

should be lying quietly in Father Thames' bed."

He burst into a cynical laugh. "What poor, irresolute fools we all are," he muttered; "mere straws blown hither and thither by the wind of circumstance. What have I saved that wretched child for? If she had died to-night she would at least have died innocent. What vices and degradation and misery may yet be in store for her. Some day she'll curse me for my officiousness. And for myself? I must take the Queen's shilling or go to the workhouse."

Nevertheless Richard Mallock went home to his chambers in the Temple and slept soundly. And next morning the postman brought him a letter from a lawyer, announcing that he had inherited a considerable sum of money from an aunt, who had died intestate.

Mallock sat for some time holding the letter in his hand. For a while it was a shock to him rather than a joy. How narrowly he had escaped being the victim of one of Fate's little ironies. It was a terrible thought and he breathed an inward thanksgiving for his rescue from a great sin.

And a poor little, ragged street-waif had been the instrument, under a higher power, of his salvation!

You need scarcely be told that he was not ungrateful to Peggy for the strange part she had played in his destiny. He had her taken away from her vile surroundings, respectably educated and trained, and she is now the wife of a well-to-do tradesman. While Mallock himself, having renounced his old mode of life, is a barrister of repute and large practice.

Letters and Reminiscences from Last Century

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FIRST PAPER

IN the good old days before aggressive civilisation cast its blighting restrictions upon us, people in quest of the pleasures of society, were trammelled by no stereotyped rules, but each one entertained his own particular friends after his own characteristic fashion. This brought private eccentricities well before the public for, until the year 1710, there was no recognised Assembly in Edinburgh, and the amusements, held in such horror by the Presbyterian party, were indeed of a character most rightly described as promiscuous. Many a good story has mercifully been preserved of these days. We find them in Chambers' Traditions, and Wilson's Memorials, as well as in the odd pages throughout the various biographies which make the history of the eighteenth century a living reality to us. But between these days of reckless gaiety and our own of solemn sobriety there was a delightful period of genial hospitality when friends united

frequently and informally to differ on politics or discuss the war, and if a man was needed to sing a song or support an argument Peter the caddy was despatched post haste to bring not only the coveted friend, but also the guests from his house, and, as often as not, the food from his table, lest there should be even the dread of too little at supper. People in the country were also keen to be refreshed by the gossip of the town. Here is a note from Archie Campbell* to Robert Sym, "Clerk to the Signet," the "Timothy Tickler" of Wilson's "Noctes Ambrosianæ."

* The Right Hon. John Archibald Campbell, Lord Advocate in 1807. He married a sister of Lord Kinneddar, Mary Anne Erskine, Sir Walter Scott's early friend. Campbell assumed the name of Colquhoun on succeeding to the estate of Killermont, and died in 1820. It was on the death of his infant daughter that Lady Nairn, then Miss Oliphant, wrote her beautiful poem, "The Land o' the Leal."

KILLERMONT,
April 13, 1805.

MY DEAR SIR,—Living here the life of a hermit I know only by report what is passing in this strange world—would you write me often just now as to what is done or said by any or some, unless you have taken counsel's opinion and are bid to hold your tongue? But then I do not see how you can criminate yourself or what delicate correspondence or transaction of government you are acquainted with. Therefore write often all the gossip of Edinburgh. I cannot cry when I address you, but truly I am in a sad humour. My resentment is buried in the grave and I feel for the many who now suffer in their feelings. All well here except of ten twin lambs of five mothers one has died. If you could come out you would have a piece of good Stott, turnip-fed beef or potatoe-fed pork—these animals dead or alive are inferior as companions to Mark Sprott * or Wilson † or Jellicoe.

Yours truly,
A. C. COLQUHOUN.

Mr. Sym was from home when this touching appeal reached him, but he was fortunately well qualified to respond heartily to the request for gossip. He reports the news from time to time that "everybody who is anybody is going to London. Horner has gone and left Jeffrey his wig—which does not fit him at all. Mrs. Jeffrey is ill but not seriously so." (She died a few months after this, on August 8, 1805.) That "Hamilton ‡ should lay aside his laced hat till he either get the knees of his breeches mended or a new pair." That, "Brewster climbed the stair a few nights ago and only to say that the last star but one in the tail of the great bear has something queer about it; he thinks it must be two stars, but he is going to get a stronger glass at Murrayfield." § How

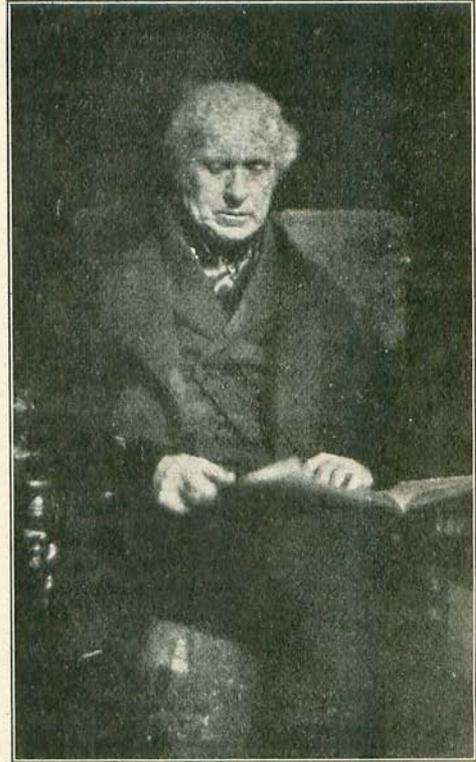
* Sprott of Garnkirk.

† Wilson afterwards known as "Christopher North" a nephew of Robert Sym.

‡ Probably "Cockie Hamilton," the last man in Edinburgh to wear a cocked hat.

§ Mr. Brewster, afterwards Sir David, inventor of the kaleidoscope, &c., was at this time tutor in the family of General Dirom of Mount Annan and

"the friday club is in full swing and Andrew Coventry (Professor of Agriculture) is admitted a member." That his nephew "John Wilson is at Oxford, and has written as to expenses that he spent in the last five months about £170, which means that £400 in the year is the least possible he can do with"—



Sir David Brewster

and so on. It is interesting to note that in this year 1805 Scott came prominently before the public as the author of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel."

Here is another invitation to "Timothy Tickler," dated the same year :

ST. JAMES' SQUARE,
Monday 5, 1805.

DEAR SIR,—If you are disengaged on Saturday next may I request the favour of

spent with them part of each year in Murrayfield, probably in the old house of that name, now standing amid a sea of villas.

your dining with Mrs. Dundas and me at Belmont where you will meet your friend, Mr. Rolland, and a small as well as a dissipated party. We dine at four o'clock.

I am,

Yours very truly,

ROBERT DUNDAS.

The Mr. Rolland here alluded to, was Adam Rolland of Gask, Scott's prototype in external circumstance, for Councillor Pleydell.

Letters, however, at the beginning of last century were not always of a friendly nature as will be seen from the account of an absurd quarrel which took place between Mr. Blackwood, the well-known publisher, and a Mr. Douglas who imagined that his name had been used with disrespect in "Maga."

Mr. Blackwood writes:

17 PRINCES STREET, EDINBURGH,

May 13, 1818.

