English denies me the power of doing her justice in that language, but you know the Scottish idiom—'She was a bonnie, sweet sonsie lass.' Among her other love-inspiring qualities, she sang sweetly, and it was her favorite reel to which I attempted giving an embodied vehicle in rhyme. . . . Thus with me began love and poetry."

The verses written on this occasion, like those of

Lord Byron, and perhaps of every other great poet's real first attempt, contained little or no indication of his genius. With every fresh attempt, however, came increased power; and during the poet's residence at Mossiel, "My Nanny O," "Green grow the Rashes," "Poor Mailie," the "Holy Fair," the "Address to the De'il," the wonderful dramatic extravaganza of the "Jolly Beggars," the "Cotter's Saturday Night,"—in short, all the pieces that appeared in his first publication, were composed. Among these various pieces, one of the most pleasing is the Cotter's Saturday Night. We cannot so well do justice to the poet as to quote a few of the verses of this admirable poem.

THE COTTER'S SATURDAY NIGHT.

II.

November's chill blows loud wi' angry sugh;
 The short'ning winter-day is near a close;
 The miry beasts returning frae the pleugh,
 The blackening trains o' crows to their repose;
 The toil-worn cotter frae his labor goes,
 This night his weekly moil is at an end,
 Collects his spades, his mattocks and his hoes,
 Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
 And weary, o'er the moor his course does homeward bend.

III.

At length his lonely cot appears in view,
 Beneath the shelter of an aged tree;
 Th' expectant wee things, toddlin', stacher thro',
 To meet their dad wi' flichterin' noise an' glee.
 His wee bit ingle, blinkin' bonnily,
 His clean hearth-stane, his thriftie wifie's smile,
 The lisping infant prattling on his knee,
 Does a' his weary carking cares beguile,
 An' makes him quite forget his labor an' his toil.

The poet here goes on to describe the gathering in of the older children, who are out at service ; the meeting of brothers and sisters, the visit of a young lad who has a fancy for the eldest daughter, Jenny, and finally the evening meal. He then proceeds :—

XII.

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face
 They round the ingle form a circle wide ;
 The sire turns o'er wi' patriarchal grace
 The big ha' Bible, ance his father's pride :
 His bonnet rev'rently is laid aside,
 His lyart haffets wearing thin an' bare ;
 Those strains that once did sweetⁱⁿ Zion glide,
 He wales a portion with judicious care ;
 And "Let us worship God!" he says, with solemn air.

Here follow the hymn, the reading of a chapter in the Bible, and finally the prayer.

XVI.

Then kneeling down, to Heaven's eternal King,
 The saint, the father and the husband prays ;
 Hope springs exulting on triumphant wing,
 That *thus* they all shall meet in future days ;
 There ever bask in uncreated rays,
 No more to sigh, or shed the bitter tear,
 Together hymning their Creator's praise,
 In such society, yet still more dear ;
 While circling time moves round in an eternal sphere.

XVIII.

Then homeward all take off their sev'ral way ;
 The youngling cottagers retire to rest ;

Sugh, rush of wind; *frae*, from; *pleugh*, plough; *crams*, crows; *stacher*, stagger; *toddlin'*, tottering; *flichterin'*, fluttering; *ingle*, hearth; *ha' Bible*, great Bible that lies in the hall; *lyart*, gray; *haffets*, temples; *wales*, selects.

The parent pair their secret homage pay,
And proffer up to Heaven the warm request,
That *He* who stills the raven's clam'rous nest,
And decks the lily fair in flow'ry pride,
Would, in the way his wisdom sees the best,
For them and for their little ones provide ;
But chiefly in their hearts with grace divine preside.

It is our painful duty to state that the industry, virtue and sobriety which characterized the early life of Burns, were not adhered to as he approached manhood. He was led into dissipated company, and adopted the vicious habits of those with whom he associated. He was involved in serious difficulties, the result of his own indiscretion. An irregular connection with Jean Armour, afterwards Mrs. Burns, brought both him and her into the greatest distress. It was, at last, agreed between them, to make a legal acknowledgment of a private marriage, according to a Scottish custom, and that he should then set out for Jamaica, to push his fortune.

"But before leaving my native country forever," he says, "I resolved to publish my poems, and weighed my productions as impartially as was in my power. I thought they had merit, and it was a delicious idea that I should be called a clever fellow, even though it should never meet my ears." An impression of six hundred copies of the book was, accordingly, published at Kilmarnock. This was in the autumn of 1786. The poems were well received by the public, and, after paying all expenses, the author cleared nearly twenty pounds.

"This sum," he says, "came very seasonably, as I was thinking of indenting myself, for want of money

to procure my passage. As soon as I was master of nine guineas, the price of wafting me to the torrid zone, I took a steerage passage in the first ship that was to sail from the Clyde; ‘for hungry ruin had me in the wind.’ I had been for some days skulking from covert to covert, under all the terrors of a gaol, as some ill-advised people had uncoupled the merciless pack of the law at my heels.”

This had been done to oblige him to find security for the maintenance of his children, for the parents of the mother were so indignant, that, notwithstanding what had happened, they would not allow the marriage to take place. He now took farewell of his friends; his chest was sent forward to Greenock; and he had composed the last song he ever expected to write in his native land. This, which was entitled, “The Gloomy Night is gathering fast,” affords a touching picture of the poet’s feelings at this dark and almost hopeless period.

THE GLOOMY NIGHT IS GATHERING FAST.

The gloomy night is gath’ring fast,
Loud roars the wild inconstant blast;
Yon murky cloud is foul wi’ rain,
I see it driving o’er the plain.
The hunter now has left the moor,
The scatter’d coveys meet secure,
While here I wander, prest with care,
Along the lonely banks of Ayr.

The autumn mourns her rip’ning corn,
By early winter’s ravage torn;
Across her placid, azure sky
She sees the scowling tempest fly;

Chill runs my blood to hear it rave;
 I think upon the stormy wave,
 Where many a danger I must dare,
 Far from the bonnie banks of Ayr.

'T is not the surging billow's roar,
 'T is not that fatal, deadly shore ;
 Tho' death in every shape appear,
 The wretched have no more to fear ;
 But round my heart the ties are bound,
 That heart transpierc'd with many a wound ;
 These bleed afresh, those ties I tear,
 To leave the bonnie banks of Ayr.

Farewell ! old Coila's hills and dales ;
 Her heathy moors and winding vales,
 The scenes where wretched fancy roves,
 Pursuing past, unhappy loves !
 Farewell, my friends ! Farewell, my foes !
 My peace with these, my love with those—
 The bursing tears my heart declare,
 Farewell ye bonnie banks of Ayr.

It was at the critical moment when Burns had thus, in a feeling of despair, taken, as he supposed, a final leave of his country and all he held dear, that a letter of Dr. Blacklock to a friend, overthrew all his schemes, by opening new prospects to his poetic ambition. The doctor belonged to a set of critics, for whose applause he had not dared to hope. His opinion that he would meet with encouragement in Edinburgh, for a second edition, fired him so much, that away he posted for that city, without a single acquaintance, or a single letter of introduction !

The result of this visit was the introduction of the poet to all who were eminent in literature, in rank or

in fashion, in the Scottish metropolis. The brilliant conversation of the unlettered ploughman seems to have struck all, with whom he came in contact, with as much wonder as his poetry. Under the patronage of the Earl of Glencairn, Dr. Robertson, Professor Dugald Stewart, Mr. Henry Mackenzie, and other persons of note, a new edition of his poems was published, from the profits of which he received nearly five hundred pounds.

In the summer of 1788, he returned to Ayrshire, where his brother Gilbert, who had taken upon him the support of their aged mother, was struggling with many difficulties in the farm they had conjointly taken. Robert advanced two hundred pounds, and with the remainder of his money he prepared to stock another farm, that of Ellisland in Dumfries-shire, for himself. Here he took up his abode in June, 1788, having previously legalized his union with Miss Armour, by joining with her in a public declaration of their marriage.

Soon after this, by the interest of Mr. Graham of Fintray, he was appointed, on his own application, an officer of excise for the district in which he lived. The salary he received in this capacity was originally fifty pounds a year, but it was eventually increased to seventy pounds. His duties, however, interfered so much with the attention due to his farm, that he found himself obliged to resign it to his landlord, after having occupied it nearly three years and a half. About the end of the year 1791, he retired with his family to a small house in the town of Dumfries, placing his dependence for the future, exclusively on his chances of promotion in the excise.

In Dumfries, Burns spent the short remainder of his life. The habits that he had acquired during the sudden and short-lived intoxication of his first introduction to public notice, now gained entire ascendancy over him, as misfortune and disappointment broke, or at least embittered his spirit, and enfeebled his powers of resistance. The strong excitements of admiration and applause, by which he had been surrounded at Edinburgh, were sought for at any cost, and among companions of any order who would join him in drowning reflection. Even the prospects upon which he had placed his reliance of advancement in the excise, were suddenly overcast in consequence of some imprudent expressions which he dropped on the subject of the French revolution, to which some despicable informer had called the notice of the Board.

Instead of treating the matter with the contempt it deserved, with a littleness and an inquisitorial despotism peculiar to such bodies, they set on foot a regular inquiry into Burns's political tenets and conduct,—and this, it must be remembered, in relation to a man whose independence formed the most striking trait of his character. Burns thus describes his feelings and thoughts, at this most unhappy epoch of his history. He is writing to his friend Graham, of Fintray: the date is Dec., 1792. “I have been surprised, confounded and distracted by Mr. Mitchell, the collector, telling me that he has received an order from your Board, to inquire into my political conduct, and blaming me as a person disaffected to government. Sir, you are a husband and a father. You know what you would feel to see the much-loved

wife of your bosom and your helpless, prattling little ones turned adrift into the world, degraded and disgraced, from a situation in which they had been respectable and respected. I would not tell a deliberate falsehood, no, not though even worse horrors, if worse can be, than these I have described hung over my head ; and I say that the allegation, whatever villain has made it, is a lie ! To the British constitution, on Revolutionary principles, next after my God, am I most devotedly attached."

Enclosed with this letter was another to be laid before the Board, disclaiming all idea of setting up a republic, and expressing his adherence to the constitutional principles of the Revolution of 1688. He, however, owned, at the same time, with a manly courage, that he felt that corruptions had crept in, which every patriotic Briton desired to see amended.

" This last remark," says the poet, " gave great offence, and one of our supervisors general, a Mr. Corbet, was instructed to inquire on the spot, and to document me,—that my business *was to act, not to think*, and that whatever might be men or measures, it was for me *to be silent and obedient.*" Rightly did a nobleman of the very administration under which such things were done, remark upon the poet's judges, " they are as absurd as they are cruel." Burns was " partly forgiven," but henceforward, all his hopes of advancement were blasted, and consequently, from that time, may, we think, be dated that downward course, which resulted in his destruction. This point of his history has a significant moral. It teaches us how heartless and selfish is the treatment measured out to the

benefactors of mankind, by those who are entrusted with the dispensation of public patronage,—and that when bestowed, it is only to those who will render a blind obedience to despotism. It should teach every man of genius to keep aloof from the seductions of government patronage.

The irregularities of Burns were great, though they have probably been exaggerated. Findlater, a brother officer, says he was exemplary in his attention to his duties, until disease and accumulated infirmity came upon him, and that, whilst seeing more of him than any other person, he “never beheld anything like the gross enormities with which he was charged, after his death.”

In midsummer, 1794, Burns removed to Milehole Brae, since called Burns Street, in Dumfries, where he leased a plain and humble, but commodious house. The street stands near the bleaching or parade ground on the river-side, a favorite walk with the citizens of Dumfries. Here he was often seen, within the open door, reading among his children, with his wife moving about, arranging matters connected with the details of her household. Darker and darker now grew the scene, for the last enemy was approaching. An excruciating rheumatism reduced him to a deplorable state. The excise then only allowed him half pay, as was customary ; and when he petitioned the Board for an increase of his salary, saying, “if they do not grant it, I must die, not of disease, but I must perish with hunger,” it was still refused.

Many of his happiest songs had been written as contributions to Thomson’s “Collection of Original

Scottish Airs," and at an early period of the acquaintance of the two men, Burns had almost quarrelled with his friend for sending him five pounds, remarking, in the honest enthusiasm with which he engaged in the work, it would be prostitution of soul to talk of money, &c.

He was now, however, obliged to write in a different strain. On the 12th of July, Thomson received from him a letter, in which he says, "After all my boasted independence, stern necessity compels me to implore you for five pounds; a cruel haberdasher, to whom I owe an account, taking it into his head *that I am dying*, has commenced a process, and will infallibly put me in gaol. Do, for God's sake, send me that sum, and that by return of post. Forgive me this earnestness; but the horrors of a gaol have made me half distracted. I do not ask all this gratuitously, for upon returning health, I hereby promise and engage to furnish you with five pounds' worth of the neatest song-genius you have seen."

Of course, Burns received the money he desired, but no health returned to enable the high-spirited man to keep this voluntary pledge. He repaired to the Solway, where sea bathing relieved for a time the pains in the limbs, but his appetite failed, and melancholy preyed on his spirits. He grew feverish on the 14th of July, 1796, and desired to be conducted home. He returned on the 18th, and the news soon spread through the town that he was dying. "Who do you think will be our poet now?" inquired, with much simplicity, one of the numerous persons congregated in knots about the street. His wit and

good humor broke out in some of his last recorded sayings. To Gibson, a brother volunteer, who sat by the bedside in tears, he said, smiling, "John, don't let the awkward squad fire over me."

To Burns, woman was indebted for the thousand charming things he has said and sung of the sex,—to woman was he, in return, indebted, during the last few days of his life, for an alleviation of his pains and anxieties. With all the poet's admirers, let the name of Jessy Lewars be held in affectionate esteem and honor, for she it was, who,—when Mrs. Burns was in hourly expectation of her confinement, and the poet's children, in their youth and helplessness, required, instead of being able to render, sympathy and support,—acted with the prudence of a sister and the tenderness of a daughter, and kept desolation away, though she could not keep disease.

It was on the fourth day after his return from the Solway, that his attendant held a cordial to his lips: the poet swallowed it eagerly, instantly rose almost upright in the bed, extended his hands, sprang forward nearly his whole length, and died! He was but in his thirty-seventh year. He was buried on the 25th, with the military honors he had deprecated; Mrs. Burns giving birth, almost at the same hour, to a son, who lived but a short time. The old kirkyard of Dumfries was the poet's burial-place. On the 5th of June, 1815, the grave was opened to remove the body to a more commodious place. The coffin was partly destroyed, but the dark and curly locks looked as fresh and glossy as ever. A showy mausoleum,

with a Latin inscription, now marks out to the pilgrims who daily visit the place, the spot where the poet lies buried.

Thus lived and died Robert Burns, the first of Scottish poets. "He seems to have been created,"—says Allan Cunningham, to whom we are chiefly indebted for our narrative,—"to show how little classic lore is required for the happiest flights of the muse—how dangerous to domestic peace are burning passions and touchy sensibilities; and how divinely a man may be inspired, without gaining bread, or acquiring importance, in the land his genius adorns."

Burns in his youth was tall and sinewy, with coarse, swarthy features, and a ready word of wit or kindness for all. The man differed little from the lad; his form was vigorous, his limbs shapely, his knees firmly knit, his arms muscular and round, his hands large, his fingers long, and he stood five feet ten inches high. All his movements were unconstrained and free; he had a slight stoop of the neck, betokening a holder of the plough; and a lock or so of his dark, waving hair was tied carelessly behind, with two casts of narrow black ribbon.

His looks beamed with genius and intelligence; his forehead was broad and clear, shaded by raven locks inclining to curl; his cheeks were furrowed more with anxiety than time; his nose was short rather than long; his mouth firm and manly; his teeth white and regular; and there was a dimple, a small one, on his chin. His eyes were large, dark and lustrous; they have often been likened to coach-lamps approaching in a dark night, because they

were the first feature of the poet that was remarked. "I never saw," said Scott, "such another eye in a human head, though I have seen the most distinguished men of my time."

In his ordinary moods, Burns looked a man of a hundred ; but when animated in company, he was a man of a million : his swarthy features glowed, his eyes kindled up till they all but lightened ; his ploughman stoop vanished ; and his voice, deep, manly and musical, added its sorcery of pathos or of wit, till the dullest owned the enchantments of genius.

His personal strength was united to great activity ; he could move a twenty-stone sack of meal without much apparent effort, and load a cart with bags of corn in the time, one of the neighbors said, that other men were talking about it. A mason was hewing him a stone for a cheese-press, and Burns took pleasure, as a side was squared, in turning over the huge mass unaided. A large pebble is still pointed out at Ellisland, as his *putting* stone ; and although no living man in Ellisland can poise it in the air, the tradition proves the popular belief in his strength. He delighted in feats of rural activity and strength ; he loved to draw the straightest furrow in the fields ; to sow the largest quantity of seed-corn of any farmer of the dale, in a day ; mow the most rye, grass and clover in ten hours of exertion, and stock to the greatest number of reapers.

In this, he sometimes met with his match : after a hard strife, on one occasion, in the harvest-field, with a fellow-husbandman, in which the poet was equalled, " Robert," said his rival, " I'm no sae far behind this

time, I'm thinking ?" "John," said he, in a whisper, "you're behind in something yet,—I made a song while I was stocking!"

