

as when he spoke of Alexander, clay-cold at Babylon, with the world lying conquered around his tomb, or of the Highland hills, that pour the rage of cataracts adown their riven cliffs, or even of the human mind, with its 'primeval granitic truths,' the grand old face flushed with the proud thought, and the eyes grew dim with tears, and the magnificent frame quivered with a universal emotion.

"It was something to have seen Professor Wilson—this all confessed; but it was something also, and more than is generally understood, to have studied under him."

CHAPTER XI.

LITERARY AND DOMESTIC LIFE.

1820-'26.

IN July, 1819, the following announcement appeared in the Book-lists: "In the press, 'Lays from Fairy Land,' by John Wilson, author of 'The Isle of Palms,' " etc.

"Doth grief e'er sleep in a Fairy's breast?
Are Dirges sung in the land of Rest?
Tell us, when a Fairy dies,
Hath she funeral obsequies?
Are all dreams there, of woe and mirth,
That trouble and delight on earth?"

In the Magazine for January, 1820, one of these lays was published, and it seemed as if the formula, "in the press," really meant something was then preparing for publication, which I believe is all that it generally conveys to the initiated. Beyond that, however, the Lays, if ever in the press, did not show themselves out of it.* From dreams of Fairy Land the author had been roused to the un-

* Unless I except a previous poem, "The Fairies, a Dreamlike Remembrance of a Dream," in the Magazine for April, 1818, with the signature of N., evidently his. The subject was a favorite one with him. In one of his Essays there is a very beautiful and fanciful description of a fairies' burial.

romantic realities of Deacon Paterson and his green bag. The sober certainty of a course of Moral Philosophy lectures took the place of poetic visions, and the "folk of peace" seem thenceforth to have vanished from his view, so far at least as singing about them was concerned. The explanation is cleverly given in the lines of Ensign O'Doherty, in the Magazine for 1821, when the Professor was doubtless still hard at work on the Passions and the Moral Faculty. After "touching off" various other poets, he says:—

"Let Wilson roam to Fairy-land, but that's
An oldish story: I'll lay half-a-crown
The tiny elves are smothered in his gown."

But though the heavy duties of his first session put an end for the time to all other occupations, his literary activity was rather stimulated than otherwise by his elevation to the chair. With trifling exceptions his literary labors were confined exclusively to *Blackwood's Magazine*, and their extent may be guessed from the fact, that for many years his contributions were never fewer on an average than two to each number. I believe that, on more than one occasion, the great bulk of the entire contents of a number was produced by him during the currency of a month. No periodical probably was ever more indebted to the efforts of one individual than "Maga" was to Wilson. His devotion to it was unswerving, and whether his health were good or bad, his spirits cheerful or depressed, his pen never slackened in its service. He became identified with its character, its aims, and its interests; and wearing, as it did, such strong marks of a controlling individuality, it was naturally believed to be under the editorial sway of the hand that first subscribed the formidable initials of "Christopher North." The first conception of that remarkable personage was, however, as purely mythical as the "Shepherd" of the *Noctes*, and "C. N." notes and criticisms were freely supplied by other hands, under the direction of the really responsible editor, Mr. Blackwood. As my father gradually invested his imaginary ancient with more and more of his personal attributes and experiences, the identification became more complete, till at length John Wilson and Christopher North were recognized as names synonymous. Any repudiation of the editorial character essentially associated with the latter was thenceforth regarded as but a part of the system of mystification which had distinguished the Magazine from the beginning. But it was

true, nevertheless, that the reins of practical government were throughout in the hands of the strong-minded and sagacious publisher. It lay with him to insert or reject, to alter or keep back; and though of course at all times open to the advice and influence of his chief contributors, his was no merely nominal management, as even they were sometimes made to experience.

The relation between him and my father, considering the character of the two men, was not a little remarkable, and it did equal credit to both. Wilson's allegiance to the Magazine was steady and undivided. He could not have labored for it more faithfully had it been his own property.* This itself would suffice to prove high qualities in the man who owned it. Mere self-interest does not bind men in such perfect mutual consideration and confidence as subsisted between them throughout their lives. It required on both sides true manliness and generosity, combined with tact and forbearance, and every kind feeling that man can show to man. Blackwood's belief in Wilson was unbounded, not simply from admiration of his great powers, but because he knew that he could rely on him to the utmost, both as a contributor and a friend. Wilson's respect and affection for Mr. Blackwood were equally sincere and well founded; and when he followed him to the grave, he felt that no truer friend remained behind. It is pleasant to be able to say that these relations of mutual esteem and confidence were continued uninterrupted after the Magazine came into the hands of Mr. Blackwood's sons, who were able to appreciate the genius and the labor that had done so much to make their own and their father's name famous throughout the world.

In the miscellaneous correspondence that follows, extending over many years, the reader will gather an idea of my father's varied relations, and of the general tenor of his life; but before passing from the subject at present, mention may here be made of the publication in 1822 of a volume of his prose compositions, under the title of "Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life, a selection from the papers of the late Arthur Austin." Some of these had appeared in *Blackwood* under the signature "Eremus," which will also be found affixed to several poems in the very early numbers of the Magazine.

* "Of all the writers in it (the Magazine), I have done *most* for the *least* remuneration, though Mr. B. and I have never once had one word of disagreement on that subject."—MS. letter of Wilson, dated 1833.

These beautiful tales have acquired a popularity of the most enduring kind. They are, indeed, poems in prose, in which, amid fanciful scenes and characters, the struggles of humanity are depicted with pathetic fidelity, and the noblest lessons of virtue and religion are interwoven, in no imaginary harmony, with the homely realities of Scottish peasant life.

The emoluments of his new position, combined with his literary earnings, enabled him, after a few years, to remove from his house in Ann Street to a more commodious residence at no great distance. He was also in a position once more to take up his summer quarters in his beautiful villa at Elleray, the place which he loved above all others on earth; and in the summer of 1823 we find him there, with his wife and children, again under the old roof-tree. After the labors of the College session, and so long a separation from a spot so dear to him, it was not unnatural that he should crave some relaxation from work; and in spite of his publisher's desire to hear from him, the study for a time was deserted for the fields. He was in the habit of sauntering the whole day long among the woods and walks of Elleray. This delightful time, however, had its interruptions. The indefatigable publisher writes letter after letter, reminding him that the Magazine and its readers must be fed. Mr. Blackwood's letters discover the shrewd and practical man of business, temperate in judgment, and reasonable, though a little too much inclined sometimes to the use of strong epithets—a habit too common with literary men of that day, but now fortunately out of fashion. From these letters may be gathered the true relation of Wilson to *Blackwood's Magazine*. On the 15th of May he says:—

“MY DEAR SIR:—For nearly a week I have either been myself, or had one of my sons waiting the arrival of the Carlisle mail, as I never doubted but that you would give me your best help this month. It never was of so much consequence to me, and I still hope that a parcel is on the way.

“That I may be able to wait till the last moment for any thing of yours, I am keeping the Magazine back, and have resolved to let it take its chance of arrival by not sending it off till the 28th, when it will go by the steamboat; this will just allow it time to be delivered on the 31st, and if no accident occur, it will be in time.

“I wrote you on the 3d with Waugh's Review, and a few other

things. I wrote you again with the periodicals on the 6th. Both parcels were directed according to your letter, to be forwarded by Ambleside coach by Mr. — or Mr. Jackson. I hope you have received them and the former parcel.

“*Quentin Durward* is to be out on Tuesday, when I will send it to you. Reginald* is not quite finished, but will be all at press in a day or two. Mr. Lockhart has done Barry Cornwall† and Tim’s‡ Viscount Soligny in good style. My not hearing from you, however, discourages him, and I fear much this number will not be at all what I so confidently expected it would have been.

“I shall be happy to hear that you are all well again.

“I am, my dear sir, yours truly,

“W. BLACKWOOD.”

About this time, Mr. Leigh Hunt was advised to threaten legal proceedings against the London publisher of the Magazine, Mr. Cadell, who appears to have been greatly alarmed by this prospect, not having been quite so accustomed to that species of intimation as Mr. Blackwood. He accordingly wrote to Edinburgh, giving a very grave and circumstantial account of the visit he had received from Mr. Hunt’s solicitor. Mr. Blackwood and his contributors took the matter much more coolly, as may be seen from the following letter from Mr. Lockhart, whose concluding advice is eminently characteristic. Indeed, all Mr. Lockhart’s letters to my father, as will be seen, are marked by the satirical power of the man—piquant, racy, gossipping, clever, and often affectionate and sincere:—

“EDINBURGH, *Friday, June, 1823.*

“MY DEAR PROFESSOR:—Blackwood sends you by this post a copy of the second letter from Cadell, so that you know, ere you read this, as much of the matter as I do.

“I own that it appears to me impossible *we* should at this time of day suffer it to be said that any man who wishes in a gentlemanly way to have our names should not have them. I own that I would rather suffer any thing than have a Cockney crow in that sort.

* *Reginald Dalton*. By Mr. Lockhart.

† *The Flood of Thessaly, The Girl of Provence, and other Poems*. By Barry Cornwall. 8vo.

‡ A *soubriquet* for Mr. Patmore, the reputed author of *Letters on England*. By Victor Count de Soligny. 2 vols. 1823; and *My Friends and Acquaintances*. 3 vols. 1854.

But still there is no occasion for rashness, and I do *not* believe Hunt had that sort of view; at all events, he has not acted as if he had.

“My feeling is that in the next number of the Magazine there should be a note to this effect:—‘A certain London publisher has been making some vague and unintelligible inquiries at the shop of our London publisher. If he really wishes to communicate with the author of the article which has offended him, let him not come double-distilled through the medium of booksellers, but write at once to the author of the article in question (he may call him N. B. for the present), under cover to Mr. Blackwood, 17 Princes Street, Edinburgh. He will then have his answer.’

“Whether such a notification as this should or not be sent previously I doubt—but incline to the negative; at all events, the granting of it will save our credit; and as for Hunt, how stands the matter? *First*, Suppose he wishes to bring an action against the author; against you *he* has *no* action, and that he knows; but you would probably give him no opportunity of bringing one; at least, poor as I am, I know I would rather pay any thing than be placarded as the defendant in such an action. *2dly*, Suppose he wishes to challenge the author. He cannot send a message to *you*, having printed the last number of the *Liberals*.* Therefore, either way, the affair *must* come to naught; I mean as to any thing serious.

“Blackwood is going to London next week, and will probably visit you on the way, when you and he can talk over this fully; but ere then, I confess, I should like to have your consent to print such a note as I have mentioned. I cannot endure the notion of these poltroons crowing over us; and being satisfied that no serious consequences *can* result, I do think the thing ought to be done. Read Cadell’s letter, and think of it, and write me.