SIR,—In the *Glasgow Chronicle* of yesterday I observe the following paragraph: "Yesterday forenoon, a gentleman from Glasgow (Mr. Douglas) whose name had been impertinently introduced into *Blackwood's Magazine*, horsewhipped Mr. Blackwood opposite to his own shop in Princes Street. As this gentleman was stepping into the Glasgow coach, at four o'clock, Mr. Blackwood, armed with a bludgeon, and apparently somewhat intoxicated, and accompanied by a man having the appearance of a shop porter, attempted a violent assault but without injury, the attack being repelled and retaliated by the free use of the horse-whip. A crowd attracted by the occurrence speedily separated the parties."

The transaction to which the above refers having occurred in the presence of about one hundred people of all sorts, there can be no difficulty in arriving at the truth.

On Monday between one and two o'clock Mr. Douglas entered my shop assuming his most terrific frown said, "My name is Douglas," and laying his whip slightly across my shoulders instantly strode off. I determined to do what I could to chastise the ruffian, so provided myself with a hazel sapling and took up my place at the door of Mackay's hotel with my much respected

friend, Mr. Hogg (the Ettrick Shepherd). Mr. Douglas, having I suppose reconnoitered me from his position at the window, did not betray much alacrity in coming forth. On the third blowing of the horn he appeared to start for Glasgow by the four o'clock coach. I sprang up and cudgelled him until weary, when I was led away reluctantly by my friend, Mr. Hogg, and an opportunity was afforded Mr. Douglas of "stepping into the coach" the guard having obligingly delayed starting for ten minutes, on account of the unavoidable engagement which had prevented one of the passengers from taking his seat. On his arrival at Glasgow he plucked up courage to pen the lying paragraph I have quoted. As to his brutal insinuation that I was intoxicated, I shall only mention that immediately after my chastisement of him, my shop was crowded with the first literary men in Edinburgh. They will confute such a monstrous piece of audacious falsehood. To those, indeed, who know anything of me and of my habits this malicious insinuation can need no denial.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD.

The Ettrick Shepherd now writes in great wrath because he has been likened to a shop porter:

6 CHARLES STREET, EDINBURGH,

May 13, 1818.

SIR,—A copy of the *Glasgow Chronicle* has just been handed to me in which I observe a paragraph concerning Mr. Blackwood and a "gentleman from Glasgow." He says that Mr. Blackwood was accompanied by "a man having the appearance of a shop porter." Now there was no person accompanying Mr. Blackwood but myself, and I do not take this extremely well, and should like to know what it is that makes him a gentleman and me so far below him. Plain man as I am it cannot be my appearance; I will show myself on the steps at the door of Mackay's hotel with him whenever he pleases, or anywhere else. It cannot be on account of my parents and relations for in that likewise I am willing to abide the test.

If it is, as is commonly believed, that a man is known by his company, I can tell this same "gentleman" that I am a frequent and a welcome guest in companies where he would not be admitted as a waiter. As to the circumstances of the drubbing which Mr. Blackwood gave this same "gentleman from Glasgow," so many witnessed it there can be no mistake about the truth.

JAMES HOGG.

The Ettrick Shepherd again writes :

6 CHARLES STREET,
May 23, 1818.

SIR,—Yesterday morning I was disturbed by two gentlemen who made their way into my bedroom at about six o'clock in the morning. On recovering from my first surprise I understood that the object of this intrusion was to challenge me to meet Mr. John Douglas in the field of honour. But I had no hesitation with regard to the way I behaved having previously resolved to fight with no man. I therefore sent the two gentlemen to the police office as being in my opinion the fittest place for persons who had condescended to bring the message of one in Mr. Douglas' situation.

JAMES HOGG.

The Ettrick Shepherd seems to have been uneasy about the last step he had taken for he and Mr. Lockhart paid Christopher North an early visit at this time, in order to ascertain what he, Wilson, would do in the circumstances. "Thrash the fellow, or blow his brains out," said the future professor of Moral Philosophy, turning round in bed and at once going to sleep again. This, however, did not satisfy Mr. Hogg so he went on to Sir Walter Scott, in the hope of receiving more congenial advice. Scott writes of the incident in a letter to the then Duke of Buccleugh:

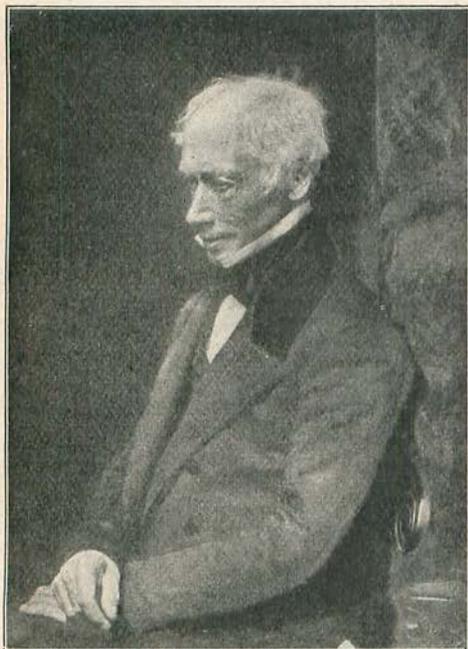
"Our poor friend Hogg has had an affair of honour . . . two mornings ago about seven in the morning, my servant announced, while I was shaving in my dressing-room that Mr. Hogg wished earnestly to speak with me. He was ushered in and I cannot

describe the half-startled, half-humorous air with which he said, scratching his head most vehemently, 'Odd Scott, here's twa folk frae Glasgow to provoke mey to fecht a duel.' 'A duel,' I answered in great astonishment, 'and what do you intend to do?' 'Odd I just locket them up in my room and sent the lassie for twae o' the police and just gi'ed the men ower to their chairge and I thoct I wad come and ask you what I should do. . . .' He had already settled for himself the question whether he was to fight or not. . . . The Glaswegians were greatly too many for him. . . . They returned in all triumph and glory and Hogg took the wings of the morning and fled to his cottage at Altrive, not deeming himself altogether safe in the streets of Edinburgh. . . . I heartily wish he could have prevailed on himself to swagger a little." And so ended the Ettrick Shepherd's affair of honour.

About this time the society in Edinburgh was exceptionally brilliant and full of notable characters. The town was alive with witty writers and budding poets, while a sprinkling still remained of old legal dignitaries belonging to the "three bottle wags" of the previous century. Mr. Robert Craig* of Riccarton the last male heir of Sir Thomas Craig, the great feudal lawyer of Scotland, did not die until the year 1823, and continued to within a short period of that date to give parties at his house in Princes Street, No. 91 now an hotel. Here on a summer afternoon he would be found seated on the front door step to receive his guests and enjoy the east wind, wearing old-fashioned clothes, knee breeches, and cut-away coat, with enormous brass buckles on his shoes. He hated innovations of every kind, and used a whistle to summon his servants disdaining the modern bell. Sir James Hall, father of Captain Basil Hall, was his friend, also two inseparable cronies, Lord Newton, and George Ferguson, known on the bench as Lord Hermond. These

* Pursuant to a deed of entail Mr. James Gibson, W.S. (of the firm Gibson, Christie, and Wardlaw), succeeded to the estate and assumed the name and arms of Craig, afterwards becoming Sir James Gibson Craig, Bart. But the house, No. 91 Princes Street, went to Colonel Gibson.