In the company of men of talent, he was another man; he was then among his peers, and listened with attention, and spoke with a modest eloquence which surprised many. "I think Burns," said Robertson, the historian, "was one of the most extraordinary men I ever met with. His poetry surprised me very much; his prose surprised me still more; and his conversation surprised me more than both his poetry and prose." "His address," says Robert Riddle, "was pleasing; he was neither forward nor embarrassed in his manner; his spirits were generally high; and his conversation animated. His language was fluent, frequently fine; his enunciation always rapid; his ideas clear and vigorous, and he had the rare power of modulating his peculiarly fine voice, so as to harmonize with whatever subject he touched upon. I have heard him talk with astonishing rapidity, nor miss the articulation of a single syllable; elevate and depress his voice as the topic seemed to require; and sometimes, when the subject was pathetic, he would prolong the words in the most impressive and affecting manner, indicative of the deep sensibility which inspired him. He often lamented to me that fortune had not placed him at the bar, or the senate; he had great ambition, and the feeling that he could not gratify it, preyed on him severely."

In the morning of life, Burns met lords with awe and embarrassment; in the afternoon of existence, he encountered them with suspicion and scorn.

Those who named a lord, or alluded to a person of rank in his company, were instantly crushed in an epigram, or insulted by some sarcastic sally. The conduct of the Scottish aristocracy had sunk to his heart, and the neglect of the Pitt administration was seldom away from his fancy. The more he saw of the world, and the more he reflected, the more these unwelcome thoughts pressed upon him. He could not but know that the high-born and well connected prospered ; that thousands less worthy than himself were fattening on posts and pensions, and elbowing the sons of genius out of what he regarded as their patrimony. He had also been made to feel his dependence in that insulting mandate from the Board of Excise, that his duty was "*to act, not to think.*"

Burns was not a silent, solitary tippler ; he loved the excitement of company, and to see the bottle circulate was a source of pleasurable excitement. When he had begun to drink, he knew not when to retire. Good fellowship was as a spell upon him. His own heart, always too open, was then laid bare. He watched the characters of men ; he gladdened the clever by the sallies of his fancy, stimulated the dull by his wit, and imagined that he was strengthening the cords of friendship, and

"That the bands grew the tighter the more they were wet."

No doubt, later in life, he desired to escape from uneasy reflections, from dwelling upon ruined hopes and humbled ambition ; and seeking consolation in company, took an angel of darkness to his heart instead of an angel of light. "I am assured," says Mrs. Haugh, who knew him to the last, "that Burns drank

from circumstances, rather than inclination. An angel from heaven could scarcely have escaped corruption in his situation ; he was constantly invited, nay, even dragged into company. My husband, now and then, as he went out by daylight in the morning to his work, met Burns coming home. The poet never passed him without a word or two expressing his sorrow for the life he was leading, such as, ‘ Oh, Mr. Haugh, you are a happy man ; you have risen from a refreshing sleep, and have left a kind wife and children ; while I am returning a poor, self-condemned wretch to mine.’ ”

At whatever hour he came home, or in whatever condition he returned, he always spoke kindly to his wife ; reproachful words were never heard between them. He was a steadfast friend and a good neighbor, ready with his hands and willing to oblige ; while he lived in Ellisland, few passed his door without being cheered by his wit or treated at his table.

Of his modes of study and habits of life, much has been said, but something more can still be added. He has told us how he delighted in the rushing of the storm through the leafless woods ; how he rejoiced in the outgushing of the flowers in spring ; in the song of the birds, and the melody of the rushing waters. In stormy nights, he has been known to rise from good company and a well-furnished table to gaze on the tumultuous clouds, mark the vivid lightning, and hearken to the pealing thunder. It was near the banks of the “ Nith’s winding river,” that he composed the finest of his songs.

As soon as he was heard to hum to himself, his

wife saw that he had something in his mind, and was quite prepared to see him snatch up his hat, and set off for his musing ground. When by himself and in the open air, his ideas arranged themselves in their natural order, words came at will, and he seldom returned without having finished a song. In case of interruption, he set about completing it at the fire-side ; he balanced himself on the hind legs of his arm-chair, and, rocking to and fro, continued to hum the tune, and seldom failed of success.

When the verses were finished, he passed them through the ordeal of Mrs. Burns's voice ; listened attentively while she sung ; asked her if any of the words were difficult, and when one happened to be too rough, he readily found smoother,—but he never, save at the resolute entreaty of a scientific musician, sacrificed sense to sound. The autumn was his favorite season, and the twilight his favorite hour of study. *

His duties in the excise he performed with strict punctuality ; he was afraid of being reckoned negligent, and was always at his post. He kept his books in excellent order. “ Bring me Burns's books,” said Maxwell, a rigid and determined magistrate ; “ it always does me good to see them—they show me that a warm-hearted man may be a diligent and honest officer.”

He was not a bustling, active gauger, nor did he love to put himself foremost in adventures which he knew would end in distress to many. One clear moonlight morning, on being awakened by the clang of horses at a gallop, he started up, looked out at the

window, and to his wife, who asked eagerly what it was, he whispered, "It is smugglers, Jean." "Robert, then I fear ye 'll be to follow them?" she said. "And so I would," he answered, "were it Will Gunnion or Edgar Wright; but it's poor Brandyburn, who has a wife and three weans, and is no doing owre weel in his farm. What can I do?" She pulled him from the window. Many anecdotes of this kind are told of Burns.

He called once on a certain lord in Edinburgh, and was shown into his library. To amuse himself till his lordship was at leisure, he took down a volume of Shakspeare, splendidly bound, and on opening it discovered that it had never been read; also, that the worms were eating it through and through. Some dozen years afterwards, another visitor took down the same volume, and found the following lines, pencilled by Burns, on the first page—

"Through and through the inspired leaves,
Ye maggots, make your windings;
But oh! respect his lordship's taste,
And spare his golden bindings."

Burns paid little deference to the artificial distinctions of society. On his way to Leith one morning, he met a man in hoddin-gray, a west country farmer; he shook him earnestly by the hand, and conversed with him some minutes. All this was seen by a young Edinburgh blood, who took the poet roundly to task for this defect of taste. "Why, you fantastic gomeral," said Burns, "it was not the gray coat, the scone bonnet, and the Fanquhar boot-hose I

spoke to, but the man that was in them; and the man, sir, for true worth, would weigh you and me, and ten more such, down any day."

His discernment was great. When Scott was quite a lad, he caught the notice of the poet by naming the author of some verses describing a soldier lying dead in the snow. Burns regarded the future minstrel with sparkling eyes, and said, "Young man, you have begun to consider these things early." He paused on seeing Scott's flushed face, shook him by the hand, saying, in a deep tone, "This boy will be heard of yet!"

The ascendency which Burns acquired over those around him was remarkable. His talent for argument enabled him readily to prostrate his rustic antagonists of Ayrshire, and even those of cultivated powers felt his strength. Before he was known as a poet, he became acquainted with a young clergyman, who tells us the following anecdote. The latter was one day preaching his second sermon, and having mastered his feeling of fear, was proceeding with a tranquil self-assurance, when he chanced to see Burns enter the church. He was instantly seized with terror and embarrassment—and thus became conscious of the impression which the talents of the latter had made upon him.

It would require a large space to enter into a full analysis of the various works of Burns. They are chiefly characterized by their depth of feeling. He has poured out in verse the rushing emotions of his own stormy bosom, and though many are, of course, to be condemned, yet most of them are of a

pure, noble, exalted and exalting nature. There is scarcely a human vice which has not been rendered more odious, or a virtue that has not acquired new charms, by means of his muse. His lines lose no part of their interest or effect, by being usually associated with the history of the poet. The following picture of gratitude, though it be but a return for the kind offices of his patron, the Earl of Glencairn, is probably, for that very reason, more effective.

The bridegroom may forget the bride
 Was made his wedded wife yestreen ;
 The monarch may forget the crown
 That on his head an hour hath been ;
 The mother ~~may forget~~ ^{the} child
 That smiles sae sweetly on her knee ;
 But I 'll remember thee, Glencairn,
 And a' that thou hast done for me !

The following lines, among the most touching that were ever written, also derive a portion of their interest from the association of the poet with the narration they convey.

HIGHLAND MARY.

Ye banks and braes and streams around
 The castle o' Montgomery,
 Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
 Your waters never drumlie !
 There simmer first unfauld her robes,
 And there the langest tarry ;
 For there I took the last farewell
 O' my sweet Highland Mary !

How sweetly bloom'd the gay green birk,
 How rich the hawthorn's blossom ;

As underneath their fragrant shade
 I clasp'd her to my bosom !
 The golden hours on angel wings
 Flew o'er me and my dearie ;
 For dear to me, as light and life,
 Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow, and lock'd embrace,
 Our parting was fu' tender ;
 And pledging aft to meet again,
 We tore oursels asunder ;
 But oh ! fell death's untimely frost,
 That nipt my flower sae early !
 Now green 's the sod, and cauld 's the clay,
 That wraps my Highland Mary.

O pale, pale now those rosy lips,
 I aft hae kissed sae fondly !
 And closed for aye the sparkling glance
 That dwelt on me sae kindly !
 And mouldering now in silent dust
 That heart that lo'ed me dearly !
 But still, within my bosom's core,
 Shall live my Highland Mary !

The topics which Burns selected for the exercise of his poetic talent, were chiefly of a familiar and humble nature ; thus showing that genius relies not upon an elevated subject for its elevation, but may endue whatever it touches with its own sublimity. The following lines, addressed to a pretty but humble little flower, indigenous to Scotland, sufficiently illustrate this proposition.

Drumlie, muddy ; *unfauld*, unfold ; *birk*, birch.

TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY,

ON TURNING ONE DOWN WITH THE PLOUGH.

Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flow'r,
 Thou's met me in an evil hour ;
 For I maun crush amang the stoure
 Thy slender stem ;
 To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
 Thou bonnie gem.

Alas ! its no' thy neebor sweet,
 The bonnie lark, companion meet !
 Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet !
 Wi' spreckled breast,
 When upward-springing, blythe, to greet
 The purpling east !

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
 Upon thy early, humble birth ;
 Yet cheerfully thou glinted forth
 Amid the storm,
 Scarce reared above the parent earth
 Thy tender form.

The flaunting flow'rs our gardens yield
 High shelt'ring woods and wa's maun shield,
 But thou beneath the random bield
 O' clod or stane
 Adorns the histie stibble field,
 Unseen, alone.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
 Thy snawy bosom sunward spread,
 Thou lifts thy unassuming head
 In humble guise ;
 But now the share upturns thy bed,
 And low thou lies !

Stoure, dust ; *neebor*, neighbor ; *weet*, rain ; *glinted*, peeped :
wa's, walls ; *bield*, shelter ; *histie*, dry.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
 On life's rough ocean luckless starr'd!
 Unskilful he to note the card
 Of prudent lore,
 Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
 And whelm him o'er!

Such fate to suffering worth is giv'n,
 Who long with wants and woes has striv'n,
 By human pride or cunning driv'n
 To misery's brink,
 Till wrench'd of every stay but Heav'n
 He ruin'd sink!

The following lines afford another illustration of the admirable power with which Burns could turn a trifling subject to the highest uses of poetry.

TO A MOUSE, ON TURNING UP HER NEST WITH A PLOUGH.

Wee, sleekit, cow'rin', tim'rous beastie,
 O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
 Thou needna' start awa' sae hasty,
 Wi' bickering brattle!
 I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee
 Wi' murdering pettle!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
 Its silly wa's the win's are strewin'!
 An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
 O' foggage green!
 An' bleak December's winds ensuin',
 Baith snell an' keen.

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,

Sleekit, sleek; brattle, hurry; wad, would; laith, loth; rin, run; pettle, plough-staff; wa's, walls; win's, winds; big, build; baith, both; snell, bitter.

An' weary winter comin' fast,
 An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
 Thou thought to dwell,
 Till crash! the cruel coulter past
 Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble
 Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
 Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
 But house or hald,
 To thole the winter's sleety dribble
 An' cranreuch cauld!

But, mousie, thou art no thy lane,
 In proving foresight may be vain;
 The best laid schemes o' mice an' men
 Gang aft a-gley,
 An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain
 For promis'd joy.

Still thou art blest compared wi' me!
 The present only toucheth thee:
 But, och! I backward cast my e'e
 On prospects drear,
 An' forward, tho' I canna see,
 I guess an' fear.

The following verses, adapted to one of the best of Scotland's national airs, presents a delightful picture of rustic life,—the aged wife, feeding her still fond affections upon the sweet memories of the past, and deriving cheerfulness, in the frosts of age, from reflections upon the unity of the lot which attends herself and her husband.

Cozie, sung; *mony*, many; *but*, without; *hald*, abiding place; *thole*, suffer; *dribble*, drizzle; *cranreuch*, hoar frost; *lane*, alone; *aft*, often; *a-gley*, wrong.

JOHN ANDERSON.

My Anderson, my jo, John,
 When we were first acquaint,
 Your locks were like the raven,
 Your bonnie brow was brent ;
 But now your brow is bald, John,
 Your locks are like the snaw ;
 But blessings on your frosty pow,
 John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
 We clamb the hill thegither,
 And mony a canty day, John,
 We've had wi' ane anither :
 Now we maun totter down, John,
 But hand in hand we'll go,
 And sleep thegither at the foot,
 John Anderson, my jo.

We might easily multiply quotations, full of beauty and pathos, and there is scarcely any kind of poetry of which we could not furnish admirable specimens. The songs of Burns, however, as they are the most numerous, so they are the best of his varied productions. They are not entirely free from moral defects, but they are less exceptionable than his other works, many of which are disfigured by touches of impurity and grossness. His variety is as remarkable as his excellence. If any one desires humor, he can find it in abundance—for Burns has more of it than any modern poet. If he seeks tenderness, he meets with it on every page; if he loves pathos, he cannot

Brent, smooth; *pow*, head; *thegither*, together; *canty*, cheerful; *ane*, one; *anither*, another; *maun*, must.

read far without finding the tears gathering in his eyes. If he wish them all together, he will find them woven as naturally into one song, as the diversified colors and forms of the blooming meadow, into one landscape.

We may remark that while Burns is one of the greatest of poets, so he is among those who are most extensively read. The leading quality of his poems is their truth, their sincerity. He has no fabulous or fantastic joys or woes: all that he expresses is real. The passion that he has traced, we must feel, from our own sympathies, has glowed in a human bosom. He does not write from hearsay, but from experience. Though his scenes and subjects are humble, they kindle lofty emotions in the soul. Though his dialect is but a rustic jingle, yet it is poured forth with such melody, as to captivate the heart. Here, then, we see the secret of his greatness, as well as his popularity: it is his truth, his simplicity, his harmony.

We cannot close without saying a word of Burns's family. No sooner was he dead, and beyond the reach of the world's scorn or pity,—than, as usual, there was a general burst of sympathy. Happily, this was directed to the benefit of his family. His widow was made comfortable for life, and died, within a few years, at a great age, respected by all who knew her. His sons were provided for, and some are still living, in reputable stations of life. Gilbert, his brother, died recently, having established his family successfully in the world. The life of the poet has been written by able hands—but the best of these memoirs is that of Allen Cunningham, which has been re-

cently issued, with a full collection of his poems. An admirable review of the works of Burns appeared about ten years since, from the pen of Thomas Carlyle. To these two works we are largely indebted, in the compilation of this sketch of the best of Scottish poets.



House in which Burns was born.



EDMUND BURKE.

THIS great statesman and orator was born on the 1st January, 1730. His father, Richard Burke, or Bourke, a Protestant, and son of a gentleman of landed property, in the county of Cork, was an attorney in large practice. His mother was a Miss Neagle, a Catholic lady; and, it appears, great niece of Miss Ellen Neagle, who married Sylvanus Spencer, the eldest son of the poet. Edmund Burke, whose Christian name may have been taken from that of his ancestor, the author of the *Fairy Queen*, was the second of

three sons, who, with a daughter, were all that grew up of a family of fourteen children.

Young Burke, whose health in childhood was very feeble, being sent to live with his grandfather in the county of Cork, was put to a village school, where he remained about five years.

It might almost seem that it was intended he should spend his life in intercourse with the muses, rather than in the turbulent arena of politics ; for he was not only related, as above mentioned, to one of the greatest of England's poets, but his residence at this period was Castle Rooke, near the castle of Kilcolman, where the *Fairy Queen* was written, and in the midst of scenes described in that admirable poem. These made abiding impressions on Burke's mind, and not only served to establish his love of nature, but may have stimulated his powers of fancy, which were among his most remarkable endowments.

On his return to Dublin, he was sent to school there, but in May, 1740, with his two brothers, he was placed at a Quaker seminary at Ballytore, in the county of Kildare. Here, under the care of Abraham Shackleton, a Quaker, and excellent teacher, he spent three years, and laid the foundation of his most valuable mental habits—for he was trained in methodical, patient, thorough study, and probably his after greatness was mainly traceable to this excellent discipline. Such an example is worth more than gold to all young persons who will heed it.

In 1744, Burke entered Trinity College, Dublin, where his attainments in scholarship appear not to have been remarkable. He, however, showed a taste

for poetry : the following extract from a translation of the second of Virgil's Georgics, written when he was sixteen years old, displays great cleverness.

“ Oh, happy swains ! did they know how to prize
The many blessings rural life supplies ;
Where in safe huts, from clattering arms afar,
The pomp of cities, and the din of war,
Indulgent earth, to pay his laboring hand,
Pours in his arms the blessings of the land :
Calm through the valley flows along his life,
He knows no anger, as he knows no strife.
What though no marble portals, rooms of state,
Vomit the cringing torrent from his gate ;
Though no proud purple hang his stately halls,
Nor lives the breathing brass along his walls ;
Though the sheep clothe him without color's aid,
Nor seeks he foreign luxury from trade ;
Yet peace and honesty adorn his days,
With real riches and a life of ease.”