“Above all, for God’s sake, be you well and hearty! Who the devil cares for Cockneydom? Write a good article, and take a couple of tumblers.

Yours, affly,

“J. G. L.

“*P. S.*—*Reginald Dalton*† is doing very well. The London subscription was 831, which Ebony thought great for a three-

* The number of the *Liberals*, I presume, containing an article on the Scottish character, in which the Blackwood writers are compared to “a troop of Yahoos, or a tribe of satyrs.”

† *Reginald Dalton* and *Adam Blair* were anonymous novels written by Mr. Lockhart.

volume affair. In a new magazine (Knight's) set up by the 'Etonians,' there is an article on *Lights and Shadows, Adam Blair*, etc., in which you are larded tolerably, and but tolerably, and the poor Scorpion still more scurvily treated. It is their opening article and their best. The choice exhibits weakness, and conscious weakness. No other news. *Rich and Poor** is a clever book, but very methodistical. I have read about half of it. I will write you a long letter, if you will write me any thing at all."

A fragment of a letter from Mr. Lockhart, written about the same time, contains, like all his effusions, something racy and characteristic. His expressions of interest with regard to Mrs. Wilson's health are more than friendly. The first few lines of this fragment refer to a paper in *Blackwood's Magazine* for July, 1823, "On the Gormandizing School of Eloquence," "No. I. Mr. D. Abercromby." In such scraps as this we find the salt which flavored his letters, and without which he could not have written:—

"Who is Mr. D. Abercromby? You have little sympathy for a brother glutton. What would you think of the Gormandizing School, No. II. 'Professor John Wilson?' I could easily toss off such an article if you are anxious for it, taking one of the *dilettante* dinners, perhaps, and a speech about Michael Angelo by David Bridges,† for the materials. No. III. 'Peter Robertson;' No. IV. 'Wull.' Miss Edgeworth is at Abbotsford, and has been for some time;‡ a little, dark, bearded, sharp, withered, active, laughing, talking, impudent, fearless, outspoken, honest, Whiggish, unchristian, good-tempered, kindly, 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

* *Rich and Poor*, and *Common Events*, a continuation of the former, anonymous novels, which were ascribed to Miss Annie Walker.

† Mr. David Bridges, dubbed by the Blackwood wits, "Director-General of the Fine Arts." For a description of his shop, which was much resorted to by artists, see *Peter's Letters*, vol. ii., p. 280.

‡ Miss Edgeworth's visit was in August, 1823. "Never did I see a brighter day at Abbotsford than that on which Miss Edgeworth first arrived there; never can I forget her look and accent when she was received by him at his archway, and exclaimed, 'Every thing about you is exactly what one ought to have had wit enough to dream.'"—*Scott's Life*.

§ Sir Adam Fergusson, the schoolfellow of Scott, died on Christmas day, 1854. Mr. Chambers remarks, in a biographical sketch of the good old knight, published shortly after his death, that "many interesting and pleasant memories hovered around the name of this fine old man, and

Unknown, are 'too much for any company.' Tom Purdie is well, and sends his compts. ;* so does Laidlaw.† I have invited Hogg to dine here to-morrow, to meet Miss Edgeworth. She has a great anxiety to see the Bore.

"If you answer this letter, I shall write you a whole budget of news next week ; if not, I hope to see you and Mrs. Wilson in good health next 12th of November, till when I shall remain your silent and affectionate brother-glutton,

J. G. LOCKHART.

"*N. B.*—Hodge-podge is in glory ; also Fish. Potatoes damp and small. Mushrooms begin to look up. Limes abundant. Weather just enough to make cold punch agreeable. Miss Edgeworth says Peter Robertson is a man of *genius*, and if on the stage, would *be a second Liston*. How are the Misses Watson? Give my love to Miss Charlotte when you see her ; and do let me know what passed between you and the Stamp-Master,‡ the Opium-Eater, etc., etc. LL. D. Southey is, I suppose, out of your beat."

The remaining portion of this season spent at Ellera contributed (as appears by allusions in the following letters) not a small share of its occupations to the satisfaction and gratitude of Mr. Blackwood:—

in his removal from the world one important link between the Old and the New is severed. It will be almost startling to our readers to hear that there lived so lately one who could say he had sat on the knee of David Hume." He was about a year older than Sir Walter.

* Scott's faithful servant, and affectionately devoted, humble friend, from the time that Tom was brought before Sir Walter in his capacity as Sheriff, on a charge of poaching, and promoted into his service, till his death, which took place in 1829. A full account of his peculiarities will be found in Lockhart's *Life of Scott*.

† William, or, as he was always called, Willie Laidlaw, was the factor and friend of Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford, and latterly his amanuensis ; and in this case "the manly kindness and consideration of one noble nature was paralleled by the affectionate devotion and admiration of another." His family still retains as sacred the pens with which *he* wrote *Ivanhoe* to his master's dictation ; and he used to tell that at the most intense parts of the story, when Scott happened to pause, which he very seldom did, running off, as he said, "like lintseed oot o' a pock," Laidlaw eagerly asked, "What next?" "Ay, Willie man, what next! that's the devil o't!" so possessed with the reality of the tale was the busy penman. It is a curious subject how much and how little an author such as Scott can control his own creatures. If they live and move, they possess him often as much as he them. That "shaping spirit" within him is by turns master and slave. Some one asked the consummate author of *Esmond*, "Why did you let *Esmond* marry his mother-in-law?" "I! it was'nt I; they did it themselves."

Of his *Lucy's Flitting*, my father said, "'Tis one of the sweetest things in the world: not a few staves of his have I sung in the old days when we used to wash our faces in the Douglas Burn, and you, James, were the herd in the hill. Oh me! those sweet, sweet days o' langsyne, Jamie. Here's Willie Laidlaw's health, gentlemen!"—*Noctes*.

Mr. Laidlaw died in 1845.

‡ Wordsworth.

“EDINBURGH, *September 6, 1823.*”

“MY DEAR SIR:—I hope you would receive the coach parcel yesterday or to-day, and I expect I shall have the pleasure of receiving a packet from you by Monday or Tuesday. Being so anxious to make this a very strong number, I have put nothing up yet till I see what you and Mr. Lockhart send me. He is to send me something on Monday, and if I receive Hayley* in time, I intend to begin the number with it. I have time enough yet, as this is only the 6th, but in the beginning of the week I must be getting on. I rely so confidently upon you doing all that you can, that I feel quite at ease, at least as much as ever I can be till I see the last form fairly made up. I have not received the continuation of your brother’s article; Mr. Robert promised to write him as he is still in the West. Dr. Mylne told me to-day that he had met him a few days ago at Lord John Campbell’s, and that he was pretty well.

“Your friend, Mr. Lowndes from Paisley, was inquiring for you here to-day. I had a letter this morning from Mr. Blair, in which he apologizes for not having fulfilled his engagement, and says, ‘It has not been neglect of your claims, to which I have devoted both time and labor, but a complete want of success in every thing I have attempted. I should have written you some apology, but that I had always hopes of completing something before another month, and the only reason I had for sending nothing, seemed almost too absurd to write. I know nothing else I can say till I have something else than excuses to send. I am at this moment engaged on an essay on a question of language, which I shall be glad if I can send for your number now going on, and I have been making remarks on “Hunter’s Captivity among the Indians,” with the intention of reviewing it, which I shall go on with if I hear nothing from you to the contrary.’

“He gives me no address, but merely dates his letter Dudley. Perhaps you will write him, and tell him not to be over-fastidious, and point out to him something he should do. I have sent Mr. L[ockhart] to-day Alaric’s† paper, in which there is a grand puff of ‘Maga;’ he will forward it to you.

“Maginn writes me in high glee about this number, and says he

* A review of Hayley’s *Memoirs*, Art. X., September, 1823.

† Alaric A. Watts, then editor of the *Leeds Intelligencer*.

will send something. I hope I shall have the pleasure of hearing from you very soon, and I am, my dear sir, yours very truly,

“W. BLACKWOOD.”

“*Saturday Morning, September 20, 1823.*”

“MY DEAR SIR:—Before coming home last night I got all to press, so that I will be able to send you a complete copy of the Number with this, by the mail to-day. You will, I hope, find it a very good one, and though not equal in some respects to No. 79, it is superior in some others. On Wednesday morning I did not expect to have got this length, nor to have had it such a number. By some mistake I did not get back from Mr. L[ockhart] till Wednesday afternoon the slips of O’Doherty on Don Juan and Timothy Tickler. Not hearing from you or him on Tuesday morning, I made up Doubleday’s ‘Picturesque’* with Crewe’s ‘Blunt,’† and ‘Bartlemy Fair,’ by a new correspondent, whom I shall tell you about before I have done; and not knowing how I might be able to make up the Number, I put in Mr. St. Barbe’s ‘Gallery,’‡ and ‘The Poor Man-of-War’s Man,’ both of which had been in types for three or four months. There being no time to lose, I got these four forms to press; I wish now I had waited another day, and kept ‘The Man-of-War’s Man,’ but still I hope it will pass muster, and I hope you will read it without prejudice. You will naturally be saying, Why did I not, when run in such difficulty, make up and put to press your articles on ——, and the Murderers? Here I am afraid you will blame me, but first hear me. When I first read your terrible scraping of —— I enjoyed it excessively, but on seeing it in types, I began to feel a little for the poor monster, and above all, when I considered that it might perhaps so irritate the creature as to drive him to some beastly personal attack upon you, I thought it better to pause. I felt quite sure that if published in its present state, he would be in such a state of rage, he would at all events denounce you everywhere as the author. This would be most unpleasant to your feelings, for now that one can look at the article coolly, there are such coarseness and personal things in it as one would not like to hear it said that you were the author of

* Art. I. in the Number.

† Art. II. a review of Blunt’s *Vestiges of Ancient Manners, &c.*

‡ Art. IV. “Time’s Whispering Gallery.”