three, with perhaps Mr. Sym to balance the table, would make up many a party, and it is recorded that "Timothy Tickler" took these gatherings so seriously that he was never known to speak during the meal (having something better to do with his tongue) unless to ejaculate to the passing maid-servant without raising his eyes from his plate, "Breed, lassie," or when the toasted cheese was placed before him, "Have ye got any mustard about ye?" In spite of Mr. Craig's intimacy with the Lords Newton and Hermond his dinners were solemn and decorous. Ladies attended them. George Combe,* the phrenologist, would bring his aunt Mrs. Margaret Sinclair



George Combe, the phrenologist

from St. Leonards Hill to the festivities, or old James Ferrier would come accompanied by a chair conveying his eldest daughter (afterwards the wife of General Graham, of Stirling Castle). The Ferriers too entertained largely, giving whist parties every night to which all congenial souls

* George Combe married a daughter of Mrs. Siddons. He died 1858.

were welcome. Lady Augusta Clavering was their intimate friend and an inveterate player. Andrew Combe* would often make up the rubber, with Sir Henry Raeburn or one of his daughters, while the three Misses Edmonstone of Duntreath were to be found there every night, and paid the penalty of living next door to the gifted Susan Ferrier by having their eccentricities embalmed for the benefit of generations yet unborn, in the inestimable characters of "Jackie, Grizzie, and Nickie." Another great friend of the Ferriers, Raeburns, &c., was Lawrence Macdonald, who afterwards settled in Rome. This celebrated sculptor and George Combe had once an amusing discussion about Fanny Kemble's head and the bumps thereon. It seems that George Combe had felt Fanny Kemble's cranial developments (she was at this time hardly grown up), and said privately to Mr. Macdonald that the organ of alimentiveness was a marked feature, meaning in plain English that she had the bump of greediness. The artist, seeing only a lovely face and radiant expression, denied the base insinuation. A few days afterwards Fanny went to Mr. Macdonald's studio to have her bust modelled and George Combe joined her, in the kindly hope that his presence might relieve the tedium of the sitting. Whilst they were there the curtain was drawn aside and Mrs. Harry Siddons† appeared in the door way with a bag of raspberry tarts in her hand. Instantly Fanny jumped up, leaving the position that the artist had been at some pains to place her in, and running to Mrs. Siddons, hugged her with one hand while with the other she seized a tart. "There now Macdonald, I told you so," quoth the phrenologist to the sculptor, and appealed to Mrs. Siddons, stating the

* Dr. Andrew Combe first introduced those rules on health which have now passed into universal practice, such as open windows at night, regular exercise, cold baths, &c. This new system of preserving health went by the general name of Combeing among girls undergoing it at school, in honour of its originator Dr. Combe.

† Mrs. Harry Siddons was a sister of William Murray the celebrated actor, she married the great Mrs. Siddons' youngest son, and Fanny Kemble spent a whole year with her in Edinburgh.

case. "The proof of the pudding is certainly in the eating," she replied, pointing to Fanny who had retired behind the sculptor in fits of laughter with her mouth very full.

Among the many people who gave parties at this time none were more deservedly popular than the Murrays,* and to sit in their drawing-room and see the various guests enter one after the other was a sight not easily forgotten. Mr. Lockhart, as the door was thrown open to admit him, would pause an appreciable moment on the threshold with the palms of his long hands pressed together as if he were about to take a header; this had an affected look, but it may have been the result of shyness. The Ettrick Shepherd on the other hand can be accused of no false modesty either at his entrance or at any other time, for he would plunge into a room and throw himself, dirty boots and all on to the sofa occupied by his hostess or her most distinguished guest. Christopher North would make his appearance talking very fast about some new and impossible theory, or how he had ceased to wish for anything in life except to be a dandy and wear patent pumps. (He was notorious for his slovenly dress.) Then there was Lord Jeffrey with natty bows on his feet and precise elegant manners, Lady Outram (mother of Sir James) always ready to tell a good story, Lord Peter† in request everywhere as the wag of the town, Miss Goldie who supplied Sir Walter with the sad tale of Jeanie Deans, James and Robert Sym Wilson, brothers of Christopher North, Sir John McNeill, one of the handsomest men in Edinburgh, and his wife, Professor Wilson's sister, one of the wittiest women, and her father-in-law whose appearance a friend graphically described, "Ay that's Colonsay—him wi' the neck like a bul' and the tail like a coo," this last being a delicate allusion to the way his hair, done in a queue, stuck straight out behind him. There were

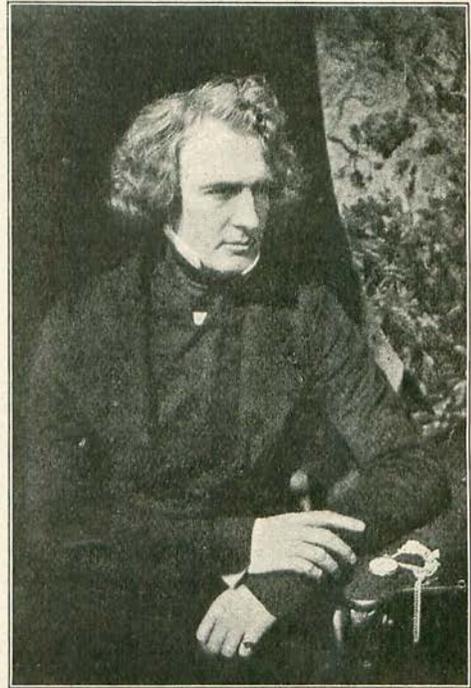
* John A. Murray, Lord Advocate 1834 and 1835, and judge under title of Lord Murray from 1839; he died 1859. His wife was Miss Rigby, from Lancashire.

† Patrick Robertson afterwards judge in the Court of Session from 1843. He died 1855.

also Mrs. Murray Keith, who told Scott the tale of the Highland widow; Sir William Hamilton, the metaphysician, and his brother Thomas, James Wolf Murray, Lord Cringletie, who succeeded Lord Meadowbank on the bench, Lords Colonsay and Cockburn, Sir Alexander and Lady Keith of Ravelstone, the gifted Sir Thomas Dick Lauder and his wife, the Andersons of St. Germain and their cousins of Moredun, and the witty Mrs. Johnstone,* author of "Meg Dodd's Cookery book."

But the most celebrated of all was the inscrutable Miss Sterling Grahame, of Duntrune, whose power of disguising her-

* Mrs. Johnstone once paid a visit to the Ettrick Shepherd at Altrive, and in the course of a walk round his grounds he took her to the fairy well and drawing a glass of sparkling water handed it to her saying, "Hae Mistress Johnstone ony merrit wumman wha drinks a tumbler of this, wull hae twuns in a twalmont." "In that case Mr. Hogg," replied the lady, "I shall take only half a tumbler." Mrs. Johnstone died 1851, in Edinburgh.



Sir John MacNeill

self—voice and manner—were so great as to take in Lords Jeffrey, Cockburn, Rutherford, and Murray, and who, at a dinner party at Lord Gillies', concealed her identity from Sir Henry and Lady Jardine, the Lord Chief Commissioner and Miss Adam, Dr. Coventry (Professor of Agriculture), the Chief Baron Sir Samuel Shepherd, and others. Sir Walter and Miss Scott were also at this dinner-party, but they had been let into the secret of the hoax.