In 1750, he left Dublin for London, and became a student at law at the Temple. This edifice, formerly devoted to the Knights Templars, and afterwards one of the inns of court, was occupied by a large number of students, with whom Burke soon became a favorite. He was alike distinguished by the variety of his acquisitions, the brilliancy of his talents, and his gracious manners. Applying himself more to literature than law, he devoted a good deal of time to writing for the magazines and newspapers, and, it is supposed, derived a considerable share of his support from these sources.

His first avowed publication appeared in 1756 ; this was a pamphlet of 106 octavo pages, entitled “ A Vindication of Natural Society, or a view of the mis-

eries and evils arising to mankind from every species of artificial society ; in a letter to Lord * * * *, by a late noble writer." This work was intended as an apparent imitation of Lord Bolingbroke, but a real satire upon that celebrated author, who died in 1750. Bolingbroke had written several works against the Christian religion, and Burke's design was to apply the same train of reasoning against civilization and the best institutions of society, for the purpose of showing that if Bolingbroke had proved the Christian religion to be unsound, everything sanctioned by time and experience, everything cherished as good, could be proved, by the same arguments, to be unsound also.

X Bolingbroke's style of writing was greatly admired ; yet Burke's, in the imitation, was so fine, that Lord Chesterfield, Bishop Warburton, and others, were taken in by it, supposing it to be a genuine work ! Considering that Burke was but twenty-six years old, and that nothing in Bolingbroke, as a piece of writing, can be found to surpass it in flow and brilliancy of style, it must be regarded as a very remarkable production. It is also interesting, as showing that, thus early, Burke had anchored his mind upon principles which were the guide of his life, and which deserve the serious consideration of every reflecting man.

"The writer is satisfied," says he, in a preface which he afterwards wrote to this work, "that a mind which has no sense of its own weakness, of its subordinate rank in the creation, and of the extreme danger of letting the imagination loose upon some subjects, may very plausibly attack everything

—the most venerable and excellent; that it would not be difficult to criticise the creation itself; and that if we were to examine the divine fabrics by our own ideas of reason and fitness, and to use the same method of attack by which some men have assaulted revealed religion, we might, with as good color and as good success, make the wisdom and power of God, in his creation, appear to many no better than foolishness."

This observation, as striking as it is just, seems suited to all ages and countries; but is there not especial reason, at the present day, to give it careful reflection? Are we to throw aside the past; is experience to pass for nothing; is the sanction of ages nothing; is the instinct of veneration to be spurned; and is human reason to break everything in pieces, and subject it to the analysis of its petty crucible, without considering that reason itself demands, as one of its premises, that what has been approved by the slow, steadfast judgment of time, is entitled to our respect—and is not to be overthrown till experience can be cited against it?

A few months after the appearance of this pamphlet, Burke published his "Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful;" which it seems he began when he was only nineteen. Though this work is not now regarded as altogether sound in its main doctrines, yet the views of the author are illustrated by a flood of ingenious, brilliant and profound observations.

By severe application, at this time, Burke brought himself into a state of ill health, and consequently

went to Bath, where he applied to Dr. Nugent, a respectable physician of that place. Here an acquaintance with his daughter commenced, and Burke afterwards married her. In 1755, he had formed the design of coming to America, where some place under the government was offered him ; but this project he abandoned, at the instance of his father, who had already been displeased at his neglect of the legal profession.

Burke appears to have determined about this time to devote his whole strength to politics, and accordingly his studies had this direction. He, however, is supposed to have written a history of America, which was published in 1757 ; and he commenced a history of England, which was only carried to the time of King John. Dodsley, the bookseller, at his suggestion, commenced the publication of the Annual Register, and Burke received one hundred pounds a year for writing the historical articles. In 1761, he went to Ireland as private secretary to W. G. Hamilton, who is celebrated for having made one famous speech, and, as he never equalled it afterwards, he has since been known by the name of *Single-speech* Hamilton.. Burke received three hundred pounds a year in this station, but he soon gave up the place and the pension.

In 1765, he was made private secretary to the Marquis of Rockingham, on the succession of that individual to the office of first Lord of the Treasury, and the premiership of England. In this station Burke declined taking any salary, and afterwards, being returned to parliament, from Wendover, in

Buckinghamshire, he paid, from his own purse, the expenses of his election.

Burke now became the animating spirit of the Rockingham administration. The very first day of his appearance, Jan. 14th, 1766, he entered into the debate, and was complimented by Mr. Pitt. He soon gained an ascendancy over those of his party, and in the question of the American stamp act, induced the ministry to pursue such a course of moderation and conciliation, as for a time to allay the storm that was gathering. When the Rockingham ministry was overthrown, in July, 1766, Burke was called upon to make their defence, which he did with great skill, in his pamphlet, entitled "A short Account of a late Administration."

The parliament being dissolved, Burke was again returned for Wendover, in 1768. The following year he published his "Observations on the State of the Nation," which ran through five editions. Though chiefly directed to the discussion of fugitive topics, this pamphlet was full of profound thought. It predicted some great convulsions in France, arising from the deranged state of the currency—which came twenty years after; and it broached doctrines in commerce and political economy far in advance of his time.

In 1770, his pamphlet entitled "Thoughts on the present Discontents," was published; and is one of the most finished of his productions. In 1771, he was appointed agent for the State of New York, in which capacity he received seven hundred pounds a year. In April, 1774, he delivered his great speech

upon American taxation, in which he took the side of the colonies, and against the ministry. On the dissolution of parliament, the same year, he was returned for Bristol. About this period, he delivered several speeches, of great power and eloquence, some of which he published; these are still regarded as among the richest productions of human wisdom, in the philosophy of statesmanship.

✗ In 1782, he was made a privy counsellor, and paymaster of the forces: this latter office had been regarded as the most lucrative under government, but Burke immediately brought in a bill of reform, by which these excessive emoluments were swept away, and an annual saving to the public of forty-seven thousand pounds sterling was effected. In 1783, he went out of office with the Portland administration, and was never afterwards a member of the government.

✗ For several years Burke had paid great attention to the affairs of the East India Company. That mighty corporation had become possessed of an empire then embracing sixty millions of people. There were few minds of sufficient scope to grasp a subject so vast, and few that had the requisite courage and industry to grapple with the immense mass of details with which it was encumbered. Burke, however, triumphed over all difficulties and discouragements; and such was the conviction of his eminent qualifications for effecting a reform in East Indian affairs, that the government offered to send him thither, at the head of a commission, having that object in charge. This offer he declined.

In 1786, he commenced a Herculean task, in the prosecution of Warren Hastings, late governor-general of India, for malversation in office, the charges of which fill two printed octavo volumes! The impeachment was tried before the House of Lords, and began in Feb., 1788. The scene was very imposing. The king, with the prelates and peers of parliament, sat on the judgment seat. The Commons stood at the bar, with Burke at their head, whom they had chosen to guide the prosecution. All the great functionaries of government were present, in their insignia of office. The accused had been governor of sixty millions of people, and of a territory as large as Europe.

All the preliminary proceedings having been gone through, Burke arose, and said—"I stand forth at the command of the Commons of Great Britain, as the accuser of Warren Hastings." He then paused about a minute, during which the feeling of suspense was almost sublime. At last he proceeded, and by a flood of the most thrilling and electrifying eloquence, seemed to sweep everything before him. In describing the atrocities perpetrated by Debi Sing, said to be an agent of Hastings, he drew such a picture as wrought up the audience to a point bordering on frenzy. Several ladies shrieked, and others fainted, from irrepressible excitement, and among the latter was the celebrated Mrs. Siddons. Hastings himself, in speaking of it afterwards, said that he was so overborne by the power of the orator, as to feel that he was the most guilty of men. As a relief to all parties, the prince of Wales, afterwards George IV., moved an adjournment.

The irresistible dominion of oratory was perhaps never more triumphantly displayed. Had the question been speedily taken, Hastings could not have escaped; but the final proceedings were not had until eight years after, when he was acquitted—not from proof of innocence of the charges against him—but from a feeling that the careful, just, and exemplary conduct, required of a public officer at home, was not to be exacted of a governor of British India!

Scarcely had Burke's labors in this field been closed, when another great subject arrested his attention. The French Revolution had commenced. It rose to the vision like a cloud, in which there was tempest, thunder, lightning, and earthquake! All saw the convulsion; yet few could tell its meaning—its causes, its character, its end. Burke looked on the fearful phenomenon, and was one of the very few that could estimate it. He saw that it was a spirit of destruction, wrestling against the established institutions of human society. He was himself a conservative; he believed "that in many counsellors there is safety;" that the sanctions of ages are the admonitions of wisdom; and therefore what he found to be approved by time, he would not condemn, till experience itself cried out against it, and pointed the way to improvement. These, as we have before shown, were the settled convictions of his mind, and therefore he looked upon the French Revolution with fear and trembling. As if inspired with the gift of prophecy, he had foreseen its coming; and when it came, he foretold its horrors. In 1790, he published his "Observations on the Revolution in France," embracing these views.

No political work has ever produced so great a sensation as this; thirty thousand copies were sold before the first demand was satisfied.

The whole proceedings in the cause of Warren Hastings, as we have stated, were not closed for some years. In June, 1794, the thanks of the House of Commons were voted to the managers of the prosecution. Burke was present on this occasion, and it was his last appearance in the great theatre of his efforts, his eloquence and his fame. His son, Richard, succeeded him in the representation of Wendover, but died soon after, August, 1794, aged thirty-six. This severe blow sunk deep into the heart of the parent, and he never again recovered his elasticity of heart. In 1795, he received rich pensions from government, at the express desire of the king. In 1796, he wrote his celebrated "Letter to a noble Earl"—which has been as extensively read and admired as any of his productions.

Burke now generally resided at his house in Beaconsfield, Berkshire, about twenty-three miles from London. Here he spent his time in study, in sustaining an extensive correspondence, and in agricultural pursuits. In the latter he had found great satisfaction, and possessed much practical knowledge. His health sunk by degrees, and he visited Bath in the hopes of recovery. But a fearful change had come over his appearance. He returned to Beaconsfield, seeming to foresee his end. He said in one of his letters, he was going there to die. The very day seemed to be known to him. For several hours before his death, he busied himself in sending messages

of affectionate remembrance to various friends,—expressing his forgiveness of all injuries, and desiring the same in return. How beautiful is this great example! He now reviewed the motives which had guided his life; expressed his anxiety for his country; and, having finished his earthly affairs, he requested one of his attendants to read to him Addison's paper in the Spectator on the immortality of the soul. In a few minutes after, he died, July 9th, 1797. He was buried in Beaconsfield church-yard. His wife died in 1802.

In private life, Burke was exceedingly amiable; his charities were numerous, and many of his acts display the most kind and generous feelings. His treatment of Crabbe, the poet, is a brilliant chapter in his life. This excellent poet, having borrowed five pounds of a friend, had come to London as a literary adventurer. His stock of money being expended, he was reduced to a state of great distress. He applied for help to Lord North, Lord Shelburne and Lord Thurlow; but in vain. At last, having been threatened with arrest, he applied to Burke, in a letter written with great simplicity, dignity and pathos. "The night after I delivered my letter at his door," said he to Mr. Lockhart some years after, "I was in such a state of agitation, that I walked Westminster bridge, backward and forward, till daylight."

With true Irish heartiness Burke received the poet, looked over his compositions, and induced Dodsley to publish them. He also assisted him with money, gave him a room at Beaconsfield, introduced him to Fox, Reynolds and others, and effectually aided him in obtaining advancement in the church. How few

great men, and especially those who have been addicted to politics, have exhibited either the humanity or sagacity displayed by Burke in this instance.

In his marriage, Burke was fortunate. He used to say that "every care vanished the moment he entered his own house." In his domestic relations he was exemplary, and rarely has a man been so much and so deeply beloved by his friends. His conversation was delightful. Perhaps no man ever possessed in an equal degree the power of throwing a flood of light over every subject that was started in familiar discourse. His imagination was rich and glowing; his heart full; his mind stored to abundance; his words choice and flowing. In the club, where Goldsmith, Johnson, and Reynolds were members, Burke was always a leading star. Even the captious old lexicographer seems to have regarded Burke's conversation as surpassing in beauty, richness and grace, that of all others.

The superiority of this great man is, however, chiefly conspicuous in his works. His oratory was defective, and his manner, though forcible, inelegant. He was, also, too much addicted to refining and amplifying; to the introduction of collateral associations and trains of thought, to be immediately effective, in the degree which the real force, wisdom and philosophy of his speeches might otherwise have caused. It is chiefly for the inexhaustible storehouse of deep thought, rich illustration, and profound wisdom touching the great science of government, embodied and preserved in his works, that the debt of gratitude is due to the memory of Edmund Burke.

It is impossible that any one who leads an active life, and produces effects, however good and great they may be, should pass through life without real or imputed wrong. Burke has been accused of venality ; of shaping his course for office, pension and pay ; of deserting his party, and turning his back upon his principles. We need not now enter into a discussion of these points ; for as the mists have subsided that arose from the arena in which he was an actor, the character of Burke has been cleared of these imputations. We may now regard him as a great intellect, allied to a great soul. How noble—how rare a union !

We should hardly do justice to the reader did we not place before him the lines of Goldsmith, which, although written in a sportive mood, contain a masterly delineation of Burke's character, beneath a satirical mask.

“Here lies our good Edmund, whose genius was such,
We scarcely can praise it or blame it too much ;
Who, born for the universe, narrowed his mind,
And to party gave up what was meant for mankind.
Though fraught with all learning, yet straining his throat
To persuade Tommy Townshend to lend him a vote ;
Who, too deep for his hearers, still went on refining,
And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining :
Though equal to all things, for all things unfit ;
Too nice for a statesman, too proud for a wit ;
For a patriot too cold ; for a drudge disobedient ;
And too fond of the right to pursue the expedient ;
In short, 't was his fate, unemployed or in place, sir,
To eat mutton cold, and cut blocks with a razor.”

A short time previous to his death, Burke expressed the hope that only a simple stone, with a brief inscrip-

tion, should mark his burial-place; and accordingly the following memorial is found upon a tablet, at the church where he reposes:

"Near this place lies interred all that was mortal of the Right Honorable Edmund Burke, who died on the 9th of July, 1797, aged sixty-eight years."



Warren Hastings.

SAMUEL JOHNSON.

THIS extraordinary man was born at Lichfield, in England, September 18, 1709. His father, Michael Johnson, was a bookseller, in humble circumstances, of strong and active mind, but deeply afflicted with constitutional melancholy. He was a man of some education and strict piety. His wife, Sarah Ford, was a woman of good natural sense, but extremely illiterate.

Johnson's wonderful memory appears to have displayed itself in early life. When he was a child in petticoats, and had but just learnt to read, his mother, one morning, put the common prayer-book into his hand, pointed to the collect for the day, and said, "Sam, you must get this by heart." She went up stairs, leaving him to study it; but by the time she had reached the second floor, she heard him following her. "What's the matter?" said she. "I can say it," he replied, and repeated it distinctly, though he could not have read it more than twice.

There is an anecdote of his precocity, which is quite amusing. It is said that when a child of three years old, he chanced to tread upon a duckling, the eleventh

SAMUEL JOHNSON.



Born Sept. 18, 1709; died Dec. 13, 1784.

of a brood, and killed it: upon which he composed the following epitaph:

Here lies good Master Duck,
Whom Samuel Johnson trod on;
If it had lived, it had been good luck,
For then we 'd had an odd one.

There is, however, good reason to believe that this story is not well founded.

Young Johnson was much afflicted with the scrofula, or king's evil, which disfigured his face, and rendered his eye-sight so imperfect, that he could see with difficulty. In infancy he was almost blind, and as the notion then prevailed that the royal touch could remove this disease, his mother took him to London, in 1712, where he was actually touched by Queen Anne. It is needless to add that it was of no avail.

Although Johnson was then but thirty months old, he was able, at an advanced age, to recollect the particulars of the journey to London, and his being in the presence of the queen. He remembered her as "a lady in diamonds, with a long black hood." He said that his mother bought him a small silver cup and spoon, marked Sam. J. She bought him also a speckled linen frock, which he knew afterwards by the name of his London frock. The cup was one of the last pieces of plate his wife sold, in the distressing poverty to which they were at one time reduced. The spoon was kept by Johnson till his death. His mother bought, at the same time, two teaspoons, and until Johnson's manhood, she had no other. These

particulars Johnson related from memory, when near seventy years of age.

He was first taught to read by Dame Oliver, a widow, who kept a school for young children, at Lichfield. When he was, some years afterwards, going to the University of Oxford, the good woman brought him a present of gingerbread, and told him he was the best scholar she ever had. His next instructor was Thomas Brown, who published a spelling-book, and dedicated it to the Universe !

He began his studies in Latin at the Lichfield school, where he made great progress. He seemed to learn by intuition, and, though naturally indolent, when he made an exertion, it was with great effect. He soon acquired an authority over his companions, which was singularly manifested. Though he was very fat and heavy, three of his friends used frequently to come to his house, and carry him to school, one taking him on his back, and the others giving a lift at each leg. His memory, at this period, was so retentive, that, on one occasion, his master having recited eighteen verses, Johnson immediately repeated them, without missing a word, and only changing an epithet, by which he improved the line.

He never joined with the other boys in their ordinary diversions. One of his few amusements was to be drawn along upon the ice by a boy who was barefoot. His defective eye-sight, indeed, prevented him from enjoying the common sports of youth. He was accustomed to saunter away many of his hours in the fields, during vacation, frequently talking to himself. He was also addicted to the reading of romances,

which he afterwards regretted, believing it to have given him an unsettled turn of mind.