There was no time for me to write you with a slip, and I sent it to Mr. —, begging him to consider it, and write me if he thought he could venture to make any alterations. I did not get his packet till Wednesday, and he then wrote that he could not be art or part in the murder of his own dedicator. In these circumstances, I thought it safest to let the article be for next number, that you might correct it yourself. I hope you will think I have done right, and I would anxiously entreat of you to read the article as if it were written by some other person. Few of the readers of 'Maga' know — and weak minds would be startled by some of your strong expressions.* It was chiefly on account of the length of the extracts that I delayed the 'Murderers,' as the extracts from *Don Juan* and *Cobbett* are so very long. The extracts in your article will make eight or nine pages. They are not set up, but I have got them all correctly copied out, and I return you the book. I am not very sure, however, if these horrid details are the kind of reading that the general readers of 'Maga' would like to have. Curious and singular they certainly are; but then the number lies on the drawing-room table, and goes into the hands of females and young people, who might be shocked by such terrible atrocities, but you will judge of this yourself.† Before I received Mr. L.'s MS., I had also made up a very singular story of a suicide, which I received from London, from a person who merely signs himself 'Titus.' O'Doherty's note is by Mr. L. I also wished him to try to make some little alterations in the article, and perhaps add a C. N. note. He had not time, however, to do either the one or the other. Write me what you think of the article, as I fear it will be apt to startle weak minds. However, there is so much talent in it, that I think it will be liked, but not having more I delayed it. 'London Oddities' is by Mr. Croly. 'Timothy, No. IX.' by Dr. Maginn. 'No. X.' by Mr. L. 'Andrew Ardent,' by Stark, and the Answer by Mr. C. Never was any thing better than your 'General Question,' though there are some strong things in it, which you had written in a real savage humor, and which will make certain good folks stare. The 'Director-General' and the 'Prize Dissertation' are capital bits. 'Heaven and Hell' no one could have done but yourself. After getting all these made up, I found I had got ten pages

* These good advices were not lost on the writer.

† The "Murderers" did not appear.

beyond my quantity; and as I could not leave out the small letter this month, I had no room for your articles on 'Tennant' and 'Martin.' I enclose the slips of 'Tennant,' but I have not got 'Martin' set up yet. When you noticed Galt's 'Ringan Gilhaize,' you would recollect, I dare say, Doubleday's 'Tragedy.' I wish much you could give half an hour to it, which would suffice. He has not said much; but in two or three of his letters he has inquired, in his quiet way, if we were not going to have some notice of his Tragedy in 'Maga.' As you probably have not a copy with you, I enclose one, in case you should be tempted to take it up. By the by, the Old Driveller is actually doing an article on 'Ringan Gilhaize.' I have seen him several times lately, and a few days ago, when he stopped half an hour in his carriage at the door, he told me he would give me his remarks on it very soon. I am truly thankful he has not thought of laying his pluckless paws on 'Reginald Dalton.' There really ought to be a splendid article on Reginald. I shall be very anxious till I hear from you, how you like this number.

"W. BLACKWOOD."

"EDINBURGH, *October 18, 1823.*

"MY DEAR SIR:—This has been a busy and a happy week with me. Every night almost have I been receiving packets from you, and yesterday's post brought me the Manifesto, which, you will see, closes so gloriously this glorious number.

"It is indeed a number worthy of the ever-memorable month of October. Though I have given twelve pages extra, besides keeping out the lists, I am obliged to keep 'Wrestliana' for next month.

"I have been terribly hurried to get all to press, but I hope you will find your articles pretty correct. I took every pains I could.

"I hope you will write me so soon as you have run through the number, and tell me how you like it. There is so much of your own that your task will be the easier. 'Tennant' is a delightful article, and will make the little man a foot higher. Hogg is beyond all praise, and he will be a most unreasonable porker if he attempt to raise his bristles in any manner of way. I prefixed 'See *Noctes Ambrosianæ*,' and wrote Mr. L. to insert a few words more in the *Noctes* with regard to it. He did not, however, think this necessary. Every one will be in raptures with 'Isaac Walton;' and the *Noctes* is buoyant, brilliant, and capital from beginning to end.

Well might you say that the 'Manifesto'* was very good. I shall weary till I have a letter from you telling me all about the number, and when you think you will be here.

"I enclose you a copy of a letter I had from Mr. Blair a few days ago, with two articles. The one on Language seems very curious, but it is so interlined and corrected, that I must send him a proof of it, and desire him to send me the conclusion, as it would be a pity to divide it. The other article is an account of Raymond Lulli. It is in his sister's handwriting, and is very amusing, but there was not room for it, and it will answer equally well next month.

"I do not know what on the face of the earth to do with the Old Driveller's critique on 'Ringan Gilhaize.' Whenever I hear a carriage stop, I am in perfect horrors, for I do not know what to say to him. I sent the MS. to Mr. L., but he returned it to me, and told me I ought to print it as it is, as it would please both author and critic.

"I send it to you in perfect despair, and I would most anxiously entreat of you to read it, and advise me what I should do. It is as wretched a piece of drivelling as ever I read, and I am sure it would neither gratify Galt nor any one else, while it would most certainly injure the Magazine. If you cannot be plagued with doing any thing to it, you will at all events return it carefully to me by coach as soon as possible.

"I have at last settled with Hook† for *Percy Mallory*. I hope it will do, though it contains not a little Balaam. There are many inquiries about the 'Foresters.' I hope you are going on. It astonishes even me, what you have done for 'Maga' this last week, and if you are fairly begun to the 'Foresters,' Stark will soon be driving on with it.

"I enclose slips of Mr. St. Barbe's article, and an amusing one by Titus. With these and Stark's article, besides several others, I have a great deal already for next number. I am, my dear sir, yours very truly,
W. BLACKWOOD."

We come now to the spring of 1824. In the merry month of

* A short article, chiefly addressed to Charles Lamb, on his exaggerated displeasure at a critical observation by Southey.

† *Percy Mallory*, 3 vols., 12mo., published in December, 1823. It was written by Dr. James Hook, Dean of Worcester, brother of Theodore Hook. He was also author of *Pen Owen*, &c. Born 1773, died 1828.

May the usual happy party filling "His Majesty's Royal Mail" set out for the Lakes. Travelling in those days was a matter of more serious consideration than now. The journey to Westmoreland was taken as far as Carlisle per coach; the remaining distance was posted. The arrival at Elleray generally took place between eight and nine o'clock in the evening, long after sunlight had left the skies. A number of trivial associations are remembered in connection with the approach to this beloved place. The opening of the avenue-gate was a sound never to be forgotten. The sudden swing of the carriage at a particular part of the drive, when it came in contact with the low-lying branches of trees (seldom pruned), dripping with a new fallen shower of rain, would send a whole torrent of drops upon the expectant faces that were peeping out to catch a first glimpse of the house, which, lighted up, stood on its elevation like a beacon to guide travellers in the dark.

This new Elleray was as much indebted to natural position as was the old. Trellised all over, there was no more than the space for windows uncovered by honeysuckle and roses. In a very short time it became as great a favorite as the old cottage; which, had it been lost sight of altogether, might have been more regretted. A letter from Mr. Blackwood will show what the Professor had in contemplation for this summer's work.

"EDINBURGH, 6th May, 1824.

"MY DEAR SIR:—I had so much to do yesterday that I had not time to write you; I hope you got all safe to Elleray, and as the weather is so delightful, I expect to hear in a day or two from you that you have fairly begun to the 'Foresters,'* and are driving on it and every thing else to your heart's content. That you may see what I am doing, I send you what I have made up, and the slips of a long article by Dr. M'Neill,† which I received a few days ago. I am not sure if there will be room for it in this number, but we shall see. It is curious and valuable.

"I wish very much you would write a humorous article upon that thin-skinned person Tommy Moore's 'Captain Rock.' This is the way the book should be treated. We have plenty of the serious *matériel* in Mr. R.'s article, and if you would only take up the

* One of Wilson's tales. It was not published until the following June, 1825.

† The Professor's brother-in-law, now Sir John M'Neill, G. C. B.; at that time in Persia.

Captain in your own glorious way, poor Tommy would be fairly dished. As you probably have not the two last numbers of 'Maga' with you, I enclose them with 'Captain Rock.'

"I have not heard from Dr. Maginn yet, which I am quite annoyed at. He proposed himself that he would send me off regularly every Monday a packet under Croker's cover.

"W. BLACKWOOD."

The next letter is from Lockhart, and is of varied interest :—

"161 REGENT STREET, *Monday*, 1824.

"DEAR PROFESSOR:—Many thanks for your welcome epistle, which, on returning from Bristol yesterday, I found here with 'Maga,' and a note of Blackwood's. By the way, you will be glad to hear I found poor Christie doing well, both in health and business. I spent three very pleasant days with him. I have seen a host of lions, among others, Hook, Canning, Rogers, Croly, Maginn, Captain Morris* (not the Dr.), Botherby, Lady Davy, Lady C. Lamb—**** (I copy these stars from a page in *Adam Blair*), Miss Baillie, old Gifford, Matthews, Irving, Allan Cunningham, Wilkie, Colburn, and Coleridge. The last well worth all the rest, and 500 more such into the bargain. Ebony should merely keep him in his house for a summer, with Johnny Dow† in a cupboard, and he would drive the windmills before him. I am to dine at Mr.

* Charles Morris, once the idol of clubmen in London, was born in 1745, and died on July 11, 1838, ninety-three years of age! Mr. Lockhart's parenthetical reference to the Doctor is, of course, to his own *nom de plume* as Dr. Peter Morris, of Pensharpe Hall, Aberyswith. The following allusion to the "Captain" is taken from M. Esquiros' *English at Home* :—

"Among the last names connected with the Beef-steak Club figures that of Captain Morris. He was born in 1745, but survived most of the merry guests whom he amused by his gayety, his rich imagination, and his poetical follies. He was the sun of the table, and composed some of the most popular English ballads. The Nestor of song, he himself compared his muse to the flying-fish. At the present day his Bacchic strains require the clinking of glass, and the joyous echoes of the Club, of which Captain Morris was poet-laureate. Type of the true Londoner, he preferred town to country, and the shady side of Pall Mall to the most brilliant sunshine illuminating nature. Toward the end of his life, however, he let himself be gained over by the charms of the rural life he had ridiculed, and retired to a villa at Brockham given him by the Duke of Norfolk. Before starting, he bade farewell to the Club in verse. He reappeared there as a visitor in 1835, and the members presented him with a large silver bowl bearing an appropriate inscription. Although at that time eighty-nine years of age, he had lost none of his gayety of heart. He died a short time after, and with him expired the glory of the Club of which he had been one of the last ornaments. Only the name has survived of this celebrated gathering where so much wit was expended, but it was of the sort which evaporates with the steam of dishes and bowls of punch."

† An Edinburgh short-hand writer.