To return to Lady Murray—the people above mentioned had, most of them, a standing invitation to attend her musical parties given once a week, at which entertainments Lady Murray herself always performed on the piano in the most gifted style. Her husband also was fond of playing, but he was more fond, naturally, of eating, and when especially anxious to gratify this taste, he would invite a limited number, perhaps only two or three, to dine with him in his kitchen, where he and his guests sat round a well-scrubbed wooden table pulled as near the fire as safety permitted, so that the beef steak or roast of mutton could be eaten absolutely red hot. After the company could hold no more they climbed heavy limbed to the upper regions, and reposed on arm-chairs while Lady Murray played to them on the piano. Mr. Lockhart attended many of these parties, here is a letter from him to Robert Sym Wilson, the cashier of the Royal Bank of Scotland:

DOUGLAS HOTEL,

Mondy Night.

DEAR ROBERT,—I have met with a bad turn of luck arriving here all wet, &c., and behold, no bag. Everything I had with me has been sent with, or after, some wrong man, and I am now going to bed with the hope and faith that your charity will send me a clean shirt by eight o'clock in the



Lady McNeill, Professor Wilson's sister

morning, in case my things should not have arrived during the night.

Yours ever,

J. G. LOCKHART.

At the date of this letter, 1830, there was not a single railway in Scotland, although a line had just been opened between Liverpool and Manchester, by which the old stage coach may be said to have received its death blow.

By the time that another generation has grown up there will not be a single person left who has sat behind the rattling team, and listened to the winding of the merry horn, and the exit of this means of conveyance closes, not only a chapter in the history of last century, but it marks an epoch in the history of the world itself.



Letters and Reminiscences from last Century

SECOND PAPER

IN September of the year 1830, the first railway in the country was opened, and as the Duke of Wellington* was to be present and receive the freedom of the city of Liverpool, for the line was laid between that town and Manchester, many people were invited to witness the *début* of the "patent steam coach," as it was then called. Among the guests were Professor Wilson and his daughter, Margaret (afterwards Mrs. Ferrier), and the following paragraph taken from a letter, gives their account of the terrible accident that heralded the introduction of railway travelling.

"There were six locomotive carriages running at sixteen or seventeen miles an hour, and all went on well till we came to a place called Newton, where Mr. Huskisson and a few other gentlemen got out, contrary to the express request of the engineer that no person should leave the carriages. Mr. Huskisson † was standing in a space between the two railways, about four feet wide, when he saw another engine rapidly approaching, and fearing there was not room enough for it to pass, rushed back to the Duke's carriage which he had left, pulled the door open with such force that he lost his balance and fell back, when, dreadful to relate, the engine passed over his legs, his poor wife witnessing the awful sight. One of the carriages was instantly sent back to Liverpool for medical aid at the rate of thirty miles an hour, but alas, in vain, for after suffering much agony Mr. Huskisson breathed his last next day. His wife never left him. We were in the next carriage to the Duke, but of course this depressing event put a stop to all gaiety. The Duke most properly declined to appear in public, or to receive the freedom of the town, which was to have been presented to

* The Duke of Wellington was Prime Minister at this time.

† Mr. Huskisson, Member of Parliament for Morpeth, and afterwards returned for Liskeard, born 1770, was present at the taking of the Bastille.

him, but which honour he begged to defer to a future visit."

The Duke, when the accident took place, was the first to rush to the assistance of the wounded man, but the sight overwhelmed him with horror. He was heard to say that, accustomed as he was to painful incidents, this unlooked-for tragedy was the saddest he had ever seen. From that hour he took an intense dislike to the railway, did all he could to oppose its extension, and continued to travel post until the scarcity of horses along the deserted high roads obliged him to abandon the practice.

This year (1830), so important to the English traveller, is memorable also as the date in which the powers of the great wizard of the north first began to fail him. He writes to a friend among other things of this paralytic seizure :

"ABBOTSFORD MELROSE,

"Feb. 27, 1830.

"DEAR MRS. SCOTT MONCRIEFF,

". . . Miss Young called on me last week, and talked of my being the medium of sending a petition to the Duchess of Buccleugh. Just at that moment I underwent a momentary incapacity of speech, and my articulation was so imperfect that I could not distinctly explain to her, that, knowing that the generosity of the Duke and Duchess fully equalled their means of benevolence, however large, I did not think I could, with propriety, pretend to dictate the channels through which they should distribute them. I was bled and am quite well again, and have been inquiring after Miss Young. I was thinking of making some publication on her behalf. I owe her some service, if possible, for I believe I gave her a hearty fright—very unwillingly on my part. . . .

"On the opposite side is a small draft for her use . . . which I hope your kindness will transfer to her with my kindest wishes,

"I am, dear Mrs. Scott Moncrieff,

"Your most obedient, humble servant,

"WALTER SCOTT."

An order for ten pounds was enclosed.

In connection with this letter the following extract from Lockhart's "Life of Scott" is interesting :

"On the 15th of February 1830, about two o'clock in the afternoon, he (Scott) returned from the Parliament house, apparently in his usual state, and found an old acquaintance, Miss Young, of Hawick, waiting to show him some MS. Memoirs of the father a dissenting minister of great worth and talents which he had undertaken to revise and correct for the Press. The old lady sat by him for half an hour, while he seemed to be occupied with her papers; at length he

my sister, Violet Lockhart, were sitting. They rushed to meet him, but he fell all his length on the floor ere they could reach him. He remained speechless for about ten minutes, by which time a surgeon had arrived and bled him. He was cupped again in the evening and gradually recovered possession of speech, and of all his faculties, in so far that, the occurrence being kept quiet, when he appeared abroad again after a short interval, people in general do not seem to observe any serious change."

The Mrs. Scott Moncrieff to whom the above letter is addressed was, as Susan Pringle of Yair, a near neighbour of Sir



Mrs Ferrier, née Wilson

rose as if to dismiss her, but sank again, a slight convulsion agitating his features. After a few minutes he got up and staggered to the drawing-room, where Anne Scott and

Walter's before her marriage to Mr. Scott Moncrieff, the late Duke of Buccleugh's chamberlain.

On their wedding tour they visited Scott

at Abbotsford, and one evening when seated with the family round the fire between the hours of dinner and late tea, Scott, who as usual had been delighting his guests with genial conversation, drew from his pocket a somewhat crumbled piece of paper, and calling his daughter Anne to him, he bid her sing to the company the verses she should find written upon it as appropriate for guests on a wedding jaunt. Anne went to her harp and sung the song, and this was the first appearance of the celebrated "Jock o' Haseldean." Mrs. Scott Moncrieff's father, Mr. Pringle, used to relate many incidents connected with his distinguished neighbour. On one occasion when he and Sir Walter were travelling up to London together, an English farmer got into the coach, and began questioning Scott as to who the wonderful new writer could be, for at this time, just after the appearance of "Guy Mannering," the great Unknown was still the great Unknown. Scott gave various reasons for thinking the novels were written by this rather than by that author, and from his critical manner of denouncing weak parts in the book nobody could possibly have suspected that he was responsible for them.

Dumple, however, was not the only character in "Guy Mannering" that betrayed the wizard, for when the book was first published, the Ettrick Shepherd said to Professor Wilson, "I've done wi' doubts now, Colonel Mannering is just Walter Scott painted by himself." This remark came round to Scott through James Ballantyne, and he smiled his approval of the quick-sighted shepherd, and often afterwards, when he and Mr. Ballantyne disagreed about anything, Scott would cut him short with, "James, James, you'll find that Colonel Mannering has laid down the law on this point."