At the age of fifteen, Johnson was removed to a school at Sturbridge, where he continued a little more than a year, and then returned home. Here he remained two years without any definite plan of life, but rambling over a vast extent of miscellaneous literature. It seems probable that he also paid some attention to his father's trade, for he was heard to remark, in after life, that he was able to bind a book.

In October, 1728, Johnson was entered at Pembroke College, Oxford, having been encouraged to expect aid from Mr. Corbett, in consideration of his being an assistant and companion to his son, who was then in the college. These hopes were disappointed in the main, and though Johnson distinguished himself by his extraordinary powers and acquirements, he was obliged, after two years, to leave the college, for the want of means to pay his way.

It was about this period that the constitutional melancholy which clouded his life, began, in a painful degree, to oppress his spirits. During one of his college vacations he was affected with such terrible gloom, as to drive him almost to despair. It continued for a considerable period, and finding no relief, he wrote a statement of his case in Latin, and gave it to a physician, his godfather, asking his professional advice. The doctor was greatly amazed at the beauty of the composition, as well as the acuteness of the statement.

From his malady, however, the sufferer only obtained partial relief. Yet it seems that at college he

was a general favorite ; and while his own heart was secretly torn with a sense of his poverty ; while difficulties and troubles clouded the future as well as the present—and the shadowy horrors suggested by a hypochondriac fancy hung over him—he was esteemed a gay, hearty, and cheerful fellow by his mates ! When Johnson was told of this afterwards, he explained it by saying, “ Ah ! sir, I was mad, and violent ; it was bitterness which they mistook for frolic. I was miserably poor, and thought to fight my way by my wit and my literature. So I disregarded all power and all authority.”

Johnson had in Christ Church College an intimate friend, named Taylor, who attended the lectures of Mr. Bateman, a professor of great eminence. In order to obtain the substance of these lectures at second hand, Johnson used to pay frequent visits to his friend Taylor. After a while, his shoes being worn out, so that his toes protruded from them, and being unable to buy others, on account of his extreme poverty, he remarked that the youth of Christ Church, who were generally the sons of the rich, noticed his humiliating condition ; he therefore desisted from further visits to Taylor. About this time some kind friend sent him a pair of shoes, which were set at his door,—but his pride revolted, and he threw them away with indignation.

Finding it impossible to meet his expenses, Johnson left Oxford, in 1730, and the year following, his father died, in a state of extreme poverty. Soon afterwards, he was glad to accept a place as usher of a school at Market-Bosworth, whither he went on

foot. But he found the situation intolerable from its drudgery, and in a short time he left it, and took up his residence at Birmingham. Here he was employed by Warren, a bookseller, in various kinds of literary labor, and at last he translated from the French a voyage to Abyssinia. This was published by Warren, and was Dr. Johnson's first book. He obtained five guineas as his reward !

Notwithstanding the eccentric marriage of Johnson to a woman of twice his years, at a subsequent period, he is said, at the age of which we are speaking, by no means to have been insensible to the charms of female beauty. When at Sturbridge school, he was greatly enamored of Miss Olivia Lloyd, a young Quakeress, and among the complimentary verses he wrote about this time, are the following

VERSES TO A LADY,
ON RECEIVING FROM HER A SPRIG OF MYRTLE.

What hopes, what terrors does thy gift create—
Ambiguous emblem of uncertain fate !
The myrtle, ensign of supreme command,
Consigned by Venus to Melissa's hand,
Not less capricious than a reigning fair,
Now grants and now rejects a lover's prayer.
In myrtle shades oft sings a happy swain,
In myrtle shades despairing ghosts complain.
The myrtle crowns the happy lover's head,
The unhappy lover's grave the myrtles spread.
Oh ! then the meaning of thy gift impart,
And ease the throbings of this anxious heart!
Soon must this bough, as you shall fix his doom,
Adorn Philander's head, or grace his tomb.

While Johnson was living in Birmingham, he be-

came intimate in the family of a silk dealer, by the name of Porter. This man soon died, and Johnson became enamored of his widow, though she was above fifty, and he but twenty-seven years of age. At this period, Johnson was a most ungainly figure,—lean and lank, seeming to be only a huge skeleton of bones, moving about in the most awkward and ungainly manner. However, the widow accepted Johnson's addresses, and he went to his mother to get her consent to the match. She pointed out to her son the disparity of years, and the apparent folly of such a union, but yet offered no positive opposition.

It was agreed that the couple should be married at Derby, a distance of nearly forty miles, and they set out on horseback for that purpose. It was a singular journey, according to Johnson's own account. "Sir," said he, speaking of the occasion to Boswell, "my wife had read the old romances, and had got into her head the fantastical notion that a woman of spirit should treat her lover like a dog; so at first she told me that I rode too fast, and she could not keep up with me—and when I rode a little slower, she passed me, and complained that I lagged behind. I was not to be made the slave of caprice, and I resolved to begin, as I meant to end. I therefore pushed on briskly, till I was fairly out of her sight. The road lay between two hedges, so I was sure she could not go amiss; and I contrived that she should soon come up with me. When she did, I observed her to be in tears."

Notwithstanding this beginning, Johnson and his wife lived happily together. His affection for her seems, indeed, to have been deep and lasting. She

had property to the amount of eight hundred pounds, which may have been one inducement to the match, but he was, nevertheless, a most fond and indulgent husband. After she had been dead nearly twenty years, his diary shows that he still remembered her with the most lively and fond attachment. "I have less pleasure," says he, "in any good that befalls me, because she does not partake of it. On many occasions I think what she would have said or done. When I saw the sea at Brighthelmstone, I wished for her to have seen it with me."

Johnson now set up a private school for boys, at Edial, near Lichfield, for teaching Latin and other languages. His advertisement, however, brought him but three scholars,—David Garrick, the celebrated tragedian, and two others. He did not seem fitted for teaching mere rudiments; and beside, his manners were so odd as to excite the perpetual merriment of his pupils. He had the most uncouth gestures, and in walking, would take one long stride and then a short one; now he would step quick—now slow, and once in a while, he would stop and whirl round. Beside all this, his demeanor to his wife was most eccentric. She was, it must be premised, an extraordinary figure—very fat, with bloated cheeks, reddened by rouge and cordials; in dress, she was truly fantastic, and absurdly affected both in her manners and speech. Still, Johnson was boisterous in his signs of affection, calling his wife by the odd nicknames of Tetty and Tetsey. We cannot be surprised that a troop of boys, with David Garrick at their head, should have found abundant food for ridicule in the manners

of this odd couple. The schoolmaster, of course, failed in securing that respect which is necessary to discipline, and the boarding-school proved abortive.

Johnson having written a part of his tragedy of Irene, was advised to go to London, and produce it on the stage. Doubtless having this in view, he set off, with Garrick for his companion, for the metropolis. Both were in indigent circumstances, though Johnson had a little money. When arrived at London, he took cheap lodgings; at dinner, he "got a cut of meat for sixpence; and bread for a penny, and gave the waiter a penny." Thus Samuel Johnson began his life in London,—a man who soon secured the homage of the greatest minds, and attracted even the monarch to his presence. Let not ambition ever regard poverty as an obstacle to its success!

The next summer Johnson went to Lichfield, where he spent three months, and then returned with his wife, leaving her daughter, Miss Porter, with her friends. At this time, Edward Cave, the bookseller, was publishing the Gentleman's Magazine, a work still continued, and one of the oldest of the kind in the world. Johnson had been much attracted by it, and he said that when he first passed by "St. John's Gate," where it was printed, he looked up at the sign with a feeling of reverence. What young author has not had similar emotions, when first beholding the sanctuaries of literature!

Johnson's tragedy of Irene being finished, he made an unsuccessful attempt to obtain its production at Drury Lane. He now turned his attention to Cave, and soon became a regular contributor to the Gentle-

man's Magazine, from which he derived a tolerable support. The first article of his, inserted in that work, was a Latin poem of five stanzas, entitled "Ad Urbanum,"—Sylvanus Urban being the fictitious title of the editor.

Johnson wrote essays, poems, criticisms, and translations for the magazine; he also composed speeches for the members of parliament, from slight notes that were furnished him, and in many cases without any notes at all, being only informed who had spoken. These attracted great attention, and for a time, their real authorship being kept a secret, many members flourished upon the reputation Johnson's admirable quill thus gave them.

In 1778, his poem of London, an imitation of one of the satires of Juvenal, appeared, and did much to give him reputation. It is but one instance in a thousand to show the difficulty of deciding upon the merit of a literary performance, from an unknown author—that Johnson offered this work to several booksellers, before he could get a publisher; and, at last, obtained for it only ten guineas. It is a curious fact, that he was so timid in respect to it, that he first offered it as the production of another, and humbly proposed to alter any touch of satire that Cave might not approve.

At this period of his life, Johnson felt the natural resentment of a just mind at the state of society he witnessed around him. The wealth and power were in England, as is generally the case in civilized society, mainly in the hands of the selfish and

unscrupulous ; while talent and virtue, unaided by money or patronage, were trodden under foot. His indignation is thus expressed :

"Has Heaven reserved, in pity for the poor,
No pathless waste, or undiscovered shore,
No secret island in the boundless main,
No peaceful desert, yet unclaimed by Spain ?
Quick let us rise, the happy realm explore,
And bear oppression's violence no more!"

Such was the genuine feeling of depressed genius, struggling like volcanic fire to throw off its load ; yet, in a different condition, and enjoying a pension from government of fifteen hundred dollars a year, Johnson was a devoted tory, a zealous supporter of all the acts of the administration, and such a hater of liberty as to set down all republicans as "rascals." It is a lesson in the weakness of human nature, which we must all learn, that, even in the greatest minds, principles are often moulded by the circumstances which bear upon them.

Being weary of his toilsome and precarious mode of getting a living, Johnson was willing to accept an offer to take charge of a school at Appleby ; but it was a rule that the teacher must have the degree of Master of Arts, from some college. An application was therefore made to Oxford for this humble boon ; but the college was as backward in appreciating Johnson's merit as the booksellers. A similar request, backed by Pope, Lord Gower and Dean Swift, to the university of Dublin, was unavailing. If it were worth while to comment upon the dullness and despotism of these

universities, we should still admit that Johnson's fortunes were not thereby injured.

Disappointed in his hopes, however, he drudged on, writing copiously for the magazine, and deriving from it a scanty subsistence. Even this resource appears, at last, to have been insufficient to pay his expenses, and he was obliged to separate from his wife, that she might find support with her friends. At this period, he was reduced to such extremity, that he wandered about the streets all night, with his profligate friend, Richard Savage, neither of them having money enough to procure a lodging. It is generally admitted that, in his intimacy with Savage, Johnson was drawn into some departures from the general course of virtue which marked his life.

In Feb., 1744, Johnson's Life of Savage appeared, and greatly increased his reputation. In 1747, his friend Garrick having established his fame as an actor, and taken a lease of Drury Lane, Johnson wrote for him a prologue for the opening of that theatre, which has been justly celebrated. In the same year he commenced his Dictionary, having engaged to complete it in three years, for the sum of one thousand five hundred and seventy-five pounds, he bearing all the expenses attendant upon its preparation for the press.

He was now fully employed for a series of years. He had a room fitted up in Gough Square, like a counting room, where he had several persons engaged in copying, and whom he kept constantly occupied. Notwithstanding the ceaseless demands of the Dictionary, he produced, at this period, his *Vanity of*

Human Wishes, for which he received fifteen guineas from Dodsley; and in 1749, he commenced the Rambler. The same year his tragedy of Irene was performed at Drury Lane theatre, under the auspices of Garrick, but without decided success.

In 1752, he lost his wife, whom he most sincerely mourned; the event so far affected his spirits, that he relinquished the Rambler. The Dictionary, instead of being finished in three years, extended to eight. Johnson's labors were unceasing, yet he was continually haunted with poverty. All he received for this stupendous work was expended in its progress. In 1756, he was arrested for a debt of five pounds, and only escaped prison by borrowing the money of a friend. In 1759, his aged mother died, and he went down to Lichfield to superintend her funeral. But not having the means to pay the expenses, while his parent lay unburied, he set to work to procure the means of her interment. In a single week he accomplished the task, and the inimitable tale of Rasselas was the result. Who can contemplate the scene without emotion,—Johnson, with the unconscious body of his mother at his side, toiling to procure the few shillings required to consign her to the grave! What must have been the feelings of his ardent and affectionate bosom during these sad and solemn hours!

It was not till 1762 that Johnson was relieved from the poverty which had oppressed him. Though never ready to lend a helping hand to genius in its days of depression, government is forward to purchase its services, when these can confer benefits.

Johnson's great abilities were now known, and in 1762, he received a pension of three hundred pounds a year. His condition was at once changed. He was placed beyond the fear of that grizzly spectre which had ever before pursued him with its horrors; he was delivered from the slough of oppressive toil, and lifted above the shadows of obscurity. His fame was established—his authority in all literary matters was law. He was a member of a club of which Goldsmith, Burke, and Reynolds were members. He was the literary luminary of the age!

In 1763, he was introduced to Boswell, a Scotch gentleman, of a literary turn of mind, and having a habit of laying up every curiosity in his way—as magpies are said to pilfer and lay aside every trifle they meet with. He had a great admiration of Johnson, and from this time, set to work to collect everything the great man said and did. He hung about the doctor like his shadow, and put down on the spot everything of the least cleverness that he uttered. After Johnson's death, Boswell published his life, and consequently we have a more copious account of him, than of any other great man who has ever lived. It is a most curious and instructive work; for Johnson's conversations were full of wit and wisdom, and they are here carefully gathered together. Besides, Boswell has gathered up and introduced into his work, a vast deal of gossip, and thus made us familiarly acquainted not only with Johnson, but with persons and things, in any way associated with him.

The Edinburgh Review, in speaking of Boswell's

life of Johnson, and in illustration of its completeness, and the perfect picture it draws of its subject, says : " Everything about him—his coat, his wig, his figure, his face, his scrofula, his St. Vitus's dance, his rolling walk, his blinking eye, the outward signs which too clearly marked the approbation of his dinner, his insatiable appetite for fish-sauce and veal pie with plums, his inextinguishable thirst for tea, his trick of touching the posts as he walked, his mysterious practice of treasuring up scraps of orange peel, his morning slumbers, his midnight disputations, his contortions, his mutterings, his gruntings, his puffings ; his vigorous, acute and hearty eloquence ; his sarcastic wit, his vehemence, his insolence, his fits of tempestuous rage, his queer inmates, old Mr. Levett, and blind Mrs. Williams, the cat Hodge, and the negro Frank ; all are as familiar to us, as the objects by which we have been surrounded from childhood."

In 1766, his constitution being greatly weakened, he took up his residence with Mr. Thrale,* at Streat-

* Mr. Thrale was a wealthy brewer of London ; his wife was a woman of some cleverness, and Johnson became much attached to her. She was the daughter of John Salisbury, and born 1739. Her good looks and vivacity introduced her into society, and her connection with Johnson has handed her name down to our time. Mr. Thrale died in 1781, and she married a music master by the name of Gabriel Piozzi, in 1784. The match degraded her in the eyes of society—yet she published several works, and among others, *Anecdotes of Dr. Johnson*. She is the author of a celebrated poem entitled the "Three Warnings." She went to Florence, and, in connection with three gentlemen, aided in founding what is called the Della Cruscan school of poetry. She died at Clifton, England, 1821.

ham, where a room was fitted up for his accommodation, and friends were invited to see him from London. His society was much sought after, and even George III. paid him a visit at the library of Buckingham palace, to which he frequently resorted. In 1773, he made a tour to the Hebrides, in company with Boswell. In 1781, he completed his lives of the poets.

In 1783, he was attacked with paralysis, and soon after was swollen with dropsy. His constitutional melancholy, which had haunted him through life, pursued him to his death-bed. His first approach to the grave was with terror. From this, however, he recovered, and as he came nearer his departure, his mind was tranquillized by religious contemplations. On the day of his death, he pierced his legs first with a lancet, and then with scissors, in order to let off the water which had accumulated ; but he bled profusely, soon fell into a doze, and expired. This event occurred on the 13th of December, 1784. A short time before he died, he said to his attendant, Mrs. Sasters, "*Jam moriturus,*" "I am about to die." His last words were uttered to a young friend, Miss Morris—"God bless you, my dear!"

Dr. Johnson was a man of great powers of mind, and the works he has left behind are among the richest stores of English literature. His style of writing was pompous, but suited to the lofty conceptions of his mind. His Dictionary is the most elaborate of his works ; his Rambler the most profound ; his Lives of the Poets the most pleasing : as a single essay, his preface to his edition of Shakspere is equal to anything of the kind ever produced. It was indeed in

criticism that he chiefly excelled, though his captious humor led him generally to disparage all modern productions. His classical conceit induced him, at the same time, to overrate whatever belonged to antiquity. His predilection for the Latin language was one of the scholastic follies common in his days, though exploded now. Johnson's first poems at college were in Latin, and his dying words were in the same tongue. When besought by Burke, Reynolds and others, in the famous "round robin," to change his Latin epitaph on Goldsmith into our own tongue, he replied that nothing would induce him to disgrace Westminster Abbey with an English epitaph. His love of the Latin was so pervading as to lead him to eschew the sinewy Saxon words of our language, and use, as far as possible, those of Latin derivation. From this, his style acquired much of its turgidity.

Dr. Johnson's powers of conversation were the marvel of his age. He had a ready wit, and a happy talent of illustration. Innumerable instances of these may be found in the gossip of Boswell, Mrs. Piozzi, and others. He was, however, dogmatical in his temper, and sometimes excessively rude in his manners. He was humored by the literary men of the day, as if they were dealing with a bear who was not expected to observe a civilized etiquette, and out of the reach of whose huge paws every one must of course be careful to keep.