Gillman's one of these days. Irving,* you may depend upon it, is a pure humbug. He has about three good attitudes, and the lower notes of his voice are superb, with a fine manly tremulation that sets women mad, as the roar of a noble bull does a field of kine; but beyond this he is nothing, really nothing. He has no sort of real earnestness, feeble, pumped up, boisterous, overlaid stuff is his staple; he is no more a Chalmers than —† is a Jeffrey. I shall do an article that will finish him by and by.*** Neither Maginn nor any one else has spoken to me about the concerns and prospects of our friend. My belief is, that he has come over by Croker's advice to assist Theodore in *Bull*,‡ and to do all sorts of by jobs. I also believe that Croker thinks he himself will have a place in the cabinet in case of the Duke of York's being King, and of course M. looks forward to being snugly set somewhere in that event. It is obvious that Hook, Maginn, and all this set hate Canning; and indeed a powerful party of high *ton* (Duke of York at head thereof) is forming itself against his over-conciliation system. I am not able to judge well, but I still believe that Canning is the man no Tory Ministry can do without; moreover, that the Marquis of Hertford (the great man with Croker's party, and the destined *Premier* of Frederick I.) has not a character to satisfy the country gentlemen of England. I met Canning at dinner one day at Mr. Charles Ellis's; the Secretary asked very kindly after you, and mentioned that 'he had had the pleasure of making acquaintance with Mr. Blackwood, a very intelligent man indeed.' I am to dine with him on Saturday, when I shall see more of him. He was obviously in a state of exhausted spirits (and strength indeed) when I met him. Rogers told me *he knew* that Jeffrey was mortally annoyed with Hazlitt's article on the periodicals being in the *Edinburgh Review*, and that it was put there by Thomas Thomson and John A. Murray,§ who were co-editors, while 'the king of men'

* Edward Irving, the celebrated preacher, was at this time sailing onwards on the full tide of popularity. Mrs. Oliphant, in her recent biography, writes thus regarding his famous sermon preached during this year to the London Missionary Society: "There can be little doubt that it was foolishness to most of his hearers, and that after the fascination of his eloquence was over, nine-tenths of them would recollect, with utter wonder, or even with possible contempt, that wildest visionary conception."

† A well-known Whig lawyer.

‡ The *John Bull* newspaper, edited by Theodore Hook.

§ Afterwards Lord Murray.

was in Switzerland.* Wordsworth is in town at present, but confined with his eyes. I thought it might appear obtrusive if I called, and have stayed away. John Murray seems the old man; the *Quarterly* alone sustains him. Maginn says he makes £4,000 per annum of it, after all expenses, and as they really sell 14,000, I can easily credit it. Colburn is making a great fortune by his Library and altogether. I meet no one who ever mentions his magazine but to laugh at it. The No. of *Ebony* is fair, but not first-rate. Your talk of Murders is exquisite, but otherwise the *Noctes* too local by far. Maginn on Ritter Bann not so good as might be. The article on Matthews (I don't know whose) is just, and excellent criticism. This wedding of James's came on me rather suddenly. Perhaps you will be delayed in Auld Reekie for the sake of witnessing that day's celebration. My own motions are still unfix'd, but I suspect I shall linger here too long to think of a land journey or the lakes. More likely to make a run in September, and see you in your glory. De Quincey is not here, but expected.

Yours,

"J. G. L.

"I don't hear any thing of *Matthew Wald* here, but I would fain hope it may be doing in spite of that. Ask Blackwood to let me hear any thing. Can I do any thing for him here? I am picking up materials for the Baron Lauerwinkel's or some other body's letters to his kinsfolk, 3 vols. post 8vo. Pray write a first-rate but *brief* puff of *Matthew* for next number *Blackwood*, or if not, say so, that I may do it myself, or make the Doctor.† I shall write B—— one of these days if any thing occurs, and at any rate he shall have a letter to C. N. speedily, from Timothy, on the *Quarterly* or *Westminster* Reviews. A *Noctes* from me positively."

Passing over the various other topics touched on in this letter, how strangely do these words about "Frederick I." now sound upon the ear! How little did the sagacious foresight of politicians calculate that every day an invisible hand was preparing the crown for a little child of five years of age, and that in the short space of eighteen years, no fewer than five heirs of the royal line should

* From Mr. Innes's *Memoir of Thomas Thomson*, I see that the editorship of the *Edinburgh Review* was left in his hands more than once. "This foremost of Record scholars, the learned legal antiquarian, and constitutional lawyer," died in 1852, aged eighty-four.

† *The History of Matthew Wald*, a novel by Mr. Lockhart. It was reviewed in the May number of *Blackwood*.

pass away, leaving a clear and uninterrupted passage for the Princess Victoria to the throne of these realms!

The next letter is equally characteristic:—

“ABBOTSFORD, *Sunday, 2d January, 1825.*

“MY DEAR WILSON:—I left London on Wednesday evening, and arrived here in safety within forty-six hours of the ‘Bull and Mouth.’

“Our friend the Bailie* might probably show you a letter of Dr. Stoddart† about getting some *literary* articles for the *New Times*. I saw Old Slop, and introduced Maginn to him. What the Doctor and he might afterwards agree about I can’t say, but I do hope there may be a permanent connection between them, as among newspeople there is no doubt Stoddart is by far the most respectable man, and there is every reason to fear M.’s propensities tending more frequently to the inferior orders of the *Plume*.

“For myself, I accepted Dr. Stoddart’s offer of his newspaper, to be repaid by a few occasional paragraphs throughout the year; and upon his earnest entreaty for some introduction to you, I ventured to say that I thought you would have no objection to receive the *New Times* on the same terms.

“Whether he has at once acted on this hint I know not, but thought it best to write you *in case*.

“After all, it is a pleasant thing to have a daily paper at one’s breakfast-table all the year through.

“It can cost us little trouble to repay him by a dozen half-columns—half of these may be puffs of ourselves, by the way—and Southey and others have agreed to do the same thing on the same terms. So if the *New Times* comes, and you don’t wish it upon these terms, pray let me know this, that I may advise Slop.

“London is deserted by the gentlefolks in the Christmas holidays, so that I have little news. I placed my brother, quite to my satisfaction and his, at Blackheath. As for the matter personal to myself, of which I spoke to you, I can only say that I left it in Croker’s

* Mr. Blackwood.

† Sir John Stoddart (at this time editor of *The New Times*, a morning paper, which was started about 1817, and continued until 1828) was born in 1773, and died in 1856. Besides his political writings, he was the author of *Remarks on Local Scenery and Manners in Scotland in 1799 and 1800*. 2 vols. 1801; *An Essay on the Philosophy of Language*; and some translations. In the political caricatures and satires of that day, he was continually introduced as “Dr. Slop.”

hands; he promising to exert himself to the utmost whenever the high and mighty with whom the decision rests should come back to London. I think, upon the whole, that there is nothing to be gained or denied except Lord Melville's personal voice; and it will certainly be very odd if, every thing else being got over, he in this personal and direct manner shows himself not indifferent, but positively adverse. I entertain, therefore, considerable hope, and if I fail shall not be disappointed certainly, but d—d angry.

“I shall be in Edinburgh, I think, on Thursday evening, when I hope to find you and yours as well in health, and better in other respects, than when I left you. May this year be happier than the last! Yours always,
J. G. LOCKHART.”

A letter from Mr. De Quincey, after a long silence, again brings him before us, as graceful and interesting as ever, though also, alas! as heavily beset with his inevitable load of troubles. His letter is simply dated “London;” for obvious reasons, that great world was a safer seclusion than even the Vale of Grasmere:—

“LONDON, *Thursday, February 24, 1825.*

“MY DEAR WILSON:—I write to you on the following occasion:—Some time ago, perhaps nearly two years ago, Mr. Hill, a lawyer, published a book on Education,* detailing a plan on which his brothers had established a school at Hazelwood, in Warwickshire. This book I reviewed in the *London Magazine*, and in consequence received a letter of thanks from the author, who, on my coming to London about midsummer last year, called on me. I have since become intimate with him, and excepting that he is a sad Jacobin (as I am obliged to tell him once or twice a month), I have no one fault to find with him, for he is a very clever, amiable, good creature as ever existed; and in particular directions his abilities strike me as really very great indeed. Well, his book has just been reviewed in the last *Edinburgh Review* (of which some copies have been in town about a week). This service has been done him, I suppose, *through* some of his political friends (for he is connected with Brougham, Lord Lansdowne, old Bentham, etc.), but I understand *by* Mr. Jeffrey. Now Hill, in common with multitudes in this

* The work referred to here is, “Plans for the Government and Liberal Instruction of Boys in large numbers, drawn from Experience.” 8vo. London. 1823.

Babylon—who will not put their trust in Blackwood as in God (which, you know, he ought to do)—yet privately adores him as the devil; and indeed publicly, too, is a great *proneur* of Blackwood. For, in spite of his Jacobinism, he is liberal and inevitably just to real wit. His fear is, that Blackwood may come as Nemesis, and compel him to regorge any puffing and cramming which Tiff has put into his pocket, and is earnest to have a letter addressed in an influential quarter to prevent this. I alleged to him that I am not quite sure but it is an affront to a Professor, to presume that he has any connection as contributor or any thing else, to any work which he does not publicly avow as his organ for communicating with the world of letters. He answers that it would be so in him—but that an old friend may write *sub rosa*. I rejoin that I know not but you may have cut Blackwood—even as a subscriber—a whole lustrium ago. He rebuts—by urging a just compliment paid to you as a supposed contributor, in the *News of Literature and Fashion*, but a moon or two ago. Seriously, I have told him that I know not what was the extent of your connection with Blackwood at *any* time; and that I conceive the labors of your Chair in the University must now leave you little leisure for any but occasional contributions, and therefore for no regular cognizance of the work as director, etc. However, as all that he wishes—is simply an interference to save him from any very severe article, and not an article in his favor, I have ventured to ask of you if you hear of any such thing, to use such influence as must naturally belong to you in your general character (whether maintaining any connection with Blackwood or not), to get it softened. On the whole, I suppose no such article is likely to appear. But to oblige Hill I make the application. He has no *direct* interest in the prosperity of Hazelwood: he is himself a barrister in considerable practice, and of some standing, I believe: but he takes a strong paternal interest in it, all his brothers (who are accomplished young men, I believe) being engaged in it. They have already had one shock to stand: a certain Mr. Place, a Jacobin friend of the school till just now, having taken pet with it—and removed his sons. Now this Place, who was formerly a tailor—leather-breeches maker—and habit-maker—having made a fortune and finished his studies—is become an immense authority as a political and reforming head with Bentham, etc., as also with the *Westminster Review*, in which quarter he is supposed to have

the weight of nine times nine men; whence, by the way, in the 'circles' of the booksellers, the Review has got the name of the *Breeches Review*.

"Thus much concerning the occasion of my letter. As to myself—though I have written not as one who labors under much depression of mind—the fact is, I *do* so. At this time calamity presses upon me with a heavy hand:—I am quite free of opium:* but it has left the liver, which is the Achilles' heel of almost every human fabric, subject to affections which are tremendous for the weight of wretchedness attached to them. To fence with these with the one hand, and with the other to maintain the war with the wretched business of hack author, with all its horrible degradations—is more than I am able to bear. At this moment I have not a place to hide my head in. Something I meditate—I know not what—'Itaque e conspectu omnium abiit.' With a good publisher and leisure to premeditate what I write, I might yet liberate myself: after which, having paid everybody, I would slink into some dark corner—educate my children—and show my face in the world no more.