In the year 1821 Scott's famous novel, "The Pirate," was published, and it brought to light an incident which proved the wonderful power of Sir Walter's memory.

It happened that Lady Anne Barnard, like everybody else at the time, was eagerly reading the new novel, and in one of the chapters she found with surprise that a verse from the second part of her own poem,

"Auld Robin Gray," had been quoted by Scott with her, Lady Anne's, name assigned as the authoress.

As she had never given, even to her mother, a single copy of this second part of "Auld Robin Gray," she was extremely curious to hear how Scott had obtained possession of it. The circumstances of the case were simple enough. The concluding part of the poem only came to be composed because Lady Balcarres frequently said to her daughter, "Annie, I wish you would tell me how that unlucky business of Jeanie and Jamie ended." Thus urged, Lady Anne made the verses, and sung them so often to her mother, that the old lady soon knew them herself by heart. At this time, the Dowager Lady Balcarres lived in George Square, Edinburgh, with her friend, Mrs. Murray Keith, and Lady Anne's* cousin, Mrs. Pringle, of Yair, was often in Edinburgh visiting them. Lady Balcarres then recited the verses with much pride to Mrs. Pringle who wrote down as many as she could remember, and gave them to their mutual friend, Mrs. Russell. When Mrs. Russell died the slip of paper containing the lines fell into the hands of Mrs. Russell's sister, Miss Christy Rutherford, who often repeated them to her nephew, little Wattie Scott, then living at No. 25 George Square. After nearly half a century Scott produced a verse in "The Pirate" as lines by Lady Anne Lindsay—for his aunt had told him the history of the poem.

An amusing letter from Mr. Lockhart to Professor Wilson, dated 1823, describes graphically another literary lady of this period. Lockhart writes:

"Miss Edgeworth is at Abbotsford; a little, dark, sharp, withered, active, laughing, talking, impudent, fearless, out-spoken, honest, whiggish, un-Christian, good tempered, ultra-Irish body. I like her one day, and damn her to perdition the next. She is a very queer character; particulars some other time. She, Sir Adam,† and the great

* Mrs. Anne Murray Keith died at Balcarres 1818. Lady Anne Barnard in London 1825.

† Sir Adam Ferguson a school friend of Scott died 1854.

Unknown, are too much for any company. Tom Purdie is well and so is Laidlaw.* I have invited Hogg here to-morrow to meet Miss Edgeworth. She has a great anxiety to see the bore.

Your silent and affectionate brother-glutton,
J. G. LOCKHART.

N.B.—Hodge Podge is in glory; also fish. Potatoes damp and small.

Miss Edgeworth says Peter Robertson is a man of genius, and if on the stage would be a second Liston. . . . Do let me know what passed between you and the stamp-master,† the opium eater, &c.”

When Miss Edgeworth visited Edinburgh she occupied rooms in Abercromby Place with her sisters, and their circle of friends included, besides the Scott family, the Alisons,‡ the Brewsters, Lord Meadowbank, and Mrs. Maconachie, Mr. Hope, Solicitor-General, Sir Henry Stewart, and the Skenes.

In another letter from Lockhart to Wilson, dated 1824, he writes:

“I have seen a host of lions . . . Hook, Canning, Rogers, Croly, Lady Davy, Lady C. Lamb, Mrs. Baillie, old Gifford, Allan Cunningham, Wilkie, Colburn, Coleridge. The last wcl! worth all the rest and 500 more such into the bargain.

“Ebony” [Mr. Blackwood] “should merely keep him in his house for a summer, with Johnnie Dow” [an Edinburgh shorthand writer] “in a cupboard, and he would drive the windmills before him. . . . Irving, you may depend upon it is pure humbug. He has about three good attitudes, and the lower

* Willie Laidlaw, factor and latterly Scott's amanuensis. He used to say breathlessly when Scott paused in his dictation, “What next?” “Ay, Willie man, what next! that's the devil o't.” Scott would reply if a sad bit was coming that had to come. “W] on earth did you let Esmond marry his mother-in-law?” asked a friend of Thackeray, who replied, “I! it wasn't I; they did it themselves.” And under this conviction of the reality of each character wrote Laidlaw or his master.

† Wordsworth.

‡ Mrs. Alison daughter of Dr. James Gregory and wife of William Alison, Professor of Medicine in Edinburgh.

notes of his voice are superb, with a fine manly tremulation that sets women mad . . . but beyond this he is nothing, really nothing.

“John Murray seems an old man; the *Quarterly* alone sustains him. Maginn says he makes £4000 per annum off it, after all expenses, and as they really sell 14,000, I can easily credit it.”

At this time Professor Wilson's “Noctes” were in full swing, and sometimes letters came to him from the unfortunate people who had been figuring without their consent or knowledge at Christopher North's convivial supper parties. The Rev. James White, author of “Sir Frizzle Pumpkin,” writes:

“The last was an admirable ‘Noctes,’ . . . when describing the party at Carnegie's who did you mean by the ass that after braying loud enough to deafen Christopher, went braying all over the borders? You uncon-



Miss Anne Murray Keith

scionable monster, did you mean me? Vicar of the consolidated livings of Loxley and Bray! . . .

"Have you ever thought of making Hogg a metempsychosist? What a famous description he would give of his feelings as a whale (the one that swallowed Jonah) or a tiger. . . ."

Readers of the "Noctes" will remember the scene which followed this hint, or may recall it by looking back to February 1835.

In the year 1836 Dickens published the first of that long series of tales which placed him at a bound in the very front rank as novelist and humorist. His death is comparatively of so recent a date that many to-day can claim the privilege of having known him personally.

A grandson of Christopher North, who had a boyish intimacy with his celebrated godfather Mr. Dickens, writes of their first meeting in the year 1861:

"Dickens, his secretary Dolby and my father came in after dinner, and Dickens asked me to go and see him next afternoon. Just at that time a lofty tenement in the High Street had fallen in the night causing a great sensation. Dickens took me to see the ruins. All Edinburgh thronged there for many days after the work of rescue was over. It was a strange sight for the whole face of the house was gone. The stories had collapsed but rooms were exposed like rooms in a doll-house when the front is open.

"I remember a bottle of table beer left standing on a mantelshelf and a picture of the Princess Royal as a bride sticking to the wall. Dickens took notes of what he saw and asked questions about the previous state of the houses, noises, shakings, &c. He afterwards told my mother that in 'Little Dorrit' the description of the falling house was entirely out of his own imagination, but that he found then that his inferences and suppositions were all borne out by what he learned of the Edinburgh catastrophe especially the warning noises and crackings so frequently mentioned in his novel.

"The appearance of Dickens at this time was utterly unlike the portraits of him in his



Mr. Lockhart

youth. The oval almost sentimental-looking face with soft flowing hair had given place to a square-browed, square-featured face somewhat lined and furrowed and bearded and moustached. There was something in his keen glance which suggested the vigilant observation of a skipper. His face was remarkably mobile, and during his readings could lend great effect to certain passages, although only in one reading, that from 'Oliver Twist,' could he be said to act. This was a great achievement. At a certain point he discarded his book and the recital became quite dramatic. It comprised the terrible murder of Nancy and the strain on his nerve must have been almost overpowering, as the tense interest of his audience certainly was. I remember in a passage where Fagin speaks his hands became almost claw-like, and his facial expression brought the old rascal before one like a picture. He used to rehearse this scene in a field near Gadshill at the imminent risk of being taken, as he said himself, for an escaped lunatic.