A pleasant instance in which his rudeness was rebuked by one of our own countrymen, is handed down to us. Samuel Johnson, of Connecticut, a learned and able man, shortly before the revolution, was in

London, as agent of that colony. Being once at dinner where Dr. Johnson was among the guests, the latter, in reply to some remark, turned sharply to our Johnson, saying, "Sir, what do you know in America? you have no books!" "I beg your pardon," was the reply, "we have the Rambler." Dr. Johnson immediately acknowledged the compliment, and his own want of courtesy.

We have spoken of his prodigious memory, but his readiness was equally wonderful. A friend chanced to commend the following line :

"Who rules o'er freemen should himself be free."

"Yes," said Johnson, instantly,

"Who drives fat oxen should himself be fat."

In speaking of some poems to Mrs. Thrale, he characterized them as ridiculous, and to furnish a parallel, immediately ran off the following burlesque lines.

"Hermit hoar, in solemn cell,
Wearing out life's evening gray,
Strike thy bosom, sage, and tell
What is bliss, and which the way?
Thus I spoke, and speaking sighed,
Scarce repressed the starting tear,
When the hoary sage replied,
'Come, my lad, and drink some beer.'"

In speaking of a passage of Lopez de Vega which he thought over praised, he said, "It is a mere play of words; you might as well say,

If the man that turnips cries
Cry not when his father dies,
It is a proof that he had rather
Have a turnip than his father."

Other examples of this kind could be added, almost without number. Of his felicity of illustration, the following are specimens. Speaking of scepticism, he said, "The eyes of the mind are like the eyes of the body, they see only at such a distance; but because they cannot see beyond this point, is there nothing beyond it?" Of memory he said, "In general, a person can remember one thing as well as another; otherwise it would be like a person complaining that he could hold silver in his hand, but could not hold copper." Again, "People are not born with a particular genius for particular employments or studies, for it would be saying that a man could see a great way east, but not west."

Dr. Johnson's character presents a singular mixture of good and evil. He was so credulous as to believe firmly in ghosts—yet his incredulity in some things was a sort of disease. He said himself that he did not believe in the great earthquake of Lisbon, in 1755, for six months after the news was received and its authority established. He was harsh, sneering and merciless with his tongue; yet he was all tenderness to his cat; he gave protection in his own house for years to blind Mrs. Williams; and when he saw poor children lying asleep on the pavement for a bed, he put pennies in their hands to cheer them when they awoke.

He was a man whose bosom was full of opposites—of noble emotions and low prejudices. In religion and politics, he was bigoted, holding most who differed with him in the first, as infidels, and in the last as rascals. During the war with America, he was a stern enemy of our cause. With a vast deal of re-

ligious feeling and ceremonial devotion, he was still constantly beset with doubts, fears and anxieties. He was sometimes seized with such an inward fear of sin, that even in the midst of company he has been known to retire to a corner of the room and pray audibly for grace and assistance. His whole life was dimmed by hypochondriac shadows, and it closed in darkness, save only the sunset beam that illumined his death-bed.



Portrait of Johnson.



JOHN MILTON.

THIS sublime poet was born in Bread Street, Cheapside, London, December 9th, 1608. His father was an eminent scrivener, who gave notoriety to his residence by a sign, representing the armorial bearings of the family—a spread eagle. The greatest care was bestowed upon the education of young Milton, from an early period. After the proper elementary acquirements, he was sent to St. Paul's school, London, and at the age of fifteen, to Christ College, Cam-

bridge. Here he completed his academical education. In the garden of this college is still to be seen a mulberry tree which he planted while a student there.

(Milton was extremely beautiful in his youth, and upon this, an interesting anecdote is founded, though we are obliged to admit that its authority is somewhat questionable. He wandered one day, according to the legend, to a considerable distance into the country, when, feeling himself fatigued, he laid himself down at the foot of a tree, and fell asleep. It chanced that two ladies were passing by in a carriage. They were foreigners, but, attracted by the beauty of Milton's face, they stepped lightly from the carriage and approached him. One of them, struck with his appearance, took out her pencil and wrote the following verse from the Italian poet Guarini :

“ Ye eyes ! ye human stars ! ye authors of my liveliest pangs ! If thus, when shut, ye wound me, what must have been the effect, had ye been open.”

The young lady, who was very beautiful, with trembling fingers, put the paper into Milton's hand, and departed with her companion. When he awoke he noticed the paper, and some of his friends, who were at a little distance, and had witnessed the adventure, explained to him what had happened. The imagination of the youthful poet was greatly excited by the event, which remained in his memory, and in his visit to Italy, long after, he sought with great diligence to discover the fair unknown. All his researches, however, proved abortive.)

After leaving Cambridge, Milton went into Buckinghamshire, where his father, having retired from

business, had purchased an estate at Horton. He now devoted himself to study with great assiduity, and made himself not only master of the Greek and Roman classics, but of a vast field of general literature. It is supposed, also, that during this period he wrote several of his poems, and among them *L' Allegro*, and *Il Penseroso*, two pieces, which are as distinguished for sweetness and beauty, as is his *Paradise Lost* for sublimity. He also wrote at this time the *Arcades*, a dramatic composition, which was performed at Harefield Place, in the vicinity, by the children of the Countess Dowager of Derby, as the actors.

In 1637, Milton's mother died. He now visited Italy, where he spent a considerable period, making himself acquainted with Italian literature and distinguished individuals of the time. Among other persons of eminence, he was introduced to Grotius, at Paris, and Galileo at Padua. Hearing of the political troubles which now began to agitate his country, he returned to England, and took up his residence in London. For a time, he devoted himself to the education of his nephews, the Philips's, on a system of his own formation, in which he rejected the university routine, and sought to give a more vigorous exercise to the thinking faculties.

In 1641, he began his political career by writing several pamphlets upon the agitating topics of the day, which, however, had relation to ecclesiastical matters. In 1643, he married the daughter of a justice of the peace of Oxfordshire, by the name of Powell. This union was at first unhappy, for the lady, about a month after her marriage, having gone home to her

father's on a visit, sent Milton word that she did not intend to return. He accordingly repudiated her, and published several pamphlets to prove his right to set aside the marriage. He also proceeded to pay his addresses to a beautiful young lady of London, when he chanced to meet his wife, unexpectedly, at the house of a relation. She appears, by this time, to have deeply repented her conduct, and she instantly fell upon her knees, and besought him to forgive her. It is supposed that an allusion to this scene is made in *Paradise Lost*, where Eve is praying Adam's forgiveness for the sin into which she had led him:

“ Soon his heart relented
Toward her, his life so late, and sole delight,
Now at his feet submissive in distress.”

He not only forgave her, but when her family was reduced to distress, by the ruin of the royal cause to which they had been attached, he received them,—father, mother, brothers, sisters,—into his house, giving them protection and free entertainment. In order to accommodate so large a household, he was obliged to obtain a much larger house; for his own father was living with him, and the school, which had begun with his nephews, was now considerably increased.

It was about the year 1644, that he published his “Areopagitica, or speech for the liberty of unlicensed printing,” a work of great eloquence and power, and perhaps the best of all his prose productions. His pen was now silent until after the execution of Charles I., in 1648, when he published his tract, entitled,

"The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates, proving that it is lawful to call to account a tyrant or wicked king." Two years previous to this, Milton's wife's father having died, the rest of the family left his house, and he removed to a smaller establishment in Holborn, the rear opening into Lincoln's Inn Fields.

The ability he had displayed in his political tracts had attracted the attention of the council of state of the Commonwealth, and accordingly they gave him the appointment of Latin secretary, it having been determined that all negotiations with foreign nations should be carried on in that language. This was a very appropriate appointment, for Milton wrote Latin with great elegance. An official residence was now provided for him at Scotland Yard, since called Whitehall. His style of living at this period appears to have been suited to his official rank; he was accustomed once a week to entertain, at his table, foreign ministers and persons of learning, especially such as came from Protestant countries.

In 1651, owing to some new arrangements of the public buildings, Milton removed to Petty France, Westminster, now called Queen Square Place. Here he lived, till within a few weeks of the restoration. The celebrated Jeremy Bentham occupied the same place for many years, and was accustomed to point out the garden, to visitors, where Milton used to walk.

In 1653, Milton's first wife died. Three years after, he married again, but he was soon called to follow his second partner to the grave. In one of his sonnets, he speaks of her in the most tender and affectionate terms. The following lines will appear exceed-

ingly touching when it is recollected that at this time he was blind :

“ Methought I saw my late espoused saint,
* * * * *
And such as yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of her in heaven, without restraint,
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind.
Her face was veiled, yet to my fancied sight
Love, sweetness, goodness in her person shin'd
So clear as in no face with more delight.
But oh, as to embrace me she inclin'd
I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night.”

Milton received his appointment previous to Cromwell's assumption of the supreme authority as Protector of the Commonwealth ; and he continued to hold it till after the usurper's death. His reputation as a man of great genius and vast learning was so high, that there was as much curiosity among the strangers who visited London, to see him, as Cromwell himself. He was a favorite with that remarkable man, and also with his weak son and successor, Richard Cromwell.

It was about the year 1654, that Milton lost his eyesight, though he continued to perform the duties of his office several years after. This calamity befell him in consequence of using his eyes imprudently when they were diseased. Being engaged in writing some work, which he earnestly desired to finish, he was warned of the danger by his physician ; but he persevered, and total, irrevocable blindness was the sad result.

Charles II. was restored to the throne of his fathers

in 1660. Milton foresaw the storm, and sought shelter by concealment with a friend in Bartholomew Close. His danger was considered so imminent, that a report of his death was set on foot, and a mock funeral was got up to give effect to the story. As the mouldering bones of Cromwell were dug up from their repose and exposed on a scaffold, to satisfy the poor spite of the king, it was but fit that Milton's works should be publicly burnt by the hangman. This was accordingly done—affording an instance, among many others, to prove that whatever is excellent, must, at some period or other, be the especial object of malignity and abuse.

The act of indemnity soon appeared, and Milton supposed that he was safe ; he was, however, arrested, and only escaped by paying exorbitant fees. He deemed his situation to be so precarious that he lived under the constant expectation of being assassinated. He changed his residence several times about this period, and finally established himself at Artillery Walk, Bunhill Fields.

Having taken a third wife, Milton now devoted himself to literary pursuits. In 1665, while the plague was raging in London, and scattering death on every hand, his friend Ellwood, a Quaker, who sometimes acted as his secretary, hired for him a small house at Chalfont, in Buckinghamshire, whither he retired, till it was safe to return.

One day, Ellwood tells us that he went to Chalfont to visit the poet. While he was there, Milton called for a certain manuscript, and handing it to his friend, requested him to read it and let him know

what he thought of it. When Ellwood set himself down to the perusal, he found it was the *Paradise Lost*. On returning it to Milton, he expressed his approbation, and added—" You have said much of *Paradise Lost*; what canst thou say of *Paradise Found?*" Upon this hint, Milton proceeded to write his *Paradise Regained*, which was completed before he left Chalfont.

Milton returned to London in 1666, and in the awful conflagration of that year, the house in which he was born, and which he had inherited from his father, was burnt. The next year, *Paradise Lost* was published, and the author received fifteen pounds, in instalments, as his compensation !

He continued to reside at Artillery Walk, and here, at this period, he might be seen, in warm and sunny weather, sitting at the door of his house, clad in a coarse gray coat, and enjoying the fresh air. He was visited by many distinguished persons, who came to see and converse with him. His mind had settled into a state of tranquillity ; and with a magnanimity worthy of his exalted genius, forgiving or forgetting his enemies, and superior even to the saddest of earthly calamities, he seemed elevated alike above the passions and accidents of humanity.

He once delighted in walking, and amused himself in botanical pursuits. When confined by blindness, he had a machine to swing in, that he might obtain exercise. In summer, he remained in bed from nine in the evening till four in the morning ; if he were not then disposed to rise, he had some one at his bedside to read to him.

When he first rose in the morning, he heard a chapter in the Hebrew Bible, and commonly studied till twelve ; he then used exercise an hour, then dined, and afterwards played on the organ or bass viol, and either sung himself or made his wife sing. He was exceedingly devoted to music, and no poet has celebrated its charms so frequently and in such delightful strains. After his musical relaxation, he studied till six ; then entertained his visitors till eight ; then took a light supper, and after a pipe of tobacco and a glass of water, he retired to rest.

On Sunday, the 8th day of Nov., 1674, the great poet died. So serene was his departure, that the attendants in the room at the time were unaware of the precise moment. He was buried next his father in the chancel of Cripplegate Church. A monument, by Bacon, was afterwards erected to his memory, and placed in the middle aisle of that edifice.

The person of Milton was fair, so that he was called, at Cambridge, the lady of Christ college ; his hair was light brown, and his features exact and pleasing. He was of the middle size, well proportioned, nervous and active ; but his constitution was tender, and his health consequently weak. In his mode of living he was economical, abstemious, and averse to strong liquors. Though he did not inherit much from his father, yet frugality maintained him in a respectable manner, and at his death he left about fifteen hundred pounds, besides the value of his household goods. He had no children, except by the first of his three wives. Three daughters survived him ; and of these the two youngest were employed

in reading to him ; and though they could read with ease eight different languages, yet they understood nothing but English ; as their father used to say that one tongue was enough for a woman.

In his religious opinions, Milton has been charged with inconsistency. In his early years, he favored the Puritans ; afterwards he inclined to the tenets of the Independents and Ana-baptists, whose liberty of worship he greatly admired ; but in the latter part of life, he professed no attachment to any particular sect. His character and conduct, in this respect, are happily set forth in the following passage from an eminent writer :

“ Milton did not strictly belong to any of the classes which we have described. He was not a Puritan ; he was not a free-thinker ; he was not a cavalier. In his character, the noblest qualities of every party were combined in harmonious union. From the parliament and from the court, from the conventicle and from the Gothic cloister, from the gloomy and sepulchral circles of the round-heads, and from the Christmas revel of the hospitable cavaliers, his nature selected and drew to itself whatever was great and good—while it rejected all the base and pernicious ingredients by which these fine elements were defiled. Like the Puritans, he lived ‘as ever in his great Taskmaster’s eye.’ Like them, he kept his mind continually fixed on an Almighty Judge and an eternal reward. And hence he acquired their contempt of external circumstances, their fortitude, their tranquillity, their inflexible resolution ; but he was free from the contagion of their partial delusions, their savage

measures, their ludicrous jargon, their scorn of science, their aversion to pleasure. Hating tyranny with a perfect hatred, he had, nevertheless, all the estimable and ornamental qualities which were almost entirely monopolized by the party of the tyrant."

It is a curious fact that Milton esteemed the *Paradise Regained* as preferable to the *Paradise Lost*; and it is equally strange that, for almost a century after his death, his poetical merit was not understood even in England. He was a republican in politics, and, perhaps, carried his views to extremes; he had assailed the Church of England with great bitterness; he was also excessively severe—sometimes abusive—in his controversial writings. He had sustained Cromwell, denounced King Charles, and vindicated his execution. It was long before the people of England could consider the poet, as distinct from the politician; and it was not till Addison, in the *Spectator*, did justice to his transcendent genius, that the British nation were aware that in John Milton they could boast the most sublime poet the world has produced. From that time, *Paradise Lost* has taken its rank as the highest effort of the human imagination.

Though it is chiefly in respect to the sublimity and grandeur of his thoughts, and the unflagging vigor with which he sustains his lofty flight, that Milton excels other poets, yet his versification is exquisitely musical; and no poet has excelled, even in tenderness, some of his lighter pieces. His poetry is less popular than that of many others, for it is highly embellished with learned allusions,—a circumstance

which commends it to scholars, but necessarily narrows its circulation.

Milton's prose writings are hardly less remarkable than his poetry; they are alike wonderful for their vigor of thought and their rhetorical beauty—for vastness of intellectual vision, and musical flow of language. His political writings had a prodigious effect during his lifetime, and they must be regarded as among the most effective means by which the high pretensions of prelacy and royal prerogative have been made to give way to more just views of religious and civil liberty. They are still a store-house from which ample treasures of truth and wisdom may be gathered, if the winnowing process be applied, under the guidance of a sound discretion.

In 1823, a manuscript work, in Latin, upon "Christian Doctrine," was discovered among the papers of the state department, in London. It was found to be an unpublished work of Milton's, and was soon after, for the first time, given to the public. It furnished occasion for several reviews, among which two essays, of wonderful beauty and power, upon the character and works of Milton, appeared—one by Dr. Channing, of Boston, and another by Mr. Macaulay, of London. We give two extracts, the first from the essay of Dr. Channing, the other from that of Macaulay.

"His name"—says Dr. Channing—"is identified with sublimity. He is in truth the sublimest of men.) He rises, not by effort or discipline, but by a native tendency and a godlike instinct, to the contemplation of objects of grandeur and awfulness. He always

moves with a conscious energy. There is no object so vast or terrific as to repel or intimidate him. The overpowering grandeur of a theme kindles and attracts him. He enters on the description of the infernal regions with a fearless tread, as if he felt within himself a power to erect the prison-house of fallen spirits, to encircle them with flames and horrors worthy of their crimes, to call forth from them shouts which should ‘tear hell’s concave,’ to embody in their chief an archangel’s energies and a demon’s pride and hate. Even the stupendous conception of Satan seems never to oppress his faculties. This character of power runs through Milton’s works.” “His sublimity is in every man’s mouth.”

“ We here close our remarks on Milton. In offering this tribute, we have aimed at something higher than to express or gratify our admiration of an eminent man. We believe that an enlightened and exalted mind is a brighter manifestation of God than the outward universe, and we have set forth, as we have been able, the praises of an illustrious servant of the Most High, that through him, glory may redound to the fountain of all wisdom and magnanimous virtues.”