"If you should ever have occasion to write to me, it will be best to address your letter either 'to the care of Mrs. De Quincey, Rydal Nab, Westmoreland' (Fox Ghyll is sold, and will be given up in a few days), or 'to the care of M. D. Hill, Esq., 11 King's Bench Walk, Temple:—but for the present, I think rather to the latter: for else suspicions will arise that I am in Westmoreland, which, if I were not, might be serviceable to me; but if, as I am in hopes of accomplishing sooner or later, I should be—might defeat my purpose.

"I beg my kind regards to Mrs. Wilson and my young friends, whom I remember with so much interest as I last saw them at Elleray,—and am, my dear Wilson, very affectionately yours,

"THOMAS DE QUINCEY."

In the following letter from my father to his friend, Mr. Findlay, of Easter Hill, he refers to the death of his venerable mother, which took place in December, 1824. The accident to my mother, to which allusion is made, occurred in the previous summer; he was driving with her and the children one day in the neighborhood of Ambleside, when the axletree gave way, and the carriage was over

* To the very last he asserted this, but the habit, although modified, was never abandoned.

turned while ascending a steep hill. No very bad consequences to any of the party ensued at the time. Mrs. Wilson, however, felt the shock to her nervous system, which affected her health so as to cause her husband much anxiety.

“29 ANN STREET, *March 2, 1825.*”

“MY DEAREST ROBERT:—Much did I regret not being at home when you called upon us lately. Both Mrs. Wilson and myself felt sincerely for your wife and yourself on your late affliction. I had heard from Miss Sym that there were few hopes, but also that the poor soul was comfortable and happy, and now no doubt she is in heaven.

“I am sure that you too would feel for all of us when you heard of my mother’s death; she was, you know, one of the best of women, and although old, seventy-two, yet in all things so young that we never feared to lose her till within a few days of her departure; she led a happy and a useful life, and now must be enjoying her reward. I have suffered great anxiety about Mrs. Wilson; that accident* was a bad one, and during summer she was most alarmingly ill. She is still very weak, and her constitution has got a shake, but I trust in God it is not such as may not be got over, and that the summer will restore her to her former health. She

* The following letter from Principal Baird alludes to the same accident:—

“UNIVERSITY CHAMBERS, *July 23d, 1824.*”

“MY DEAR SIR:—In the first place, to begin methodically, I beg to congratulate you on the hair-breadth escape which the newspapers told us you so happily made when your horse was restive and your gig on the brink of a precipice; and, in the second place, I beg to remind you that the best expression of your gratitude for the deliverance, will be to—compose some paraphrases and translations for the use of the Church. I shall be glad to learn, and to see proof that you are thus employed.

“I have got several excellent pieces from Mrs. Hemans and Mrs. Grant, of Laggan, lately, in addition to those which I had formerly from Miss Joanna Baillie, &c.

“I am at present busy in the transmission of papers through the Church in respect to the General Assembly’s plan for increasing the means of education, of religious instruction chiefly, in the Highlands and Islands. In three contiguous parishes there is a population of about 20,000, and above 18,000 of these poor people have never been taught to read. In another district about 47,000 out of 50,000 have not been taught. Ought these things so to be?

“I am particularly interested in the state of Iona. Ill supplied with a single school, it has no place of worship. The minister is bound to preach to them only four times in the year. He preaches on a hill-side, and from that neighboring coast of the mainland; he has an audience on that hill-side of never less than 1,000 persons. This is the state of Iona, from which came at a remote day to our mainland the light of literature and religion. I wish you would write a petition by Iona for consideration and help. St. Kilda’s privations have been supplied by public sympathy and bounty. Let us not neglect Iona, amid the ‘ruins of which whose plaids would not grow warmer?’

“I am, with great regard, yours most faithfully,

“GEORGE BAIRD.”

looks well, but is not so, and many a wretched and sleepless hour do I pass on her account.

“It is so long since the meeting of the good old Professor’s* friends, that I need now say no more than that all the arrangements met with my most complete approbation, that I read the account with peculiar pleasure, and especially your speech and Dr. Macgill’s. Whatever was in your hands could not be otherwise than proper and right. I have been much worried with my own affairs, —— having entangled me in much mischief, even after he had ruined me, but I am perfectly reconciled to such things, and while my wife and family are well and happy, so will I be. Could I see Jane perfectly restored, I should dismiss all other anxieties from my mind entirely.

“I should like much indeed to see you at Easter Hill for a day or two ; my plans are yet all unfixed. Perhaps I may take a walk as far early in May.

“I am building a house in Gloucester Place, a small street leading from the Circus into Lord Moray’s grounds. This I am doing because I am poor, and money yielding no interest. If Jane is better next winter, I intend to carry my plan into effect of taking into my house two or three young gentlemen. Mention this in any quarter. Remember me kindly to your excellent wife. Your family is now most anti-Malthusian. Believe me ever, my dearest Robert, your most affectionate friend,
JOHN WILSON.”

The house in Gloucester Place was completed and ready for habitation in 1826, and thenceforth was his home during the remainder of his life. The plan of receiving young gentlemen into his house was never put into execution.

About this time a proposal was made that a separate Chair of Political Economy should be instituted in the University of Edinburgh, and that the appointment should be conferred upon Mr. J. R. McCulloch, then editor of the *Scotsman* newspaper. Wilson’s professorship combined the two subjects of Moral Philosophy and Political Economy, but up to this period he had not lectured on the latter topic: he therefore resented the movement as an interference with his vested rights, and by appealing to Government succeeded in crushing the project. After this controversy (which

* Professor Jardine.

included a sharp pamphlet, in which the Professor, under the *nom de plume* of Mordecai Mullion, dealt somewhat freely with Mr. M'Culloch), he lectured on political economy. Two years later, we find that he was an advocate of free trade, as may be seen from his letter to Dr. Moir in the next chapter. Could his new studies—consequent upon complying with his friend Patrick Robertson's advice to prepare a course of lectures on political economy—have led to this result? It is more than probable that De Quincey may also have influenced his opinions on this head.

The following letters, from Mr. Patrick Robertson, Mr. Huskisson, Mr. Canning, and Mr. Peel, will show the interest taken by Wilson's personal and political friends as to the proposed Chair:—

“EDINBURGH, *Tuesday, 14th June, 1825.*”

“MY DEAR WILSON:—I have your last. Lockhart and Hope concur with me in thinking that the idea of a petition is out of the question. It would not do to enter the field in this way, unless victory were perilled on the success; and what will be the lethargy of our leading Tories and the activity of the Whigs? I should fear the result of a contest in this form. You seem to me to have made every possible exertion; and there is only one thing more I must urge upon you, a positive pledge to lecture on this subject *next winter*. You are quite adequate to the task, and this without leaving Ellera. Books can easily be sent; and if you don't know about corn and raw produce, and bullion and foreign supplies, so as to be ready to write in December, you are not the man who went through the more formidable task of your first course. A pledge of this kind would be useful, and when redeemed (if the storm were now over), would be a complete bar against future invasions of your rights. Think of this, or rather determine to do this without thinking of it, and it is done.

“I don't see why you should leave your charming cottage to come down here at present, nor how you can be of any further service than you have been. It is strange there is no answer from the Big Wigs. Lord Melville writes nobody, and I fancy William Dundas has his hands full enough of his city canvass since that insane ass, —, started. I am in hopes you will hear soon. Both Hope and Robert Dundas are anxious to do all in their power, and expect this plot will be defeated; but I see no way of preventing

it ultimately, except your actual lectures on the subject. None of us will come up this year, that you may have time to study, so study you must; and don't you understand the old principle upon which the whole of this nonsensical science hangs? I assure you, without jest, we all deeply feel the insult thus offered to you and the party, and I cannot believe it will ever be carried through. My hope is in Peel more than all the rest. Oh, for one dash of poor Londonderry! Ever yours faithfully,
PAT. ROBERTSON."

"BOARD OF TRADE, 15th June, 1825.

"SIR:—I have had the honor to receive your letter of the 8th instant, stating the grounds on which you conceive that the erection of a new professorship in the University of Edinburgh, for the purpose of lecturing on Political Economy, would be an unfair interference with the rights, and consequent duties, which belong to the Chair of Moral Philosophy.

"Without feeling it necessary to go into the question how far the mode of lecturing on political economy which has hitherto prevailed in the University of Edinburgh is the most desirable, and exactly that in which I should concur, if the whole distribution of instruction in that University were to be recast, I have no difficulty in stating that every attention ought to be paid, in looking at the present application, to the circumstances and consideration which you have stated.

"The state of this case, as far as I know, is this:—An application has been made by memorial, from certain individuals, to the Government, for the sanction of the Crown to establish a professorship of Political Economy in the University, the subscribers offering to provide a permanent fund for founding the new Chair, in like manner as has been done by a private gentleman (Mr. Drummond) in the University of Oxford.

"This memorial has been referred by Lord Liverpool to the University of Edinburgh for their opinion, and no final decision will be taken by the Government until that opinion shall be received. Should the Senatus Academicus not recommend a compliance with the prayer of the Memorial, I have every reason to believe that it will not receive the sanction of Government, and I have conveyed that impression to the person who had put the memorial into my hands.

"I must therefore refer you, as one of that *Senatus Academicus*, to your colleagues, who will, I have no doubt, give that opinion which shall appear to them most conducive to the furtherance of the important duties of the University, without prejudice to the individual right of any member of that learned body. I have the honor to be, sir, your most obedient servant,

"W. HUSKISSON."

FROM MR. CANNING.

"FOREIGN OFFICE, *June 21, 1825.*

"DEAR SIR:—The alarm under which your letter of the 8th was written, has, I think, subsided long ago, in consequence of the answers which your representations received from other quarters. I only write lest you should think that I had neglected your letter, or felt no interest in your concerns. I am, dear sir, your obedient and faithful servant,

GEO. CANNING.

"MR. PROFESSOR WILSON."

FROM SIR ROBERT PEEL.

"WHITEHALL, *June 21, 1825.*

[*Private.*]

"SIR:—The project of establishing a new and separate Professorship of Political Economy in the University of Edinburgh did not receive any encouragement from me. I understand that it is altogether abandoned; and I have only, therefore, to assure you, that before I would have given my assent to it under any circumstances, I should have considered it my duty to ascertain that the institution of a new Chair was absolutely necessary for the purposes for which it professed to be instituted, and that the just privileges of other professors were not affected by it. I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

ROBERT PEEL.