"He spent seventeen months getting his Copperfield reading into shape so careful was he to make a really good mosaic of his greatest book. His voice was singularly rich and musical, his manner genial, and his bearing most kindly and accessible, but he struck down like lightning on the point

before him, and was impatient of persons who were not quick at the 'uptak'. His observation was of course of needle sharpness and while apparently absorbed in his reading he would be fixing this or that person's appearance in the audience with minute accuracy."

Dickens' first visit to Scotland took place in June 1841, and was initiated by the splendid welcome of a public dinner with three hundred people at the table, and Christopher North in the chair. He writes a letter dated June 23, from the Royal Hotel, describing his kind entertainers:

"The renowned Peter Robertson is a large, portly, full-faced man with a merry eye and a queer way of looking under his spectacles which is characteristic and pleasant. . . . Wilson is a tall, burly man of eight and fifty . . . with the bluest eye you can imagine, hair longer than mine falling down in a wild way under the broad brim of his hat . . . a wisp of a black neckerchief; no waistcoat. . . . A bright clear complexioned mountain-looking fellow he looks as though he had just come down from the highlands, and had never in his life taken pen in hand. . . . He is a great fellow to look at and talk to; and, if you could divest your mind of the actual Scott, is just the figure you would put in his place."

Again he writes June 26, of the great dinner:

"It was the most brilliant affair you can conceive; the completest success possible from first to last. . . . I think (ahem) that I spoke rather well. It was an excellent room and both subjects (Wilson and Scottish literature, and the memory of Wilkie*) were good to go upon. . . . I was quite self-possessed, and, notwithstanding the enthoosemoosy, which was very startling, as cool as a cucumber. . . . Gordon, who gave the memory of Burns, is Wilson's son-in-law and the lord advocate's nephew—a very masterly speaker indeed, who ought to become a distinguished man. Neaves, who

* Sir David Wilkie.

gave the other poets, a little too lawyer like for my taste, is a great gun in the courts."

In this letter Dickens omits to mention one very amusing incident, which was, that in a pause between two of the grand laudatory



Charles Dickens

orations suddenly Peter Robertson threw the whole company* into convulsions of laughter by getting up and carrying on with inimitable mimicry an imaginary conversation between Dominie Sampson of Pro-di-gious memory and Mr. Squeers of Dotheboys Hall.

The close of Mr. Dickens' letter tells of his engagements:

"Wednesday we dine at home . . . Thursday to Lord Murray's . . . Friday the dinner and evening party at Allan's. Wednesday breakfast with Napier, dine with Blackwood's

* Two hundred ladies had kindly been admitted to view the three hundred men at dinner,

. . . Supper with all the artists! Thursday dine at Lord Gillie's . . . Friday dinner and evening party at Robertson's. Saturday dine again at Jeffrey's; back to theatre at half-past nine to the moment for public appearance. . . ."

But Dickens does not tell in his letter of the tremendous reception he was accorded at the theatre, for the moment he appeared the house rose and faced him to a man, and while the orchestra burst uproariously into "Charlie is my darling" such a tumultuous and prolonged cheering broke from the assembled audience that the very cabmen in

the street took up the shouts. The old theatre where this enthusiastic scene took place has long been swept away—and it is probable that there is hardly a person now alive who formed one of that brilliant assemblage. But the applause awarded to this great revealer of human secrets rolls on from generation to generation. The wrongs and shames which he exposed and denounced with so withering a scorn have one by one passed away like a tale that is told. While the names of the characters employed to point the moral, and even the bare titles of his books, have become household words wherever the English language is spoken.



The Wisdom of James the Just

Sunday Readings for November

By the Right Rev. W. Boyd Carpenter, D.D., Lord Bishop of Ripon

FIRST SUNDAY

TONGUE WISDOM AND TRUE
WISDOM

ST. JAMES set before his hearers a lofty conception of life. He saw that men were in danger of mistaking the accidents of life for its reality. He noticed how much men valued the mere raiment of existence while the abiding powers of life were neglected. Of what use would life be to men if they thus snatched at the shadow of things and missed the substance? Under the influence of this thought, he urged men not to think over much of wealth and poverty, not to mistake sentiments for actions, or emotions for character. In the same spirit he now warns them against the snares of talk, the small ambition of setting everybody right. Thus he attacks the evils which follow the uncontrolled use of the tongue. To this the whole of the third Chapter of his Epistle is devoted. We may summarise it thus:

Eagerness to teach, and the empty talk to which this desire leads are not good. If character is the end of life, and the purpose of religion, we must needs be careful lest the opportunity of volubility destroy robustness

of character. In short, chatter is not character, and chatter indulged in dissipates the energies which might be applied in developing nobility of character. A bridled tongue shows a strong character; for the tongue often outruns thought, and can defy the will. Be therefore good helmsmen of your speech. Let will and wisdom guide. The uncurbed tongue is like a fire. It is a fierce, untamable thing. Out of it may flow evil as well as good. It is like a spring which now gives forth poison, and now gracious and health-giving waters. It is needful to get at the sources of the spring. Wisdom, true wisdom, should be at the back of our life. Wisdom, not mere intellectual power, but wisdom of an ethical sort. Wisdom, which is a healthy evolution of harmonised qualities, fortifies character and controlled talk. It is a wisdom of self-restraint, which is meek and not ambitious of the pernicious brilliancy of talk which so often leads to envy and strife. It is a wisdom in which qualities of purity and mercy lead on to righteousness and peace.

The principle insisted on, then, is a very simple one. He who would use the tongue must be the master of the tongue. This is hard, for a tamed tongue means a tamed

Letters and Reminiscences from Last Century

THIRD PAPER

DICKENS' great contemporary Thackeray was very seldom in Edinburgh only appearing in the north to pay a brief visit or give a few lectures. Carlyle spent more than a whole winter in town after his college days, as tutor to two boys (the Bullers) living at No. 26 George Square. At this time Jane Welsh was staying with her friend Mrs. Bradfute in the same old square No. 22, and it was here in a small back room that the strange wooing of the grim, long-legged, peasant prophet took place.

In the year 1829, Carlyle writes a letter, from Craigenputtock, to Professor Wilson, full of characteristic touches:

“MY DEAR SIR,—

“Your kind promise of a Christmas visit has not been forgotten here; and though we are not without misgivings as to its fulfilment, some hope also still lingers; at all events if we must go unserved it shall not be for want of wishing and audible asking. Come, then, if you would do us a high favour, that warm hearts may welcome in the cold New Year, and the voice of poetry and philosophy, *numeris lege solutis*, may for once be heard in these deserts, where, since Noah's deluge little but the whirring of heath-cocks and the lowing of oxen has broken the stillness. You shall have a warm fire and a warm welcome; and we will talk in all dialects, concerning all things, climb to hill tops, and see certain of the kingdoms of this world, and at night gather round a clear hearth and forget that winter and the devil are so busy in our planet. There are seasons when one seems as if emancipated from ‘the prison called life,’ as if its bolts were broken, and the Russian ice-palace were changed into an open sunny *Tempe*, and a man might love his brother without fraud or fear! A few such hours are scattered over our existence,

otherwise it were too hard and would make us too hard.