“ Milton,” says Mr. Macaulay, “ had been unfortunate in ambition and in love. He had survived his health and his sight, the comforts of his home and the prosperity of his party. Of the great men by whom he had been distinguished at his entrance into life, some had been taken away from the evil to come; some had carried into foreign climes their

unconquerable hatred of oppression ; some were pining in dungeons ; and some had poured forth their blood on scaffolds. That hateful proscription, facetiously termed the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion, had set a mark on the poor, blind, deserted poet, and held him up by name to the hatred of a profligate court and an inconstant people ! Venial and licentious scribblers, with just sufficient talent to clothe the thoughts of a pander in the style of a bellman, were now the favorite writers of the sovereign and the people. It was a loathsome herd, which could be compared to nothing so filly as to the rabble of Comus, grotesque monsters, half bestial, half human, dropping with wine, bloated with gluttony, and reeling in obscene dances. Amidst these, his muse was placed, like the chaste lady of the Masque,—lofty, spotless * and serene,—to be chattered at, and pointed at, and grinned at, by the whole rabble of satyrs and goblins.

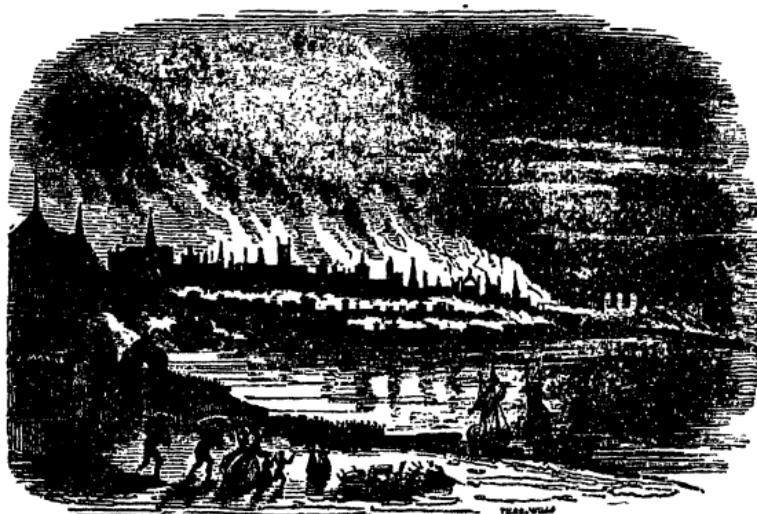
“ If ever despondency and asperity could be excused in any man, it might have been excused in Milton. But the strength of his mind overcame every calamity. Neither blindness, nor gout, nor age, nor penury, nor domestic afflictions, nor political disappointments, nor abuse, nor proscription, nor neglect, had power to disturb his sedate and majestic patience. His spirits do not seem to have been high, but they were singularly equable. His temper was serious, perhaps stern ; but it was a temper which no sufferings could render sullen nor fretful. Such as it was, when, on the eve of great events, he returned from his travels, in the prime of health and manly

beauty, loaded with literary distinctions, and glowing with patriotic hopes, such it continued to be, when, after having experienced every calamity which is incident to our nature, old, poor, sightless and disgraced, he retired to his hovel to die.

" Hence it was, that though he wrote the *Paradise Lost* at a time of life when images of beauty and tenderness are in general beginning to fade, even in those minds from which they have not been effaced by anxiety and disappointment, he adorned it with all that is most lovely and delightful in the physical and moral world. Neither *Theocritus* nor *Ariosto* had a finer, nor a more healthful sense of the pleasantness of external objects, or loved better to luxuriate amidst sunbeams and flowers, the songs of nightingales, and the coolness of shady fountains. His conception of love unites all the voluptuousness of the Oriental harem, and all the gallantry of the chivalric tournaments, with all the pure and quiet affection of an English fireside. His poetry reminds us of the miracles of Alpine scenery. Nooks and dells, beautiful as fairy land, are embosomed in its most rugged and gigantic elevations. The roses and the myrtles bloom unchilled on the verge of the avalanche.

" His public conduct was such as was to be expected from a man of a spirit so high and an intellect so powerful. He lived at one of the most memorable eras in the history of mankind—at the very height of the great conflict between liberty and despotism, reason and prejudice. That great battle was fought for no single generation, for no single land. The destinies of the human race were staked on the same

cast with the freedom of the English people. Then were first proclaimed those mighty principles, which have since worked their way into the depths of the American forests, which have roused Greece from the slavery and degradation of two thousand years, and which, from one end of Europe to the other, have kindled an unquenchable fire in the hearts of the oppressed, and loosed the knees of the oppressors with a strange and unwonted fear. Of those principles, then struggling for their infant existence, Milton was the most devoted and eloquent champion. We need not say how much we admire his public conduct."



SHAKSPERE.



Born April 23, 1564; died April 23, 1616.

SHAKSPE R E.*

WILLIAM SHAKSPERE, the greatest of dramatic poets, was born at Stratford-upon-Avon, April 23, 1564. When he was but three months old, his birth-place was visited by pestilence, and one seventh part of the inhabitants were swept away ; but it did not enter the dwelling of his parents. His father, John Shakspere, was a man of respectable standing, and for several years high bailiff, or chief magistrate of Stratford. He appears to have been a landed proprietor, and of the rank of a gentleman, though he doubtless engaged in some kinds of business. It has been said that he was a butcher ; but this is a mistake, occasioned by the fact, that another John Shakspere, who was of this trade, lived in Stratford. The name of Shakspere was common in that town, and some confusion has arisen in the obscurity which shrouds the history of the great poet, from that circumstance. His mother, Mary Arden, of Wellingcote, in the

* The name is usually spelt Shakespear, but it appears, on good authority, that the poet spells it as above. This orthography is, therefore, adopted by the best authorities.

county of Warwick, was of an ancient family, and inherited some property. At the time of his marriage, John Shakspere was in easy circumstances; but there is reason to believe that he was afterwards embarrassed.

It is supposed that John Shakspere was, to some extent, a dealer in wool; but however this may have been, we have reason to believe that he and his wife were well educated, pious people, and that their son William was carefully brought up, and duly instructed at the Latin school of Stratford, which was a highly respectable institution.

The fine old town of Stratford is about ninety-four miles north-west from London. The country around is beautiful, and within a few miles are many objects of deep interest, calculated to attract the attention of a youth such as Shakspere must have been. Within eight miles is the noble castle of Warwick, linked with many remembrances of ancient days and heroic deeds.

At the distance of about a dozen miles is Kenilworth, and in Shakspere's time its castle was in all the pomp and pride of its best days. It had been bestowed by Elizabeth upon her favorite, the Earl of Leicester, and he had expended upon it immense sums of money. The walls of the castle included seven acres of ground, and the whole manor, park and chase embraced a space of twenty miles in circuit. It was at this place that Leicester entertained Queen Elizabeth for seventeen days, with extraordinary magnificence, at the time that Shakspere was eleven years old. From what we know of the man-

ners of the time, it is highly probable that Will was there, to witness the mighty merry-makings that attended the queen's visit.

At a short distance from Stratford is the lovely "Vale of Evesham," and the venerable ruins of its abbey: and the ancient town of Coventry is also near at hand. All these places, rich in historic lore, were within the range of a boy's observation, and, no doubt, young Shakspere was familiar with them. The Avon too, one of the sweetest of streams, with its lengthened valley, presenting the loveliest of landscapes, was always before him. In the absence of positive information, we may fairly infer that these various objects were among the sources of instruction to the great poet, and that they contributed to shape the genius which has shed so much light over the world. As this is at least a probable suggestion, we may indulge the picture of the youthful poet, gazing upon these scenes and storing his mind with those sweet images which charm us in his works.

We have no positive record as to the education of Shakspere, but it was undoubtedly respectable, for he was tolerably well acquainted with Latin, and appears to have been familiar with Roman and other history; circumstances which in those days implied considerable scholarship. From the ease and accuracy with which he uses legal terms, it has been conjectured that at one time he was employed as a lawyer's clerk; but there is no direct proof of this.

We are also wholly ignorant of the boyhood of Shakspere; nothing worthy of note, touching this period of his life, has come down to us. At the early

age of eighteen, he was married to Anne Hathaway, daughter of a respectable farmer of Shottery, in the vicinity of Stratford. Soon after this event, he was, according to tradition, charged with deer-stealing, from the park of Sir Thomas Lucy, of Charlecote, near Stratford.

The story is this: that young Shakspere had become a familiar companion of some wild fellows, who in sport were accustomed to shoot deer in the grounds of Sir Thomas. Being detected in some deeds of this sort, he was prosecuted, as if he had been guilty of a crime, for what he had only deemed a roguish frolic. He, therefore, took revenge upon Sir Thomas by writing a very sarcastic lampoon, which he caused to be stuck upon his gate, and which accordingly became familiar to all the country round. For this, he was still further prosecuted, and in consequence of the stigma, or, perhaps, to escape further annoyance, he left Stratford, and proceeded to the metropolis.

This is the legend, as it has come down to us; but it is not very well authenticated. It is quite as probable that Shakspere was attracted to London by a love of the stage, as impelled to go thither by necessity. Stratford was upon one of the great roads through the heart of England, and was the frequent resort of companies of players. Shakspere must often have witnessed these exhibitions: that he went to London well skilled in the details of the stage, is rendered probable by his instructions to the players in Hamlet, one of the earliest of his dramas. Beside, Thomas Greene, a celebrated comedian of the day, probably

a relative of Shakspere, and his first patron, was a native of Stratford, and then in London. Richard Burbage, too, the greatest actor of the time, and afterwards Shakspere's partner in the Blackfriar's theatre, was either of Stratford or the vicinity.

In view of all these circumstances, we can see a sufficient motive for Shakspere to go to London, without recourse to the story of the deer-stealing. At all events, he arrived in London about the year 1586, and when he was near twenty-two years of age. He was probably engaged in the theatre, in a humble capacity, at first. It has been said that he was a call-boy for the prompter; and there is also a current story, as follows :

"In the time of Elizabeth, coaches being yet uncommon, and hired coaches not at all in use, those who were too proud, too tender, or too idle to walk, went on horseback to the play; and when Shakspere fled to London from the terror of a criminal prosecution, his first expedient was to wait at the door of the playhouse, and hold the horses of those who had no servants, that they might be ready again after the performance. In this capacity he became so conspicuous for his care and readiness, that in a short time, every man, as he alighted, called for Will Shakspere, and scarcely any other waiter was trusted with a horse, when Will Shakspere could be had.

"This was the first dawn of better fortunes. Shakspere, finding more horses put into his hands than he could hold, hired boys to wait under his inspection, who, when Will Shakspere was summoned, were ready immediately to present themselves, saying,

'I am Shakspere's boy, sir.' In time, Shakspere found higher employment; but as long as the practice of riding to the playhouse continued, the waiters that held the horses retained the appellation of 'Shakspere's boys.'

Although this has been an established legend of Shakspere's life, it is probably a fiction, and, like many other unfounded tales, has been grasped at in the hunger and thirst after incidents respecting the early life of the great dramatist. It is not well established that such a practice as the story assumes, of people riding on horseback to the playhouse, existed in this early part of Shakspere's time. None but people of wealth and education rode on horseback in those days; and such did not then frequent the theatre. These had private theatricals, but public plays were resorted to only by the rabble. The exhibitions were, in fact, rude, barbarous and absurd, until Shakspere himself converted them into a highly intellectual feast, fit for persons of taste and refinement. It is possible that after Shakspere had made the theatre the resort of the wealthy and refined, and the practice of riding thither on horseback was established, that, as proprietor of the theatre, he might have kept boys for the purpose of holding horses,—and these may have been designated Shakspere's boys: but this is only suggested as a plausible solution of the tradition.

Beside such evidences against these humiliating tales, in respect to Shakspere's early position in the theatre, it appears that when he was only twenty-five years old, he was joint proprietor in the Black-

friar's establishment. This was only three years after his arrival in London. So sudden a rise, as it is necessary to suppose, if we adopt these legends as true, is hardly credible. The probability is plainly this ; that before Shakspere left Stratford his turn for the drama had become known through Greene and Burbage, and that he went to London upon some actual and advantageous arrangement. He had, doubtless, written his Venus and Adonis before he left Stratford, and it is probable that he had shown a talent for writing plays, before his departure for the metropolis. Taking all things into view, he was doubtless attracted to the theatre as much by his taste, as his circumstances.

As Shakspere had now entered upon his public career, we might expect to find incidents and anecdotes to throw some light upon his progress. But a strange fatality seems to have attended everything touching the personal history of this remarkable man. This is doubtless attributable, in part, to the fact that his plays, though highly appreciated during his life-time, by no means possessed the reputation they now enjoy. For nearly a century, the works of his contemporary, Ben Jonson, were preferred. No life of Shakspere was attempted to be written till above a hundred years after his death. During this lapse of time, the neglected memorials of the great man passed into oblivion.

Shakspere's occupation was for a long time that of a player—but it seems he never attained any great degree of eminence in this department. He soon became distinguished as a writer of plays, but, strange

as it may seem, it is not certain what was his first production, nor at what time his first play was performed. There is an allusion to Hamlet in a publication in the year 1589, though this was probably but a sketch of the present tragedy. The first of his dramas which was printed, a part of Henry VI., appeared in 1594. It is believed, however, that eight or ten of his pieces were produced prior to 1591. The others followed in rapid succession. It is probable that his comedies, the Merry Wives of Windsor, Much Ado about Nothing, and Twelfth Night; together with the Merchant of Venice, All's well that ends well, King John, and Henry IV., were produced between that period and 1600.

It appears that Shakspere, during the whole time that he spent in London, made frequent visits to Stratford, where his family continued to reside; indeed he hardly regarded London as his residence. While there, he lived near Bear Garden, in Southwark. When, by means of his share in two theatres and the profits of his plays, he had amassed considerable money, he purchased the best house in his native town, called Newplace. This occurred in 1597.

The next year he appears to have formed an intimacy with Ben Jonson, a dramatist, poet and wit, of great celebrity, and who was long held as superior to Shakspere himself. The friendship between these two great men continued till death parted them; and then Jonson often testified his affection as well as his respect for the "Sweet Swan of Avon," for "my gentle Shakspere," as he fondly called

him. "I loved the man," says he, in the fulness of his heart, "and do honor his memory, on this side idolatry, as much as any. He was indeed honest and of an open nature." He adds, "his exceeding candor and good nature must certainly have inclined all the gentler part of the world to love him." No man of his time could better estimate Shakspere than Jonson, and these are delightful testimonials to the amiable, honest and generous character of the immortal bard.

Shakspere had four sisters, and, in 1599, Joan, the eldest, was married to Mr. William Hart, a hatter of Stratford. On the 8th of September, 1601, his father died. In 1602, our author bought one hundred and seven acres of land, connected, it would appear, with his house of Newplace, for three hundred and twenty pounds. On the last day of this year, he buried his brother Edward, at Southwark, London, who had been for some years a player at one of the theatres. He appears to have had two other brothers living at the same time, Gilbert and Richard.

Shakspere was now in good circumstances, and held a respectable situation in society. Lord Southampton, in 1608, addressed a petition to the lord chancellor, Ellesmore, in behalf of Shakspere and others, in relation to the Blackfriar's theatre, which the city authorities were endeavoring to suppress. This document has been recently discovered, and exhibits some very interesting facts. It is in part as follows :

"These bearers are two of the chief of the company ; one of them, by name Richard Burbage, who

humblly sueth for your lordship's kind help, for that he is a man, famous as our English Roscius; one who fitteth the action to the word and the word to the action, most admirably. By the exercise of his quality, industry and good behavior, he hath become possessed of the Blackfriar's playhouse, which hath been employed for plays since it was built by his father, now near fifty years ago. The other is a man no whit less deserving favor, and my especial friend; till of late an actor of good account in the company, now a sharer in the same, and writer of some of our best English plays, which, as your lordship knoweth, were most singularly liked of Queen Elizabeth, when the company was called upon to perform before her Majesty at court, at Christmas and Shrovetide. His most gracious Majesty, King James, also, since his coming to the crown, hath extended his royal favor to the company in divers ways, and at sundry times. This other hath to name William Shakspere, and they are both of one country and almost of one town; both are right famous in their qualities, though it longeth not to your lordship's gravity and wisdom to resort unto the places where they are wont to delight the public ear. Their trust and suit now is, not to be molested in their way of life, whereby they maintain themselves and their wives and families, being both married and of good reputation, as well as the widows and orphans of some of their dead fellows."

If in reading this interesting document we keep in mind the fact that players at this day were held in general contempt, and that the nobleman claimed an

immeasurable elevation above one of this class ; we shall see that Shakspere had triumphed over the prejudices of the age, and in securing the active friendship and sincere respect of one who held himself high in the ranks of titled aristocracy, that he has furnished rare testimonials in behalf of his personal as well as his professional character. We may rest assured that he was indeed what his works would lead us to expect,—not only in intellect a giant, but open, generous, honest and attractive as a man.

In the Blackfriar's theatre, his share was estimated at £1433 6s. 8d., a sum equal to five times the amount now. Besides this, he was a sharer in the Globe theatre, at Southwark. From these and other circumstances, it is evident that he was now in affluent circumstances.

In 1607, his eldest daughter, Susanna, was married to Dr. Hall, of Stratford, a man of high professional eminence. In 1608, his grandchild, Elizabeth, was born, he being then about forty-three years old. To this child he bequeathed, in his will, a sum of money, and all his plate, except "my broad silver and gilt bowl." His mother had died in 1603.

