

7. The Croker Papers. The Correspondence and Diaries of the late Right Honorable John Wilson Croker, LL.D., F.R.S., Secretary of the Admiralty from 1809 to 1880. Edited by Louis J. Jennings, Author of "Republican Government in the United States." In Two Volumes, with Portrait. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1884. 8vo. pp. xiii., 584; ix., 572. \$5.00.

The author of these papers was a well-hated man, and in turn, was a good hater. Evidences of this abound in the volumes before us, sug-

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gesting, of necessity, that as the truth is never found in extremes, all parties concerned were more or less at fault. An intense Tory in politics, so wholly out of sympathy with liberal views as to hold "that a democracy, once set a-going, must sooner or later work itself out till it ends in anarchy, and that some kind of despotism must then come to restore society;" his intellectual and moral abilities gained him friends whose personal attachments were never disturbed by the widest differences in their political theories. As a Reviewer and Critic, his pen was sharp, and often his words were bitter. Macaulay and Disraeli were especially angered by his handling of their works, and sometimes attributed to him reviews of which he had no knowledge whatever.

Active in political life, and holding a responsible position in Government for twenty years of the most interesting period in modern English history, and enjoying for nearly half a century the friendship of some of the greatest Englishmen; intimate with such eminent characters as George IV., the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, Bishop Wilberforce, Lord George Bentinck, Lady Ashburton, Lockhart, the Marquis of Hertford, Lord Lyndhurst, Sir Walter Scott, and many others, The Croker Papers are invaluable to the historian and cannot fail to interest all who would know how such persons appeared to eyes that were familiar with them.

The disclosures made by George IV. are exceedingly interesting, as are the memoranda of many conversations with the Duke of Wellington. We give the following from the Duke's views of Napoleon:

I never was a believer in him, and I always thought that in the long-run we should overturn him. He never seemed himself at his ease, and even in the boldest things he did there was always a mixture of apprehension and meanness. I used to call him *Jonathan Wild the Great*, and at each new *coup* he made I used to cry out, "Well done, Jonathan," to the great scandal of some of my hearers. But the truth was, he had no more care about what was right or wrong, just or unjust, honorable or dishonorable, than *Jonathan*, though his great abilities, and the great stakes he played for, threw the knavery into the shade.

The best of all the publications [about Buonaparte] is that of Baron Fain. All the dictations to Montholon, Gourgaud and Las Casas are of little real authority. They are what Buonaparte on after consideration thought it expedient to represent things to have been, and not what they were. Any accurate reader will find them to be what *made-up* stories always must be, full of contradictions, but we who know the affairs of our time know that they are full of falsehoods.

Buonaparte's mind was, in its details, low and ungentlemanlike. I suppose the narrowness of his early prospects and habits stuck to him; what *we* understand by *gentlemanlike* feelings he knew nothing at all about; I'll give you a curious instance.

I have a beautiful little watch, made by Breguet, at Paris, with a map of Spain most admirably enamelled on the case. Sir Edward Paget bought it at Paris, and gave it to me. What do you think the history of this watch was — at least the history that Breguet told Paget, and Paget told me? Buonaparte had ordered it as a present to his brother, the King of Spain, but when he heard of the battle of Vittoria — he was then at Dresden in the midst of all the preparations and negotiations of the armistice, and one would think sufficiently busy with other matters, — when he heard of the battle of Vittoria, I say, he remembered the watch he had ordered for one whom he saw would never be King of Spain, and with whom he was angry for the loss of the battle, and he wrote from Dresden to countermand the watch, and if it should be ready, to forbid its being sent. The best apology one can make for this strange littleness is, that he was offended with Joseph; but even in that case, a *gentleman* would not have taken the moment when the poor devil had lost his *châteaux en Espagne*, to take away his watch also.

All those codicils to his will in which he bequeathed millions to the right and left, and amongst others left a legacy to the fellow who was accused of attempting to assassinate me, is another proof of littleness of mind; the property he really had he had already made his disposition of. For the payment of all those other high-sounding legacies, there was not the shadow of a fund. He might as well have drawn bills for ten millions on that pump at Aldgate. While he was writing all these magnificent donations, he knew that they were all in the air, all a falsehood. For my part, I can

**see no magnanimity in a lie; and I confess that I think one who could play such tricks
but a shabby fellow.**

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