“But now descending to prose arrangements or capabilities of arrangement, let me remind you how easy it is to be conveyed hither. There is a mail coach nightly to Dumfries, and two stage coaches every alternate day to Thornhill; from each of which places we are but fifteen miles distant, with a fair road and plenty of vehicles from both. Could we have warning we would send you down two horses; of wheel carriages (except carts and barrows) we are still unhappily destitute. Nay, in any case, the distance for a stout Scottish man, is but a morning walk, and this is the loveliest December weather I can recollect seeing. . . .

“I have not seen one *Blackwood* or even an Edinburgh newspaper since I returned hither; so what you are doing in that unparalleled city is altogether a mystery to me. Scarcely have tidings of the *Scotsman-Mercury* duel* reached me, and how the worthies failed to shoot each other, and the one has lost his editorship and the other still continues to edit.

“Sir William Hamilton's paper on Cousin's Metaphysics I read last night; but like Hogg's Fife warlock, ‘my head whirled round, and aye thing I couldna mind.’ *O curas hominum!* I have some thoughts of beginning to prophesy next year if I prosper; that seems the best style, could one strike into it properly.

“Now tell me if you will come or if you absolutely refuse. At all events remember me as long as you can in good will and affection, as I will ever remember you. My wife sends you her kindest regards and still hopes against hope that she shall wear her

* To vindicate a fine art criticism, Mr. Charles Maclaren and Dr. James Browne had a hostile meeting at seven in the morning of November 12, 1829.



Mrs. Jameson, author of "Sacred and Legendary Art"

Goethe brooch this Christmas, a thing only done when there is a man of genius in the company. . . .

"Believe me always, my dear Sir,
"Yours with affectionate esteem,
"THOMAS CARLYLE."

Other celebrated and fugitive figures were to be met with in Edinburgh. Mrs. Jameson, the gifted authoress of "Sacred and Legendary Art" is described by Professor Wilson as "clever, middle-aged, red-haired, agreeable."

George Eliot, visiting the Combes, writes from their house that she is in clover 'between the beauty of the weather, the

scenery, and the kindness of the good people."

Charlotte Brontë long before she made out her visit to the northern capital expressed a great wish to see "dear old Christopher North with his crutch." (At that time he was quite a young man, but he always wrote of himself as tottering along in extreme old age.)

Mrs. Hemans, visiting Lady Wedderburn* is so enchanted by the beauty of the town that she makes up a party to walk through its streets by moonlight. Her friends are Scott, Mrs. Grant of Laggan, Captain Basil

* Wife of Sir David Wedderburn, Bart., and sister of the late Viscountess Hampden.

Hall, and Lord Jeffrey. She and Kirkpatrick Sharpe had an amusing passage of poetry originating in Mrs. Hemans' remark that the weather was so cold she had not even seen a butterfly. "A butterfly!" retorted Mr. Sharpe, "I have not even seen a wasp."

Next morning, however, a wasp flew into Lady Wedderburn's breakfast-room, and settled on the jam dish before Mrs. Hemans, who at once proposed that it should be enticed into a bottle and sent as a present to Mr. Sharpe.

This was accordingly done and he replied in a sonnet after the manner of Milton (but much superior as he said himself) beginning, "Poor insect! rash as rare," to which Mrs. Hemans made a charming answer from the wasp. The poem is called "The last words of the last wasp of Scotland."

Another authoress occasionally to be met with in Edinburgh was Harriet Martineau, who made her mark as a political economist, novelist, historian, biographer and journalist. Hartley Coleridge described her "as a monomaniac on all subjects." An intimate friend of hers, now an old lady, writes:

"She once came to me very much overwrought and sleepless and asked me to mesmerise her. She showed me how to set about it, and sure enough, in five minutes she was fast asleep, but talking all the time. She slept for two hours, and having asked me to notice particularly what she said, I did so, and not one of the events she had predicted ever came to pass."

Harriet Martineau describes her first meeting with the witty Sidney Smith as having been an amusing one. They were both at a very large musical party in London, the staircase one continuous crowd of ladies fighting up to the drawing-room. Sidney Smith was at the foot of the staircase, and, writes Miss Martineau:

"He passed a message up to me that he understood we desired one another's acquaintance. He put it to my judgment whether I, being thin, could more easily get down to him, than he, being stout, could get up to me; he would wait five minutes for my answer."

They did not however succeed in meeting

that night although this unceremonious introduction was the commencement of an interesting friendship. These times seem to have admitted of free and easy acquaintanceships. De Quincey, whose unique eccentricities would have endeared him to society even had he not had beautiful daughters, came once to dine with Christopher North, and stayed on for a year in perfect contentment. Few people, however, have the leisure now for such prolonged visitations, and the literary and philanthropic world must snatch its holiday as it can. Pre-eminent among those whose time was bestowed on others is Florence Nightingale who sometimes came north to rest for a brief fortnight with the McNeill's in Granton House, where many an interesting party was arranged for her benefit, that she might meet the leading men in all branches of medical science, and glean from them hints as to sanitation and ventilation which, united to her own vast experience, have made her the most practical woman of the century. It must not be supposed that guests visiting the McNeills were exposed only to assemblages of learned pundits (although there was always a risk of meeting them there), on the contrary the inmates were generally young people bent upon nothing more alarming than having a good time, and those who came to the kind mistress of the house were certain to have that in abundance.

In the year 1843 Sir John and Lady McNeill, having taken up their abode in Edinburgh (No. 53 Queen Street) after many years spent in the East, resolved to give two balls for their friends, one in fancy dress, the other masked, also in fancy dress. At this latter assembly there was a great deal of fun, owing to the successful way that guests managed to conceal their identity from each other. The whole house was arranged in Persian style for their reception; soft carpets and rich Eastern hangings met the eye at every turn, while shrouded lights were suspended from the roof, after the manner in the Shah's harem. The ample supper which refreshed the guests was different from anything that Edinburgh people had before tasted. A rare Eastern wine, Shiraz by name, in quaint bottles, sealed with an

Arabaical design, stood ready to hand round. It was supposed to have come straight from Trebizond, but it was really a concoction of Lady McNeill's nephews and nieces, brewed with much laughter in the kitchen, and bottled and sealed by them in the back green. Before the ball began the host and hostess left the house, and arrived masked among their own guests. Lady McNeill wore a Persian dress with a magnificent jewelled turban. Sir John changed his clothes three times during the night, arriving as a Circassian in a suit of chain mail, then coming in as a Persian tailor, with a board before him, on which little sham legs were crossed. Afterwards the tailor disappeared and, supper being over, it was announced to the guests that an Eastern fortune-teller awaited them in the library. This, of course, was Sir John again, primed as to the identity of most of his masked visitors by an old family maid (Mrs. Gibb), who knew not only the relations, but those in the habit of frequenting the house. She had been stationed purposely in the dressing-room, and was able to inform Sir John that



Professor Ferrier



Sheriff Gordon

Margaret Ferrier was "Beauty" in white robes with a star on her forehead; while her husband was "the Beast," recognised by her when she buttoned on his paws in the passage and put his tail straight before he ran upstairs. Sheriff Gordon and his wife went as Robin Hood and Maid Marion. Her dress was green satin with gold lace, a bow slung across the shoulders, and a quiver of arrows at her belt. Archie Swinton and Fletcher of Dunans went as Liberty and Equality. Robert Sym Wilson was Baillie Nichol Jarvie (in a claret-coloured suit), and had arrived in a noddy with Susan Rutherford (Lord Rutherford's sister), dressed as Matty, carrying a lantern. Eleanor, sister of Professor Ferrier (afterwards Mrs. Leith) was the Swiss peasant. Jane Wilson (afterwards Mrs. Aytoun) and her cousin, Anne Wilson, were the "Buy-a-Broom" girls; and Andrew Wilson was the Chinaman with the pigtail. Miss Rigby (afterwards Lady Eastlake*) went dressed as a scholar, with nine