It seems that Shakspere was an actor in one of Ben Jonson's plays, in 1603. It is supposed that his playing ceased about this period. Not long after, he returned to Stratford, where he spent his time in farming, gardening and writing plays for the London theatres, in which he continued to hold an interest. It is recorded that he wrote two a year, and received so liberal a sum, that he spent one thousand pounds

annually. This is doubtless an exaggeration, but it is evident that he was now in the full enjoyment of wealth and prosperity.

In 1605, he bought a portion of the tithes of the town of Stratford, and it is supposed, collected them in kind. He lived in the best house in the place ; he had his "curious knotted garden ;" his orchard had many a pippin of his own grafting. James I. had recommended the cultivation of mulberry trees ; and who has not heard of that which the poet planted with his own hand ? While thus engaged in business, he still courted the muse, for about this time he produced Lear, Macbeth, Cymbeline, the Winter's Tale, and the Tempest.

The play of Henry VIII. was produced at the Globe theatre in 1613, and was then a new piece. It is likely that this was one of the last of Shakspere's productions. In 1614, Stratford was ravaged by fire, and fifty-four houses were burned, but Shakspere's escaped unharmed. In 1616, his second daughter, Judith, was married to Thomas Quimby. He survived this event but two months. His death took place April 25, of that year. It is probable that he made his will at the time of this marriage. It is long and particular. His real estate he gave to his eldest daughter ; to his wife "his second best bed, with its furniture."

This being the only mention of his wife in his will, has been regarded as a sarcasm ; and one of his biographers says that he thus "cut her off with a shilling." It has been supposed, from this circumstance, that he lived unhappily with his wife, or that he had no affection for her. There is no ground for

such a supposition ; on the contrary, everything leads to the opposite conclusion. While his business kept him generally in London, he still went often to Stratford. He here purchased the best house in the place, and to this his family removed. As soon as his affairs allowed, he retired, and ever after made this place his home. Here, in the bosom of his family, he lived, and here he died. By the operation of the English law, his wife was entitled to dower, and this unquestionably was all she needed or desired.

Such are the scanty facts we have been able to gather respecting this great man. We have made out the leading events of his life, but still there is a painful barrenness in his story. We have nothing of his boyhood ; nothing of his last sickness, or his death-bed. There is not a single letter of his writing in existence ; there is no record of a conversation with him ; there is but here and there a glimpse of his looks or his manners. That he was lively, frank, witty and agreeable, we know ; that he drew friends around him, and charmed them by the graces of his conversation, the play of his fancy, and the truth of his soul, we also know ; but scenes, anecdotes, sayings, incidents, there are none. We look into his productions, and see the workings of a mind that "exhausted worlds, and then created new,"—a soul that mirrored all other souls, as the lake gives back the image of every star that shines upon it. We admire, we all but worship, a genius that seems so near to inspiration. But we still yearn to sympathize with the man ; we wish to gambol with him in boyhood ; to saunter through the meadows of Avon at his side ;

to go with him to the revels of Kenilworth ; to stand by and see him look up to the battlements of Warwick castle ; to dream with him amid the monastic ruins of Evesham. We wish to see him, returned from London, and now a farmer at Newplace. We wish to go with him to his garden ; to see him plant the mulberry and engraft the pippin ; we wish to go to his study and observe him while he indites the Tempest or pens Macbeth. What a gift would it be to the world if some one could now bestow such an account of Shakspere, as Boswell has given of Johnson, or Lockhart of Scott ! But it cannot be. We must be content, that while scantiness and dearth attend the biography of the greatest mind that has enlightened the world, the exhaustless riches of its productions are preserved and bequeathed to mankind.

It is recorded that Queen Elizabeth was delighted with Shakspere's plays, and having seen Sir John Falstaff in the two parts of Henry IV., desired to have him represented as in love ; and that, accordingly, Shakspere wrote the Merry Wives of Windsor. James I. wrote a letter to Shakspere, acknowledging a compliment paid him in Macbeth, and favored his theatres after he came to the throne of England.

We have but little to add to our biography of Shakspere. He died on his birthday, being fifty-two years old. On that very day, Cervantes, the author of Don Quixote, and a kindred genius, also expired. It is remarkable that the two most original writers of modern times, should have departed at the same hour.

On the second day after his death, Shakspere was buried in the chancel of the parish church of Stratford, and a monument, with a likeness, was afterwards placed to point out the spot. On the tablet are the following words :

“ Stay, passenger, why goest thou by so fast ?
 Read, if thou canst, whom envious death hath plast
 Within this monvment, Shaksperc ; with whome
 Qwick natvre dide ; whose name doth deck ys tombe
 Far more than coste, sieth all yt. he hath writt,
 Leaves living art bvt page to serve his witt.

Obit. Ano. Doi. 1616 ætatis 53. die 23. Ap.

On his grave-stone is the following inscription. We give it as it stands, in an uncouth mixture of small and large letters :

Good Frend for Jesus SAKE forbear
 To digg T-E Dust EncloAsed HERe
 Blese be T-E Man ^T y spares T-ES Stones
 And Curst be He ^T y moves my Bones.

In 1741, a noble monument was erected to the bard in Westminster Abbey.

We have already given some account of Shakspere's family. He had two daughters and one son. The latter, whose name was Hamlet, died when he was twelve years of age. He, with Judith, were twins. His daughters were married, as we have related, but the last lineal descendant of the poet, Lady Barnard, died 1635. His wife, who was eight years his senior, died Aug. 9, 1623. His house and estate of Newplace continued in the family, for some

years, when it was purchased by Sir Hugh Clifton, whose family had formerly owned it. He made extensive alterations in it, and in 1742, entertained Garrick and Macklin under Shakspere's mulberry tree.

After Sir Hugh's death, it became the property of the Reverend Francis Gastrell, vicar of Frodsham in Cheshire. He appears to have been a savage, despite his reverend title and sacred office; for being annoyed at the questions that were asked about the mulberry tree, by the pilgrims that came to visit it, he ordered it to be cut down. This sacrilegious deed was accomplished, and the tree was riven to pieces for the fire. But Mr. Sharp, of Stratford, a watchmaker, hearing of the event, purchased the whole, and every piece was converted, in the course of years, into boxes, goblets, tooth-pick cases, tobacco stoppers, &c. By this, the purchaser made an immense profit. Thus genius converts common wood into gold!

The Reverend Francis Gastrell had not yet completed his infamy. Newplace was subject to monthly assessments for the poor; this distressed the pious parson, and in his wrath he declared that it should never be assessed again. To make his menace good, he caused the whole edifice to be torn down, which was accomplished amid the rage and curses of the inhabitants of the place, who looked with due reverence upon everything connected with their immortal townsman.

Of Shakspere's works, volumes might be written, but we can here say but little. It may be well, how-

ever, to commend to the notice of our readers, Doctor Johnson's preface to his edition of these wonderful productions. He remarks truly, that "the great contention of criticism is to find the faults of the moderns and the beauties of the ancients." Johnson has given an exemplification of the first half of this remark, in the very article which opens with its annunciation. Still it is a profound analysis of the great dramatist's beauties and defects, and, on the whole, presents a strong, though disparaging view of his genius.

"The proper study of mankind is man." Knowledge of human nature is, after the knowledge of God, the most important of all sciences; and in this, Shakspere is second only to the Bible. No writer, of any age or country, rivals him in this. We are hardly aware how much we are indebted to Shakspere for the art of knowing ourselves and others. Even those who have never read his works, are still under great obligations to him. A thousand adages, taken from his plays, are in familiar use among mankind. How many sayings, the pure gems of truth set in golden frames, and enriching our common stock of household speech, has he furnished! Every man who stamps a truth and gives it currency and circulation, is a benefactor to our race. Who has done so much of this, as Shakspere? On every highway and byway of life, we see his guideboards set up, telling us which will lead to peace and which to sorrow. He has set a mirror in the bosom of every one, who has read his pages, by which he may look on his own heart if he will, and by which he may also look on the hearts of others.

Nor is this all. He was not less a poet of nature than a philosopher of life. Where do we find more true pictures of the outward world—of all that is beautiful, all that is sublime, in this vast creation of earth, air and sky—of light and darkness—of sunshine and shadow—than in the pages of Shakspere? Who is quoted so often when the heart cannot otherwise utter its emotions? Who has furnished words to suit all scenes, all landscapes—so beautiful—so true, as his? How many of our thoughts and emotions find utterance through his sentences, which else had remained unspoken in our bosoms!

In illustration of these remarks, we offer a few extracts, chosen at random from the thousands that are scattered through his works. The first of the following passages would seem to furnish a key to Shakspere's life. He looked upon his gifts as not his own, and he seems to have had none of the self-appreciation, which most men display, who are conscious of superior powers.

GIFTS NOT OUR OWN.

Heaven doth with us as we with torches do ;
 Not light them for themselves : for if our virtues
 Did not go forth of us, 't were all alike
 As if we had them not.* Spirits are not finely touch'd
 But to fine issues : nor nature never lends
 The smallest scruple of her excellence,
 But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines
 Herself the glory of a creditor,
 Both thanks and use.†

* Matt. v. 15, 16

† Interest. Matt. xxv. 20, &c.

The following passage shows his observation of nature, and his power of describing it. Who has not witnessed the same phenomenon, yet who could paint it as he has done ?

Sometimes we see a cloud that's dragonish—
A vapor, sometimes like a bear or lion,
A tower'd citadel, a pendent rock,
A forked mountain, or blue promontory
With trees upon't, that nod unto the world
And mock our eyes with air.

Shakspere was no scientific naturalist, yet it would seem that nothing had escaped his scrutinizing observation. Such passages as these are strewed through his pages :

Love's feeling is more soft and sensible
Than are the tender horns of cockled snails.

Ere the bat had flown his cloistered flight.

Light thickens; and the crow
Makes wing to the rocky wood.

Often to our comfort shall we find
The sharded beetle in a safer hold
Than is a full winged eagle.

How consoling is the truth here conveyed, and what nicety of observation does it display ! Surely Shakspere, when a boy, had turned up many a stone, and there read the history of the beetle, which the modern naturalist, with more display of words, will tell you is sharded or sheathed with a horny case, to protect its wings, and enable it to creep beneath stones without being crushed ! Shakspere knew all

this before he left Stratford for London ; but he did not get it from Cuvier.

In the following lines he shows that the trick of the cuckoo, in making other birds rear its young, was familiar to him.

Being fed by us, you used us so
As that ungentle gull, the cuckoo bird,
Useth the sparrow : did oppress our nest, &c.

The following observation shows that he knew the art of blending the hues of flowers by cultivation :

I have heard it said
There is an art, which in their piedness shares
With great creating nature.

Again he says :

— You see, sweet maid, we marry
A gentle scion to the wildest stock,
And make conceive a bark of baser kind
By bud of nobler race : this is an art
Which does mend nature—change it rather ; but
The art itself is nature.

What a beautiful association does he here throw around early flowers :

Daffodils
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty : violets dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
Or Cytherea's breath.

See, again, the naturalist and the poet, in the following lines :

Hark, hark ! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
 And Phœbus 'gins arise,
 His steeds to water at those springs,
 On chaliced flowers that lies.

How carefully has he watched the habits of birds :

Russet painted rooks, many in sort,
 Rising and cawing at the gun's report,
 Sever themselves and madly sweep the sky.

— The poor wren,
 The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
 Her young ones in the nest, against the owl.

What power of imagination, and accuracy of observation, are displayed in the following description of the luxuriance of nature, unchecked by the care of the cultivator :

Her vine, the merry cheerer of the heart,
 Unpruned dies : her hedges even-pleached,
 Like prisoners, wildly overgrown with hair,
 Put forth disordered twigs : her fallow leas
 The darnel, hemlock, and rank furmitory,
 Doth root upon : while that the coulter rusts,
 That should deracinate such savagery ;—
 The even mead that erst brought sweetly forth
 The freckled cowslip, burnet and green clover,—
 Wanting the scythe—all uncorrected, rank—
 Conceives by idleness : and nothing teems
 But hateful docks, rough thistles. kecksies, burs,
 Losing both beauty and utility.

The following description of a river cannot be surpassed in its truth and beauty :

The current, that with gentle murmur glides
 Thou know'st, being stopp'd, impatiently doth rage ;

But when his fair course is not hindered,
He makes sweet music with the enamelled stones,
Giving a gentle kiss to every sedge
He overtaketh in his pilgrimage—
And so by many winding nooks he strays,
With willing sport, to the wild ocean.

These passages are sufficient to show how carefully Shakspere had read the book of nature; and that nothing was mirrored in his mind,—not even an insect, a flower, a tree, a bird, a cloud, a stream,—but it caught a life, a meaning, and a moral, from the all-endowing powers of his soul.

Nor are his descriptions of human life less graphic than his delineations of nature. How brief, and yet how complete, is the history of man, in the following oft-quoted passage :

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women, merely players:
They have their exits and their entrances:
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages; at first the infant,
Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms:
And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel
And shining morning face, creeping like snail,
Unwillingly to school: and then the lover,
Sighing like furnace, with a woful ballad,
Made to his mistress' eye-brow: then a soldier,
Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
Jealous in honor, sudden and quick in quarrel,
Seeking the bubble reputation
Even in the cannon's mouth: and then the justice,
In fair round belly with good capon lined,
With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,
Full of wise saws and modern instances;
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts

Into the lean and slippered pantaloons ;
 With spectacles on nose and pouch at side,
 With youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide
 For his shrunk shank, and his big manly voice
 Turning again toward childish treble, pipes
 And whistles in its sound. Last scene of all,
 That ends this strange eventful history,
 Is second childishness, and mere oblivion :
 Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

How many romances are compassed in the following brief extract :

The course of true love never did run smooth ;
 But, either it was different in blood ;
 Or else misgrafted, in respect of years ;
 Or else it stood upon the choice of friends :
 Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,
 War, death, or sickness, did lay siege to it ;
 Making it momentary as a sound,
 Swift as a shadow, short as any dream ;
 Brief as the lightning in the collied* night.

Of those brief aphorisms, which convey significant truths in few words, so that they may be converted into ready change for the toll-gates of every-day's journey, Shakspere's pages are full. The following are only samples, of which thousands, glittering like gems in a rich mine, are sown through his works.

In delay there lies no plenty.
 It is an heretic that makes the fire,
 Not he which burns in 't.
 Let the end try the man.

* Black.

Though patience be a tired mare, yet she will plod.
We are time's subjects.
Grief makes one hour ten.
Fears attend the steps of wrong.
When the fox has got in his nose,
He'll soon find means to make the body follow.
'T is a base, ignoble mind
That mounts no higher than a bird can soar.
By medicines, life may be prolonged, yet death
Will seize the doctor too.
A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear.
Trust not rotten planks.
Let them obey that know not how to rule.
Suspicion should be all stuck full of eyes.
No visor does become black villany
So well as soft and tender flattery.
A heart unspotted is not easily daunted.
Do not cast away an honest man for a villain's accusation.
There's not one wise man among twenty that will
praise himself.
Small things make base men proud.
The clock upbraids me with the waste of time.
One drunkard loves another of the name.
The earth hath bubbles as the water has.
A mad man's epistles are no gospels.
How poor an instrument may do a noble deed.
A golden mind stoops not to show of dress.
Past all shame, so past all truth.
Ignorance is the curse of God,
Knowledge the wing wherewith we fly to heaven.
Soft pity enters at an iron grate.
An honest tale speeds best plainly told.
There's beggary in the love than can be reckoned.
Friendly counsel cuts off many foes.
Few love to hear the sins they love to act.
There's small choice in rotten apples.
He that is giddy thinks the world turns round

How strongly do the following observations enforce virtue and religion, and what a strict analogy do we here see between Shakspere's morality and that of the Bible !

Things ill got have ever bad success.
Truth hath a quiet breast.
Conscience is a thousand swords.
All offences come from the heart.
It is religion that doth make vows kept.
An hypocrite is good in nothing but the sight.
Gripe not at earthly joys.
Let never day nor night unhallowed pass,
But still remember what the Lord hath done!
Forbear to judge, for we are sinners all.
God shall be my hope,
My stay, my guide and lanthorn to my feet.
Heaven, the treasury of everlasting joy.
Now God be praised, that to believing souls
Gives light in darkness, comfort in despair.

After these extracts, the reader will be prepared to admit that the virtuous tendency of his works is the crowning glory of Shakspere's fame. He lived in a barbarous age, and some of the coarseness of his time is visible in his works. But the drift of them all is in coincidence with the holiest of books, and as truly points out the reality and beauty of virtue; as strongly depicts the deformity and misery of vice. His works have, indeed, their defects,—there are things in them to condemn and reject,—but he teaches the very art which is required to winnow the seed from the chaff; and no mind, upon fair perusal of his pages, can fail to be exalted and fortified for the con-

test with the besetting, yet seductive currents, in the voyage of life.

With a wonderful indifference to fame, Shakspere seemed to take no thought of his works, after they passed out of his hands. He saw imperfect editions of some of them issued during his time, without his authority or revision; and he also saw his name attached to publications which he never wrote; yet of these things he took no heed. It is probable that his works fell so far short of his conceptions, that he regarded them lightly, and had no foreshadowings of the glory that awaited his name. Indeed, he had a mingled modesty and magnanimity of mind, which seemed to place him above the desire of that phantom which leads so many astray. In view of his powers, he says:

No longer mourn for me when I am dead,
Than you shall hear the surly, sullen bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell:
Nay, if you read this line, remember not
The hand that writ it; for I love you so,
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then should make you woe.
O if, I say, you look upon this verse,
When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse!
But let your love even with my life decay;
Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
And mock you with me after I am gone.