"PROFESSOR WILSON, ETC., ETC., *Edinburgh.*"

He did not "leave his charming cottage," but very soon found more interesting work than political economy to occupy his thoughts. Mr. Blackwood soon after writes of his "going on with another volume," and also says, "I rejoice, too, that you are preparing your *Outlines.*"* Of the "other volume" nothing more was heard. Some small portion of its intended contents was probably con-

* In December, 1825, I find advertised as "speedily to be published, in one vol., 8vo., *Prospectus of a Course of Moral Inquiry*, by John Wilson, Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh;" this book, however, never appeared.

tributed to a work presently to be spoken of; but from the letters in reference to that subject, it may be conjectured that some tales were written by him, which, if they ever appeared in print, are not hitherto identified with his name. Besides the three tales which had already been published, *Lights and Shadows*, *Margaret Lyndsay*, and *The Foresters*, and two volumes of poems, no separate works of his appeared until the *Recreations of Christopher North*, in 1843. That he did not carry out his intention of preparing his *Outlines* is cause of regret.

The next letter from Mr. Lockhart contains some reference to a literary project, of which the first idea appears to have originated with him. The name of *Janus* will doubtless be entirely new to the readers of this generation, and there are not many now living who are aware of the fact that the volume published under that name, in November, 1825, was chiefly the composition of Wilson and Lockhart. The fact that the publication was intrusted to any other hands than those of Mr. Blackwood I can only attribute to the fact—apparent, from some allusions in Mr. Lockhart's letters—that he had by this time become rather impatient of Mr. Blackwood's independent style of treating his contributions. But for him the book would never have appeared, and as certainly my father would never have contributed. The plan was suggested apparently by the popularity of a class of books that began to appear in London in the preceding year, under the title of *Annuals*, such as the *Forget Me Not*, the *Amulet*, and *Friendship's Offering*. They were adorned with engravings, and contained contributions from the pens of distinguished writers. The projectors of *Janus* thought it most prudent to make the success of their *Annual* depend on its literary merits alone, but it turned out that they were mistaken. Lockhart and Wilson undertook the editorship, and contributed the great bulk of the articles.* The following is a letter from Mr. Lockhart bearing on this subject. He was on the eve of starting for Ireland with Sir Walter Scott:—

“EDINBURGH, July 8th—(Starting).

“MY DEAR WILSON:—I am exceedingly sorry to find myself

* Several letters on the subject have been sent me, through the kindness of John Boyd, Esq., of the firm of Oliver & Boyd, the publishers of *Janus*, which show the interest and zeal with which the work was carried through.

leaving Edinburgh without having seen again or heard from you. I have no time to write at length, so take business in form.

“1st. I have seen Dr. Graham and David Ritchie to-day. They both are in spirits about the affair of the P. E.* chair. Peel has written to the Principal *most favorably* for you, and they both think the matter is settled. However, it is still possible a *Senatus Academicus* may be called, in which case you will of course come down.

2d. I have seen Boyd. He is in high glee, and has got many subscriptions already for *Janus*. I have settled that I shall, on reaching Chiefswood by the 12th of August, be in condition to keep *Janus* at work regularly, and therefore you must let me have, then and there, a quantity of your best MS. If you think of any engravings, the sooner you communicate with Boyd as to that matter the better, as he will send to London for designs, and grudge no expense; but this is a thing which does require timely notice.

“I confess I regard all that as a very secondary concern. In the mean time I have plenty of things ready for *Janus*; and the moment I have from you a fine poem or essay, or any thing to begin with (for I absolutely demand that you should *lead*), I am ready to see the work go to press.

“I therefore expect, when I reach home, to find there lying for me a copious packet from Elleray.

“3d. Constable is about to publish a *Popular Encyclopædia*, in 4 vols. 8vo, and he has been able to get Scott, Jeffrey, Mackenzie to contribute. The articles are on *an average* one page and a half each, but each contributor, having undertaken a number of articles, is at liberty to divide the space among *them* as he pleases. I have undertaken a few heraldic and biographical things, and he is very anxious that you should do the same.

“For example, *Locke, Hobbes, Dr. Reid*: Would you take in hand to give him two or three pages each (double columns), condensing the most wanted *popular* information as to these men? If so, he would gladly jump, and I should certainly be much gratified, because I perceive in him the most sincere desire to have connection literary with your honor.

“Pray address to me, care of Captain Scott, 15th Hussars, Dublin, if you wish to write to me immediately; if not, my motions are so uncertain that you had much better write to Constable himself, or

* Political Economy.

to me when I return. As to the articles, nine of them are wanted *this year*.

“I beg my best respects to Mrs. Wilson, and to all the bairns, greeting. Yours affectionately,
J. G. LOCKHART.”

About that time there was no small excitement at Elleray in the anticipation of a visit from Sir Walter Scott. Mr. Canning was also in the neighborhood, and there was a desire to do honor to both by some grand demonstration. On the 17th August, Lockhart writes to Wilson, “On board the steamboat ‘Harlequin,’ half-way from Dublin to Holyhead:”—

“MY DEAR WILSON:—Here we are, alive and hearty. Sir Walter Scott, Anne Scott, and myself; and I write you at the desire of the worthy Baronet to say, that there has been some sort of negotiation about meeting Mr. Canning at your friend Bolton’s. He fears Mr. Canning will be gone ere now, but is resolved still to take Windermere *en route*. We shall, therefore, sleep at Lancaster on Friday night, and breakfast at Kendal, Saturday morning. Sir W. leaves it to you to dispose of him for the rest of that day. You can, if Mr. Canning is at Storrs, let Col. Bolton know the movements of Sir W., and so forth; or you can sport us a dinner yourself; or you can, if there is any inconvenience, order one and beds for us at Admiral Ullock’s. We mean to remain over the Sunday to visit you, at any rate; so do about the Saturday as you like. I believe Sir W. expects to call both on Wordsworth and Southey in going northwards; but I suppose if Canning is with you, they are with you also. Canning in his letter to Scott calls you ‘Lord High Admiral of the Lakes.’

“I am delighted to find that there is this likelihood of seeing you, and trust Mrs. Wilson is thoroughly restored. I have heard from nobody in Scotland but my wife, who gives no news but strictly domestic. Perhaps this will not reach you in time to let us find a line at Kendal informing us of your arrangements. Yours always,
“J. G. LOCKHART.”

Sir Walter, with his daughter, Miss Scott, and Mr. Lockhart, visited Elleray, as was promised, and remained there for three days. Of this meeting Mr. Lockhart writes:—“On the banks of Winder-

mere we were received with the warmth of old friendship by Mr. Wilson and one whose grace and gentle goodness could have found no lovelier or fitter home than Elleray, except where she now is.”*

All honor was done to the illustrious guest, and my father arranged that he should be entertained by a beautiful aquatic spectacle. It was a scene worthy a royal progress, and resembled some of those rare pageants prepared for the reception of regal brides beneath the dazzling sunshine of southern skies. “There were brilliant cavalcades through the woods in the mornings, and delicious boatings on the lake by moonlight, and the last day ‘The Admiral of the Lake’ presided over one of the most splendid regattas that ever enlivened Windermere. Perhaps there were not fewer than fifty barges following in the Professor’s radiant procession when it paused at the Point of Storrs, to admit into the place of honor the vessel that carried kind and happy Mr. Bolton and his guest. The three Bards of the Lakes led the cheers that hailed Scott and Canning; and the music and sunshine, flags, streamers, and gay dresses, the merry hum of voices, and the rapid splashing of innumerable oars, made up a dazzling mixture of sensations, as the flotilla wound its way among richly-foliaged islands, and along bays and promontories peopled with enthusiastic spectators.”†

My father invited various friends from Scotland at this gay and notable time, to join in the general welcome given to Scott; among others, he asked his old and esteemed friend the Professor of Natural History, Mr. Jameson,‡ who was reluctantly detained by his duties as editor of *The Edinburgh Philosophical Journal*: his letter is of sufficient interest to be given here:—

“MY DEAR SIR:—I have delayed from day to day answering your kind letter, in expectation of being able to make such arrangements as would allow me the pleasure of visiting you, but in vain; and now I find, from unforeseen circumstances, that I must forego the happiness of a ramble with you this season. My sister, or rather sisters, who were to accompany me, and who beg their best wishes and kindest thanks to you for your polite invitation, wish all printers, and printers’ devils, at the bottom of the Red Sea. They have been in a state of semi-insurrection against me for some

* *Life of Scott.*

† *Ibid.*

‡ Professor Jameson died in 1858, *at*at eighty.

time, owing to the putting off of the expedition, but are now resigned to their fate.

“Edinburgh is at present very dull, and very stupid, and we are only kept alive by the visits of interesting strangers.

“The adventures of the regatta have reached this, and my sisters expect to hear from Miss Wilson, who, they presume, acted a distinguished part in the naval conflict, an animated account of all that befell the admirals. Some German philosophers say that a man—that I presume does not exclude a professor—may be in many places at the same time. I was rather inclined to doubt the accuracy of this notion, but now it seems to be confirmed in yourself, for, on the *same day*, you were buried at Edinburgh, and alive and merry at Elleray.*

“All here join in best wishes to your family and Mrs. Wilson, and believe me to remain yours faithfully and sincerely,

“ROB. JAMESON.

“My dear sir, I hope you will not forget your promise of a paper for *The Edinburgh Philosophical Journal*. The effects of the scenery of a country on its population would form a very interesting topic, and one which affords an ample field for interesting observation.”

Soon after returning to Scotland, Lockhart writes, not in the best of spirits. What the opening allusion is to, I do not know:—

“CHIEFSWOOD, *Wednesday*, 1825.

“MY DEAR WILSON:—I have received your letter, and shall not say more in regard to one part of its contents than that I am heartily sensible to your kindness, and shall in all time coming re-

* This refers to a practical joke of Mr. Lockhart's, but not known at the time to have originated with him; a joke which might have ended in painful results had it come untimeously to the ears of any one nearly connected with its object. It was no less than a formal announcement of Professor Wilson's sudden death in the leading columns of *The Weekly Journal*, along with a panegyric upon his character, written in the usual style adopted when noting the death of celebrated persons. I have not been able to find the paper, but I believe it was only inserted in a very few copies. On a later occasion Mr. Lockhart amused himself in a similar manner, by appending to a paper on Lord Robertson's poems in *The Quarterly Review*, the following distich:

“Here lies the peerless paper lord, Lord Peter,
Who broke the laws of God, and man, and metre.”