* Lady Eastlake wrote a delightful account of this party in "Longman" 1893.

others similarly attired, under the direction of a schoolmistress. A great deal of laughter was caused by one of the brooms (unwieldy in a drawing-room) knocking off by mistake a pupil's mask. The girl thus exposed sunk down and covered her face with her hands, but she was instantly surrounded by officious masqueraders eager to discover her identity. The ever watchful schoolmistress, however, ran to the pupil's aid, struck with her switch, and snubbed with her tongue, until the girl got her mask on again. After this the scholars, summoned by a whistle, stood in a row, and sung a song to the tune of "Nix, my Dolly," a few lines will show the style.

We must not forget to be polite,
And say how much obliged we feel
To kind Sir John and Lady McNeill
For having made this masquerade,
And asked us little folks as well.

.



Mrs. Rigby, the mother of Lady Eastlake

We only hope they'll here remain
And never go back to Persia again, &c.

Among the females present there were a Madame Roland and a Madame de Sévigné, but the most remarkable of the women on this occasion was Professor Aytoun who went simply as "a lady." His dress was long and encircled by many frills, while a profusion of sunny ringlets fell in clustering disorder on each side of his mask, and beautiful flowers framed the inside of his white chip bonnet. His crinoline was of such generous proportions that he had to shut himself up like a telescope whenever he came to a door way. As the evening wore on it worked up getting ever crookeder and crookeder. His dancing was terrific. Men in mail fled before him, and he had frequently to retire in haste to the dressing-room to be sewn up the back or down the front according to the pressing need of the moment.

Professor Aytoun was certainly a very good actor, and he distinguished himself about this time in a most amusing charade given by four leading advocates of that date in the McNeills' house, No. 53 Queen Street. The performers were Gordon, afterwards the Sheriff, James Lord Moncreiff, Archie Swinton, of Kimergham, and Professor Aytoun. The word they acted was "Ellenborough," and in the first scene Gordon appeared as Miss Ellen Walker of Dalry, a well-known Edinburgh character of strong anti-tobacco principles, at that time living in her own house in an adjacent street. Gordon's acting of a lady (he was a tall man) was if possible even more perfect than that achieved by Professor Aytoun, and the audience was convulsed with laughter from first to last.

The second syllable "burgh" was an election, and the gifted advocates did ample justice to the occasion this afforded for brilliant political speaking. The last scene "Ellenborough" was the taking



Lady Eastlake, née Rigby

of the Indian town of Ghuznee (it will be remembered that at this time there was a proclamation about the restoration to India of the gates of the Temple of Somnauth redeemed at Lord Ellenborough's orders), and with this historical scene they concluded the charade. The success of the play was greatly due to the happy gift of extemporising possessed by many of the junior Bar of that date. There was a twelfth-night party given by the Aytouns which also brought forth this quality in a striking degree. As is well known at such a gathering a queen of the feast is elected, and the commands she chooses to lay on her subjects must be carried out on pain of dismissal. On this particular party given by the Aytouns at their house in Fettes Row, Mrs. Aytoun was chosen queen of the night, and as it is derogatory to the dignity of a queen to have a consort, Aytoun completely effaced himself by admitting his own guests dressed

as a footman in a fawn coloured coat with crimson plush breeches. When all had arrived the queen notified that nobody was to speak unless in poetry, which ukase might have damped the flow of conversation in many a house, but was in this instance provocative of some admirable flights of oratory. The chief speakers were James Moncreiff, ever ready of tongue. Dr. John Brown* of precious memory, Archie Swintoun a relation of the Wilsons, Sheriff Gordon excessively witty, and Aytoun himself with, of course, a real gift for extemporary rhyme. These men all vied to surpass each other and were ably seconded by a host of lesser lights headed

by their charming and witty hostess, who was gifted with such an inexhaustible flow of eloquence, that it is well she married a philosopher and poet, for certainly nothing less erudite would have been able to cope with her at close quarters.

Parties of this kind gave great scope for individual humour, and private charades and tableaux were in many places as popular as the real stage, while an informal dance—the room cleared by the guests, and blind Laurie at the piano—was often more welcome than the exacting claims of a public ball. Many families, however, were addicted to theatre going. The three Miss Grahams of Bal-

* Dr. Brown was driving one day in a shut carriage with a friend, when suddenly he seemed much excited and kept thrusting his head out of the window again and again. "What is the matter?" asked his companion, "do you see some one that you know?" "No," said the doctor, "but I think I see a dog that I don't know."

gowan made a practice of giving small dinners to attend the opera afterwards. Old Lord Stair, father of the present earl, was a frequent guest in their house, also the Wilson girls from Woodburn (as good as a play in themselves) and Mr. George Ramsay, of the Bamff family to chaperon the whole party, as old Miss Graham used to say. It was in her dining-room that there hung for so many years Gainsborough's celebrated portrait of the Hon. Mrs. Graham, the great Lord Lynedoch's wife. Her early death, before the picture was sent home, caused him such grief that he never could bear to look at it, so the portrait remained in its packing-case for many years. This sad event imparted a romantic character to Lord Lynedoch's life, leading him to many gallant, but most rash actions when he was abroad on foreign service.

At the death of the last Miss Graham, it was found that the family had bequeathed the portrait to the National gallery in Edinburgh, where it now hangs as probably the best-known picture in the whole collection.

The characteristic features of many well-known people live in our remembrance to-day, without the aid of Gainsborough's brush. There are Galt and Delta, the courtly Dean Ramsay, Bishop Terrot conducting the service in grey kid gloves, the Cay family and their friend, Mrs. Murray Gartshore,* whose wonderful voice has never been surpassed; the witty Glassford Bell ready to tell a good story or eat a big dinner at any time of the day or night; Mrs. Ferrier, whose racy tales still go the round; the Sinclair girls who were so tall that the walk before their house in George Street was called "The Giant's Causeway"; Mr. Hill Burton, writing away at his history in old Craig House, and filling the rooms so full of books that the flooring had to be supported by wooden posts; William and Robert Chambers, the first to introduce wholesome literature at a moderate rate; the philanthropic Guthrie; Dr. Chalmers, a

* Mrs. Murray Gartshore, daughter of Sir Howard and Lady Douglas, married the late John Murray, of Gartshore. She died 1857.



Professor Aytoun

power in the land; Mr. Erskine, of Linlathen, who radiated so infectious a charity that even those opposed to his religious opinions named him "the life-giving heretic"; Dr. Simpson, of immortal fame; and the "great" Norman McLeod, so immeasurably before his generation that he appeared a king among men, be the others who they might. A list of names truly—some of whom will command the respect of many generations.

We are bound to them by uncountable ties; their talents, tastes, passions still being ours. Even their features many of us have inherited, and the mere sight of a name upon paper is enough to recall the memory of a thousand kindnesses, and the sense of a presence which, having passed away, nothing here can ever replace.