Yet one result of Shakspere's indifference to reputation has been, that it is a matter of some difficulty to make a list of his genuine works. He wrote sev-

eral poems, a great number of sonnets, and many plays, as well comedies as tragedies. In respect to some that are attributed to him, there has been much learned controversy, whether they were his or not. Most of these questions have at last been settled, and his authentic works are now in almost every library. It is one of the results of the art of printing, and the progress of education in our country, that any day-laborer, in these United States, may possess the fruits of the mightiest genius that has shed its light over the world.

In closing our sketch of the greatest genius of modern times, and, perhaps, of all time, it may be well to remark that Shakspere was not only a man of genius, but a good man, a good citizen, and a Christian. He was a man of business, attentive to all its details, and of that care, vigilance and assiduity, which insured thrift. Who, after this great example, will feel that it is humiliating, an evidence of dulness and commonness, to show forth these homely qualities? Shakspere was honest, faithful, punctual;—who will now pretend that genius must be eccentric, faithless, thriftless? Shakspere was a firm believer in Christianity;—let those who fancy that scepticism implies smartness, read his solemn words,—

The tongues of dying men
Enforce attention like deep harmony,—

and then let them read the following passages from his last will and testament:

“In the name of God, Amen. I, William Shakspere, at Stratford-upon-Avon, in the county of Warwick,

gent. ; in perfect health and memory, God be praised !
do make and ordain this, my last will and testament,
in manner and form following ; that is to say :

“ First, I commend my soul into the hands of God
my Creator, hoping, and assuredly believing, through
the only merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour, to be
made partaker of life everlasting ; and my body to
the earth whereof it is made.”



Font of Stratford, in which Shakspere was baptized.



F R A N C I S B A C O N .

THIS celebrated man was born at York House, in the Strand, London, 22d Jan., 1561. His father, Nicholas Bacon, was an eminent lawyer, and lord keeper of the great seal, during the first twenty years of Elizabeth's reign.

In boyhood, Francis Bacon was remarkable for sprightliness and the smartness of his observations. The queen, who was much taken with him, used to try him with questions on various subjects. Upon

one occasion, she asked him how old he was ; his reply conveyed an ingenious compliment. "I am just two years younger than your majesty's happy reign," said he. This occurred when he was about six years old.

We know little of Bacon's early education ; but as his father was a distinguished statesman, and his mother a woman of superior mind, as well as of learning and piety, there is little doubt that he had every advantage. In his thirteenth year, he was sent to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he studied with diligence and success. In his sixteenth year, he expressed great dislike to the philosophy of Aristotle, "not for the worthlessness of the author, to whom he would ever ascribe all high attributes—but for the unfruitfulness of the way—being a philosophy not only strong for disputation and contentions, but barren of the productions of works for the life of man."

There are few instances on record, evincing a power of mind, at the age of sixteen, equal to this. The philosophy of Aristotle had governed the world for almost two thousand years, yet this youth had already burst its bonds, and was preparing to enter upon the great work he was destined to accomplish—the overthrow of a false and bewildering system, which taught men to begin with theory in their search after truth, and the substitution of a wiser course—to commence with facts, and establish principles upon the sure foundation of observation and experience.

On leaving Cambridge, Bacon entered Gray's inn,

as a student at law. He soon after went to Paris, in the suite of the British ambassador, and travelled in several countries on the continent. His father died in 1579 ; he then returned to London, and found that he was the only one of the family unprovided for. This compelled him to rely upon his own efforts. He devoted himself earnestly to the study of the law ; but yet the love of philosophy was in him, and at this early period, he planned his great work, the *Organon*, and which, in the exultation of his youthful fancy, he proposed to call *The greatest Birth of Time*.

He was duly called to the bar, and soon rose to distinction in his profession. Being, however, nephew to Lord Burleigh, and cousin to Sir Robert Cecil, two of Elizabeth's ministers, he sought preferment through them. These persons, however, represented him as a mere dreamer to the queen, and his hopes were deferred. He enjoyed the friendship of the generous-hearted Earl of Essex, who first endeavored to obtain for him the situation of solicitor-general, and failing in this, presented him with the noble estate of Twickenham Park, which was worth eighteen hundred pounds a year, and in point of beauty, as Bacon himself called it, "a garden of Paradise."

It is a painful part of the great philosopher's story, that when his noble friend was arraigned for treason he appeared as counsel against him. This, it is true, was by the queen's command ; and when she read the declaration drawn up by Bacon against the Earl, she remarked, "I see old love is not easily forgotten." It was found necessary to embitter the

statement, in order to satisfy the queen, as she deemed it too mild for the nature of his offences. Essex was condemned and executed, and Bacon was, of course, censured by the public. He had doubtless a sincere friendship for Essex, and felt grateful for his munificent gift ; and we know that he earnestly sought to dissuade him from a course which seemed like rushing on his own destruction. Yet it was expecting too much of a lawyer and a politician, to run the risk of darkening his own prospects of advancement, by a chivalrous defence of one, whom, after all, he could hardly hope to save.

In 1592, Bacon was returned to parliament, for the county of Middlesex, and distinguished himself in the debates by taking the popular side. In 1596, he published his " Essays or Counsels, Civil and Moral," a work full of profound thought and useful observation. He was now in very embarrassed circumstances, and sought to mend them by a rich marriage. In this he failed, and was twice arrested for debt.

Upon the accession of James I., in 1603, his fortunes brightened. He had taken unwearied pains, by writing to various influential persons in Scotland, to have himself recommended to the king ; and in this he was successful. His majesty came to London prepossessed in his favor, and soon bestowed upon him the honor of knighthood. He now rose rapidly, as well in his profession as in preferment. He was made solicitor-general, and held other offices. About 1607 he married Alice Barnum, daughter of a rich alderman of London.

Determined to lose no opportunity to pay his court

to the king, and now being attorney-general, he took measures for the conviction of an aged minister of the gospel, by the name of Peacham, which has stamped his memory with indelible shame. This clergyman was apprehended for having in his possession a written sermon, in which it was alleged there were some treasonable passages. It was desired by the court that he should be punished, but the proof was inadequate. The practice of torture, for the purpose of obtaining evidence, had been common in the civil courts of England, though it was not theoretically avowed by the law. Bacon, however, gave his opinion in favor of torture, in the present case, and the old minister was put to the rack. He, however, would confess nothing, and Bacon complained to the king that he had a "dumb devil." The proof being insufficient, the attorney-general did not now hesitate to tamper with the judges, and attempt to persuade them to convict the prisoner. In this he failed, and accordingly the brave old man, not being executed, was permitted the grace of drawing out his miserable existence in gaol. What tales of horror linger in the prisons of pious kings and holy judges!

Though involved in politics, and a sedulous courtier, as well as an active lawyer, Bacon still found time to cultivate philosophy, and at different periods published several works, all displaying wonderful powers of mind, and seeming to show habits of thought, and a current of feeling, utterly at variance with the life he led. He passed through various stages of preferment, and in 1617 was made lord chancellor, and in 1619 received the title of Viscount St. Albans. He

had now reached the pinnacle of his wishes and the acme of his fame. In the beginning of the year 1620, he kept his birth-day with great state, at York House, the place of his birth. Ben Jonson was present among the throng of lordly guests, and celebrated the event in some of his best verses, of which the following is a single stanza :

“England’s high chancellor, the destined heir,
In the soft cradle of his father’s chair,
Whose every thread, the fates spin round and full,
Out of their choicest and their whitest wool.”

Bacon’s literary reputation was not less brilliant than his political and professional fame. He was aware that his great work, the *Organon*, in which he set forth principles of philosophy which were to guide future ages, was one which would startle the world by the novelty of its doctrines, and perhaps subject him to temporary reproach. He elaborated it with the utmost care, and copied and revised it throughout no less than twelve times. Taking advantage of his present elevated position, he ventured upon its publication.

This work has now taken its rank among the highest productions of the human mind ; but it was at first received with mingled sneers and admiration. Wits and geniuses turned it into ridicule. Dr. Andrews, a wag of the time, wrote some doggrel lines, in which he spoke of St. Albans, which furnished Bacon his title, as on the high road to *Duncetable*—that is, Dunstable ! The pedantic king, who was sadly bothered with the book, said it was “ like the peace of

God—that passeth all understanding !” Sir Edmund Coke wrote in the title page, under the device of a ship—

“ It deserveth not to be read in schools,
But to be freighted in the ship of fools.”

Bacon was, however, understood by some. Ben Jonson, soon after his lordship’s death, spoke of the work in exalted terms, and Sir Henry Walton, who had received a copy from the author, wrote to him as follows : “ Your lordship hath done a great and everlasting benefit to all the children of nature and to nature herself—who never before had so noble and so true an interpreter.” On the continent, the work was still more favorably received than at home.

But from this point, the sun of Bacon declined, and soon set forever. While he was seeking with anxious care and patient toil to establish his literary reputation, he was laying the train which would ere long explode, and blacken his name with everlasting infamy. He had run into a course of lavish expenditures, and though his income was enormous, it was still insufficient to supply his wants. He became unscrupulous as to the means in which he obtained money ; his principles were undermined ; and at last he did not scruple to use his official power to replenish his purse.

In consequence of an inquiry set on foot by the House of Commons, several cases came to light, in which he had received large bribes as judge of the court of chancery. The first was that of a poor gentleman of the name of Aubury, who, finding his suit

in chancery going on with a ruinous slowness, was advised to quicken it by a gift to the lord chancellor. In his anxiety and distress, he borrowed a hundred pounds from an usurer. Lord Bacon received the money from Sir George Hastings and Mr. Jenkins, who assured the poor and anxious suitor, in his lordship's name, of thankfulness and success. The case, however, was decided against him. When the chancellor heard the complaints of his victim, he sent for his friend, Sir George Hastings, and entreated him, with many professions of affection and esteem, to stay the clamor of the poor man he had cheated.

The evidence in the next case deepened the color of the chancellor's guilt. Mr. Egerton had several suits pending in chancery against Sir Rowland Egerton, and under the name of an expression of gratitude for past services, he presented the chancellor with three hundred pounds. The case accordingly went in Egerton's favor, until the opposite and losing party expressed his gratitude also to the judge in the shape of four hundred pounds ; when the superiority of four over three, turned the scales of equity against him !

On one of these occasions, when the judge's decision was prepared, though not actually delivered, the influence of a bribe, bestowed in the nick of time, induced the chancellor to reverse his decree ! The lady Wharton, hearing that her suit was likely to go against her, was too clever and high-spirited a woman to be defeated without a struggle. She wrought a purse with her own hands, and having filled it with one hundred pounds, she waited on Bacon at his apartments, and begged his acceptance of a purse of

her own making. The chancellor was, of course, too gallant a gentleman to refuse anything from the hands of so fair a lady, and she gained her cause!

The discussion in the commons issued in referring the whole of the case to the peers, the only authority competent to subject him to trial. The king told a deputation of the commons to proceed fearlessly, whatever might be the consequences, and whoever might be implicated; but he felt exceedingly for the chancellor, received him with undiminished affection, and ordered a short recess of parliament, to give him time for his defence.

The spirit of Bacon was crushed within him. His servants were, undoubtedly, the agents who sought out the victims of his corruption, and induced them to tempt their master; and it is equally undoubted that he was himself ruined by the rapacity and extravagance in which he permitted them to indulge. During the investigation of the charges, when Bacon one day entered his house, and his costly menials rose up and saluted him, he said bitterly, "Sit down, my masters; your rise has been my fall." He was great even in such circumstances, and the native dignity of his mind shone out even through the disgrace in which he had clothed himself.

There is something inexpressibly touching in the contrition which he expressed in the general confession which he first sent to the lords, appointed to try him. This, however, did not satisfy the indignation of his judges. They demanded a particular confession of each charge by itself, and a specification of the minute details of his meanness and guilt. This

Lord Bacon sent, and when a deputation of the lords waited upon him to inquire if this paper were his own voluntary act, he replied, “It is my act, my hand—my heart. Oh, my lords, spare a broken reed.” He was then stripped of his offices, disqualified for public life, banished beyond the precincts of the court, subjected to a fine of forty thousand pounds, and to imprisonment in the Tower during the king’s pleasure.

He was confined, for a short time, in the Tower, and then discharged. Though the sentence was afterwards commuted by the king, his ruined fortunes were never repaired; and we never feel the degradation into which Bacon had sunk himself, so painfully, as when reading the words of his pardon, “for all the frauds, deceits, impostures, bribes, corruptions, and other mal-practices, of which he had been found guilty!”

We now follow him to Gorhambury, the magnificent seat of his father, the home of a considerable portion of his boyhood, and which was to be the resting place of his old age. During all the bustle and splendor of office, he had frequently found means to escape to the quiet and meditation which there awaited him; and for the better enjoyment of such opportunities, he built, about half a mile from Gorhambury, a house, which cost him ten thousand pounds. There he now endeavored to alleviate the anguish which preyed upon his heart, by collecting around him some of the most distinguished of the many friends which not even his disgrace had alienated, and who were most proud of the office, which

he sometimes imposed upon them, of writing to his dictation. Hobbes, a scarcely less distinguished name in philosophy than his own, then a young man, was often employed in this way.

Bacon never again entered into public life, but continued, to the very day of his death, to occupy himself in his literary and philosophical labors. The great apostle of experimental philosophy was destined to be its martyr. It had occurred to him that snow might be used to advantage for the purpose of preventing animal substances from putrefying. On a very cold day, early in the year 1626, he alighted from his coach near Highgate, in order to try the experiment. He went into a cottage, bought a fowl, and with his own hands stuffed it with snow. While thus engaged, he felt a sudden chill, and was soon so much indisposed that it was impossible for him to return to Gray's Inn.

The Earl of Arundale, with whom he was well acquainted, had a house at Highgate. To this, Lord Bacon was carried. The Earl was absent; but the servants, who had charge of the place, showed great respect and attention to the illustrious guest. Here, after an illness of about a week, he died, early in the morning of Easter-day, 1626. His mind appears to have retained its strength and liveliness to the last. He did not forget the fowl which had caused his death. In the last letter that he ever wrote, with fingers, which, as he said, could not steadily hold a pen, he did not omit to mention that "the experiment of the snow had succeeded excellently well."

In his will he wrote, "For my burial, I desire it

may be in St. Michael's Church, St. Alban's ; there was my mother buried, and it is the parish church of my mansion-house of Gorhambury, and it is the only Christian church within the walls of old Verulam. For my name and memory, I leave it to men's charitable speeches, to foreign nations, and the next ages." He was of course buried where he desired.

The accomplishments of Lord Bacon were unrivalled in his day, and his character displayed the phenomena of great originality, combined with a most extensive range of acquirements. He was a poet and an orator, a lawyer and a statesman. In the philosophy of experiment and observation, he was pre-eminent. The metaphysical and the physical were both congenial to his genius ; and although the taint of his immorality has induced many to doubt the extent, and to deprecate the excellence, of his knowledge and ability, an impartial and searching examination will fill us with admiration, as we successively trace his steps in almost every branch of intellectual exertion.

The mind of Bacon was poetical, and his works abound in imagery. His moral essays are full of beautiful illustrations, and we scarcely know which most to admire, the richness of his fancy, or the abundance of his stores of truth and wisdom. Small wits have ridiculed his poetical pretensions, because, in his version of the Psalms, he says that " Man's life hangs on brittle pins," and speaks of

"The great leviathan
That makes the seas to seethe like boiling pan."

We may, however, find in Lord Bacon's verses

many vigorous lines, and some passages of great beauty.

His merits as an orator were, in the opinion of Ben Jonson,—the most competent critic of his age,—confirmed as it is by the testimony of Francis Osborne, and other evidences, undoubtedly, not equalled in his own time. Sir Walter Raleigh reckoned him the only man of his day who was equally eminent as a writer and a speaker.

The chief characteristic of Bacon's philosophy was its direct opposition to all that had previously existed under the same name. "The ancient philosophy disdained to be useful, and was content to be stationary. It dealt largely in theories of moral perfection, which were so sublime that they never could be more than theories." Bacon's, on the contrary, was essentially a philosophy of utility and progress; he thought the fruit of more consequence than the leaves and flowers; he desired to multiply human enjoyments, to mitigate human suffering, to improve man's estate. And hence it is that he is justly regarded as the author of modern philosophy; that from the day of his death, his fame has been progressively increasing, and will doubtless continue so to do, until he is recognised in every age and country as one of the most illustrious benefactors of the human race.

The following extracts from Lord Bacon's essays, will afford an idea of the wit, truth, and beauty in which they abound.

"It will be acknowledged, even by those that practise it not, that clear and round dealing is the honor of man's nature: and that mixture of falsehood is

like alloy in gold and silver, which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth it: for these winding and crooked courses are the goings of the serpent, which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the feet."

" He that dies in an earnest pursuit, is like one that is wounded in hot blood; who for the time hardly feels the hurt: and therefore a mind fixed and bent upon somewhat that is good, doth avert the dolors of death. But above all—believe it—the sweetest canticle is—' Now let thy servant depart in peace'—when a man hath obtained worthy ends and expectations."

" Revenge is a kind of wild justice—which the more man's nature runs to, the more ought law to weed it out. Certainly, in taking revenge, a man is but even with his enemy; but in passing it over he is superior."

" The virtue of prosperity is temperance; the virtue of adversity is fortitude."

" It is a strange desire to seek power, and lose liberty; or to seek power over others, and to lose power over one's self."

" Of all kind of men, God is the least behoden unto kings; for he doth most for them, and they do ordinarily least for him."

" We take cunning for a sinister or crooked wisdom; certainly there is a great difference between the cunning man and the wise man, not only in point of honesty but in point of ability."

" Suspicions among thoughts are like bats among birds—they ever fly by twilight."

" Crafty men contemn studies; simple men admire