These lines were, however, only in one copy, which was sent to the senator; but the joke lay in Lord Robertson's imagining that it was in the whole edition.

spect most religiously the feelings which I cannot but honor in you as to that matter. I hope I may be as brief in my *words* about Mrs. Wilson. I trust the cool weather, and quiet of a few weeks, will have all the good effects you look forward to, and that I shall have the pleasure of seeing you all well and gladsome, in spite of all that hath been in the month of November. As for *you*, I do think it is likely we may meet earlier. All I know of Canning's motions is, that Sir W. Scott expects him at Abbotsford very early in October; the day not fixed that I know of. I cannot help thinking that you would be much out of your duty, both to others and to yourself, if you did *not* come down; for there *is* to be at least one public dinner in C.'s offer—I mean from the Pitt Club—and I think he can't refuse. You must come down and show that we have one speaker among us—for *certes* we have but one—unless the President himself should come forth on the occasion, which I take to be rather out of the dice. I know Sir W. also will be particularly gratified in seeing you come out on such a field-day. I wish you would just put yourself into the mail and come to *me* here when C. leaves Storrs, and then you would see him at Abbotsford, and at Edinburgh also, without trouble of any kind. The little trip would shake your spirits up, and do you service every way. I assure you it would do me a vast deal of good too. I have been far from well either in health or spirits for some time back, and indeed exist merely by dint of forcing myself to do something. I have spent five or six hours on Shakspeare regularly, and have found that sort of work of great use to me, it being one that can be grappled with without that full flow of vigor necessary for any thing like *writing*; and I wish you had some similar job by you to take up when the spirit is not exactly in its highest status. I heard grand accounts of you the other day from the young Duke of Buccleuch and his governor, Blakeney—a very superior man, by the way. It would make *me* happy indeed to see you here, and I may say the same of not a few round about me.

“I shall not fail to write you again, if I hear any thing worth telling as to C.; but I think it more likely you should than I, and I hope you will write *me* if that be the case.

“One word as to Ebony.* It is clear he must go down now. Maginn, you have heard, I suppose, is universally considered as the

* The *soubriquet* by which Mr. Blackwood was known by his contributors.

sole man of the *John Bull Magazine*; a most infamous concern, and in general displaying a marvellous lack of every thing but the supremest impudence. I foresee sore rubs between Ebony and him. ——— is exceedingly insolent when he has nobody near him, as is the case at present—cuts and maims—keeps back, etc., etc.; in short, is utterly disgusting.

“You will have perceived that I have done very little this summer. How could I? I am totally sick of all that sort of concern, and would most gladly say, ‘farewell forever.’

“Yours affectionately always, J. G. LOCKHART.”

It appears that Mr. Canning did not visit Abbotsford, and the anticipated opportunity of showing that there was “one speaker” in Scotland did not therefore occur.

The brilliant and versatile, but somewhat dangerous pen of Maginn,* was at this time in full employment for the Magazine. In

* William Maginn, *alias* Ensign O’Doherty, *alias* Luctus, *alias* Dr. Olinthus Petre, Trinity College, Dublin, &c., &c., was born at Cork in 1794, and died in London in 1842. This versatile writer and singular man of genius began to contribute to *Blackwood* in November, 1819. Dr. Moir says that his first article was a translation into Latin of the ballad of “Chevy Chase,” which was followed by numerous articles containing both wit and sarcasm, which Mr. Blackwood had to pay for in the case of Leslie v. Hebrew. Although he continued to write for *Blackwood*, the publisher was not acquainted with his real name, and the account of their first interview is amusingly told by Dr. Moir:—

“I remember having afterwards been informed by Mr. Blackwood that the Doctor arrived in Edinburgh on Sunday evening, and found his way out to Newington, where he then resided. It so happened that the whole family had gone to the country a few days before, and in fact the premises, except the front gate, were locked up. This the Doctor managed, after vainly ringing and knocking, to open, and made a circuit of the building, peeping first into one window and then another, where every thing looked snug and comfortable, though tenantless. He took occasion afterwards to remark, that no such temptations were allowed to prowlers in Ireland.

“On the forenoon of Monday he presented himself in Princes street, at that time Mr. Blackwood’s place of business, and formally asked for an interview with that gentleman. The Doctor was previously well aware that his quizzes on Dowden, Jennings, and Cody of Cork (perfectly harmless as they were), had produced a ferment in that quarter, which now exploded in sending fierce and fiery letters to the proprietor of the Magazine, demanding the name of the writer, as he had received sundry notes from Mr. Blackwood, telling him the circumstances; and on Mr. Blackwood appearing, the stranger apprised him of his wish to have a private conversation with him, and this in the strongest Irish accent he could assume.

“On being closeted together, Mr. Blackwood thought to himself—as Mr. Blackwood afterwards informed me—‘Here, at last, is one of the wild Irishmen, and come for no good purpose, doubtless.’

“‘You are Mr. Blackwood, I presume,’ said the stranger.

“‘I am,’ answered that gentleman.

“‘I have rather an unpleasant business, then, with you,’ he added, ‘regarding some things which appeared in your Magazine. They are so and so, would you be so kind as to give me the name of the author?’

* *Dublin University Magazine*, January, 1844, which contains the fullest account of Maginn’s life and writings I have seen.

the *Noctes* in particular, where the character of the composition allowed most freedom of expression, he took his full swing, and laid about him in true Donnybrook style. Whether the "sore rubs" anticipated by Lockhart occurred, I have no means of knowing; probably they did. That he sometimes caused considerable annoyance to the judicious editor will appear from the following brief note to Wilson about this very time. The reference in the conclusion is to Mr. Blackwood's candidature for the office of Lord Provost, in which he was unsuccessful.

"EDINBURGH, August 22, 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR:—I received your packet in time, and I hope you will find the whole correctly printed, though I was obliged to put to press in a great hurry. I only got Maginn's Song on Saturday night, after I had put the sheets to press.

"On Thursday I received from him some more of the *Noctes*, but I did not like them, as he attacked Moore again with great bitterness for his squibs upon the King, and charged the Marquis of Hastings as a hoary courtier, who had provoked Moore *with his libels upon the King*. I have written him that it really will not do to run a-muck in this kind of way. I hope you will, on the whole,

"That requires consideration,' said Mr. Blackwood; 'and I must first be satisfied that—'

"Your correspondent resides in Cork, doesn't he? You need not make any mystery about that.'

"I decline at present,' said Mr. B., 'giving any information on that head, before I know more of this business—of your purpose—and who you are.'

"You are very shy, sir,' said the stranger; 'I thought you corresponded with Mr. Scott, of Cork,' mentioning the assumed name under which the Doctor had hitherto communicated with the Magazine.

"I beg to decline giving any information on that subject,' was the response of Mr. Blackwood.

"If you don't know him, then,' sputtered out the stranger, 'perhaps, perhaps you *could* know your own handwriting,' at the same moment producing a packet of letters from his side-pocket. 'You need not deny your correspondence with that gentleman; I am that gentleman.'

"Such was the whimsical introduction of Dr. Maginn to Mr. Blackwood; and after a cordial shake of the hand and a hearty laugh, the pair were in a few minutes up to the elbows in friendship."

From this time, 1820, till 1828, he continued his contributions more or less frequently. In 1824, about the time Mr. Lockhart writes of him, he was appointed foreign correspondent of *The Representative*; but as this newspaper was not long-lived, he was again thrown upon his resources, and he earned a scanty livelihood by writing for the periodicals. He assisted, as Mr. Lockhart says, Theodore Hook, in the *John Bull*, and obtained so much reputation as a political writer, that on the establishment of the *Standard*, he was appointed joint editor of the latter. He was ultimately connected with the foundation of *Fraser's Magazine*, in 1830, and along with Father Mahony, Mr. Hugh Fraser, and others, gave that periodical his heartiest support. He was then in the zenith of his fame, and his society courted; but in 1834 he was again corresponding with Mr. Blackwood, dating his contributions from a garret in Wych street, Strand, and from this time till his death his condition was one of wretchedness.

like this number, and that you will be in good spirits to do something very soon for next one. I fully expected to have had the pleasure of a letter from you either yesterday or to-day.

“A letter from you, however short, is always a treat. The canvass for the Provostship is as hot as ever, but the result does not now appear so certain as when I last wrote you; still, I do not despair, and I trust we shall be successful.

“I am, my dear sir, yours truly, W. BLACKWOOD.”

Mr. Lockhart's temporary disgust at magazine writing did not affect his productive activity. Very soon after writing the foregoing letter, he was hard at work writing articles for *Janus*, which began to be printed early in September, and was published about the close of November, 1825. The various letters which passed between the editors and the publisher on the subject are entirely occupied with the details of “MS.,” “slips,” “proofs,” and “forms.” They contain, however, the materials for ascertaining the contributions of the two principal writers, a list of which will be found in the Appendix. The following letter from my father to Delta is given, as being the first communication between them which I have found, and as illustrating his mode of discharging the delicate duty of telling a friend that his MS. is not “suitable.” It is also his first letter dated from Gloucester Place:—

“GLOUCESTER PLACE, No. 8, *Friday*.

“MY DEAR SIR:—On my arrival here, a few days ago, I found in the hands of Messrs. Oliver and Boyd, an extract from a tale intended for *Janus*. As I take an interest in that volume, I trouble you with a few lines, as I know your handwriting.

“I had intended writing to you to request a contribution to *Janus*, but delayed it from time to time, uncertain of the progress that double-faced gentleman was making towards publicity.

“Copy for 350 pages is already in the printer's hands, and I have about 120 pages of my own MS., and of a friend, to send in a few days, which, owing to peculiar circumstances, must make part of the volume, so that 470 pages may be supposed to be contributed. A number of small pieces too are floating about, which it is not easy to know how to dispose of.

“I am, however, anxious that something of yours should be in this volume, and if it be possible, there shall be, if you wish it.

“The funeral scene is certainly good, natural, and true, and as part of a tale, I have no doubt it will be effective. Standing by itself it does not strike me as one of your best things (many of which are most beautiful and most lively), and I should wish to have in *Janus* one that *I* at least like better.

“I had in my possession, some time ago, a MS. volume of yours containing several prose tales, one of which,* about a minister, a bachelor, I think, or widower, loving or being made to love his housekeeper, or somebody else, I thought admirable. Another tale, too, there was, of a lively character that I liked much, but I forget its name.† I generally forget, or at least retain an indistinct remembrance of what gives me most pleasure. Had I that volume I would select a tale from it for *Janus*. The worst of *Janus* is, that a page holds so little in comparison with a magazine page, that even a short story takes up necessarily great room.

“Should the volume prove an annual, I hope you will contribute.

“This is not a confidential communication. Mr. Lockhart and I have no objections to be spoken of as friends and contributors to *Janus*, but, on the contrary, wish to be. But let all contributors keep their own counsel. I am, my dear sir, yours with much regard,

JOHN WILSON.”

On her way to Edinburgh from Elleray, my mother was taken alarmingly ill, and was for some time in a very precarious state. This, combined with the labors of the opening University session, left little leisure for literary work; MS. for *Janus* was therefore in great demand, and proof-sheets had to be revised after the class hour in the Professor’s “retiring-room.” Some contributions had also been expected from Mr. De Quincey, which, however, did not make their appearance. The work at last came out in the form of a very finely-printed small octavo volume of 542 pages, which was sold at the price of 12s. There were no embellishments beyond a vignette representation of the two-faced god, and no names were given on the title-page or in the table of contents. The preface announces that the volume is intended to be the first of a series, to be published annually early in November. It never went, however, beyond its first number, not having received encouragement enough

* This appeared in the volume under the title, “Saturday Night in the Manse.”

† Probably “Daniel Cathie, tobacconist.”

to warrant the risk of a second trial. As the publisher dealt liberally with the authors, we may infer that the book did not pay so well as it might have done with poorer matter and a lower price. There was, in fact, *too much* good writing in this now little-known volume: such a crop could not be "annual," and so it came up but once. Its name suggests the character of the subjects contained in its pages, which vary in range between the seriousness of philosophy and the facetiousness of genuine humor; as free from dulness in the one kind as from flippancy in the other. Among the shorter and lighter papers, there is one from the French, but not a translation, that gives the history of a dog, "Moustache," whose characteristic individuality is as skilfully portrayed as if it had come from the hand of a literary "Landseer."* From the list of contents it will be seen that nearly the whole was produced by the editors. Of the few contributions by other hands, are Miss Edgeworth's witty "Thoughts on Bores," and one or two pleasant sketches by Delta.

Mr. Lockhart left Chiefswood for London in December, 1825, to assume the editorship of the *Quarterly Review*. The following letter appears to have been written the day after he had taken possession of the editorial chair:—

"25 PALL MALL, 23d December, 1825.

"MY DEAR WILSON:—It was only yesterday that we got ourselves at length established under a roof of our own, otherwise you should have heard from me, and, as it is, I must entreat that whatever you do as to the rest of my letter, you will write *immediately*, to say how Mrs. Wilson is. I have often thought with pain of the state in which we left her, and, through her, you, and I shall not think pleasantly of any thing connected with you, until I hear better tidings.

"Murray, from what he said to me, would answer Boyd's letter in the affirmative. I did not choose to press him, but said what I could with decency.†

"As I feared and hinted, you are rather in a scrape about the

* Of such is Dr. John Brown, who, in *Our Dogs*, has unravelled the instinctive beauties and touching sagacity of the canine race, with a delicacy of perception and cunning workmanship of thought truly admirable. "Rab" and "Moustache," in their devotion of purpose, would perfectly have appreciated each other; but, alas! the faithful companion of "Allie," and the brave "Moustache," must remain for ever the heroes of their own tales. These are not dogs to be met with every day; they come, like epic poems, after a lapse of ages, and like them are immortal.

† Probably refers to Murray becoming the London publisher of *Janus*.

Uranus poem, the proprietor of it being some old Don, who for these seven years had dunned Murray constantly, the bookseller in the mean time writing, he says, to Blackwood, equally in vain.

“One thing remains; that the whole *MS.* be *forthwith* transmitted to Murray; in that case the old gent. may probably never know of the printing of any part. I fear the volume is heavy on the whole; but I know the deepness of my own prejudice against metaphysical essays, and would fain hope it is not largely partaken.

“Maginn is off for Paris, where I hope he will behave himself. He has an opportunity of retrieving much, if he will use it. I think there can be nothing in his removal to injure his writings in *Blackwood*, but *au contraire*, and certainly nothing to diminish their quantity.

“Mr. ——— has yesterday transferred to me the treasures of the Review; and I must say, my dear Wilson, that his whole stock is not worth five shillings. Thank God, other and better hands are at work for my first number, or I should be in a pretty hobble. My belief is that he has been living on the stock bequeathed by Gifford, and the contributions of a set of d—d idiots of Oriel. But mind now, Wilson, I am sure to have a most hard struggle to get up a very good first Number, and, if I do not, it will be the Devil. I entreat you to cast about for a serious and important subject; give your mind full scope, and me the benefit of a week’s Christmas leisure.

“Murray’s newspaper concerns seem to go on flourishingly. The title, I am rather of belief, will be ‘The Representative,’* but he has not yet fixed.

“I shall write you in due time, and at length, as to that business.

“As for me personally, every thing goes on smoothly. I have the kindest letters from Southey, and indeed from *all* the real sup-

* Murray’s newspaper concerns did not go on “flourishingly,” as may be gathered from the following note:—“With Mr. Benjamin Disraeli for editor, and witty Dr. Maginn for Paris Correspondent, John Murray’s new daily paper, *The Representative* (price 7d.), began its inauspicious career on the 25th January, 1826. It is needless to rake up the history of a dead and buried disaster. After a short and unhappy career of six months, *The Representative* expired of debility on the subsequent 29th of July. The Thames was not on fire, and Printing House Square stood calmly where it had stood. When, in after years, sanguine and speculative projectors enlarged to John Murray on the excellent opening for a new daily paper, he of Albemarle street would shake his head, and with rather a melancholy expression of countenance, pointing to a thin folio on his shelves, would say, ‘Twenty thousand pounds are buried there.’”—“Histories of Publishing Houses,” *Critic*, January 21, 1860.

porters of the Review. Give my love to Cay, and do now *write, write, write* to yours affectly.,
J. G. LOCKHART."

During the following year my father contributed no less than twenty-seven articles, or portions of articles, to the Magazine, including the following, afterwards republished, in the collected works by Professor Ferrier:—"Cottages," "Streams," "Meg Dods," "Gymnastics." The only month in which nothing of his appeared was May; the month of April, which closed the session, being his busiest at the College, except November. During the autumn of this year, business of some importance obliged him to go into Westmoreland. He was accompanied by his daughter Margaret and his son Blair, and during his absence wrote regularly to his wife, giving pleasant local gossip and descriptions of the improvements at Elleray. The dinner at Kendal, of which he speaks, was one of political interest connected with the Lowther family, at which he, as a matter of course, was desirous to be present. Mrs. Wilson's brother-in-law, Mr. James Penny Machell of Penny Bridge, was High Sheriff that year at the Lancaster Assizes, which accounts for the allusions to the trials, besides that some of them excited unusual interest.

"KENDAL, 22d August, 1826,
 Tuesday Morning, Half-past Three.

"MY DEAREST JANE:—I wrote you a few lines from Carlisle, stating our successful progress thus far, and we arrived here same night at half-past eleven. Not a bed in the house, nor any supper to be got, the cook having gone to bed. I however got Maggie and Blair a very nice bed in a private house, and saw them into it. I slept, or tried to do so, on a sofa, but quite in vain. In a quarter of an hour we set off for Elleray in a chaise, which we shall reach to breakfast about half-past ten. We are all a good deal disgusted with our reception last night in this bad and stupid inn.

"It is a very fine day, and Elleray will be beautiful; I should think of you every hour I am there, but to-morrow you know I am to be in Kendal again, and shall write to you before the *dinner*. I have seen nobody in the town whatever, and, of course, heard nothing about the intended meeting. The Mackeands were hanged yesterday (Monday), and I have just been assured that the *brother* Wakefield, who was to have been tried on Saturday, has forfeited

his bail, and is off, fearing from the judge's manner that he would be imprisoned—if he stood trial—five years.* So there will be no trial at all at Lancaster. I hope, therefore, yet to be at Hollow Oak.

“Think of my bad luck in losing seven sovereigns from there being a hole in my lecturing pantaloons. All the silver fell out of the one pocket, which Blair picked up, but the sovereigns had dropped forever through the other.

“I will write as often as possible, and tell you all that I hear about the various places and people. Kindest love to Johnny and Mary, who will have their turn some day, and also to the lovely girl and George Watson.

“The chaise is at the gate, and is an open carriage.

“I am, my dearest Jane, ever your affectionate husband,

“JOHN WILSON.”

“KENDAL, *August 23, 1826,*
Wednesday Night, Twelve o'clock.

“MY BELOVED JANE:—The dinner is over, and all went well. Your letter I have just received, of which more anon. Why did you not write on Monday night? but thank God it is come now. We are all well, and my next, which will be a post between, shall be a long, descriptive, full and particular account of every one thing in the country. It is your own fault that this is not a long letter, for my misery all day has been dreadful. Mr. Fleming was with me all day, and was the kindest of friends; and George Watson will, I am sure, write for you.

“I shall see the Machells, who have returned home, and well, I understand. Once more, God bless and protect you! and get your spectacles ready for next letter, which I shall have time to write at length. Hitherto I have not had an hour.

“To-morrow, at Elleray, I shall write an admirable epistle.

“Your affectionate husband,

“JOHN WILSON.

“Love to Johnny, Mary, Umbs, and George Watson.”

* The two Mackeands were brothers, who had committed an atrocious murder on the inhabitants of a wayside inn, in Lancashire. The “brother Wakefield” was no less a person than Edward Gibbon Wakefield, whose shameful deception wove a strange romance around the life of Helen Turner, and furnished to the annals of law one of the most peculiar cases that has ever been recorded.

"ELLERAY, August 24th, 1826,
Thursday Forenoon.

"MY DEAREST JANE:—I shall give you a sort of *précis* of our movements. On Tuesday morning, at nine o'clock, we left Kendal in an open carriage, and reached Elleray before eleven. The day was goodish, indeed excellent at that time, and the place looked beautiful as of old. A handsome new rail runs along from the junction of the new avenue, all along to front of the new house, and has a parkish appearance—painted of a slate color. The house we found standing furnished and in all respects just as we left it, so that, I suppose, the family have just walked out. The plants in the entrance reach near the roof, one and all of them, but have few flowers, and must be pruned, I fear, being enormously lank in proportion to their thickness, but all in good health. The little myrtles are about a yard high, and in high feather. The trees and shrubs have not grown very much—it seems a bad year for them; but the roses and smaller flowers have flourished, and those sent from Edinburgh were much admired. The walks in the garden are all gravelled neatly; the bower is as green as the sea, and really looks well. The hedge lately planted round the upper part is most thriving, and strawberry-beds luxuriant; in short, the garden looks pretty. The crops in the fields are bad, as all in the country are.

"In an hour or two after our arrival it began to rain and blow and bluster like Brougham, so I left the house. Dinner was served in good style at six; fowls, fish, and mutton. In the evening William Garnet came up, and was, as you may suppose, in a state of bliss. The boy is well, and I am to be his godfather by proxy. On Wednesday morning, I never doubted but there would be a letter from you, as I made you promise to write every night at six; but I never make myself understood. It gave me great pain to find there was none; but this I alluded to before, so say no more now, but will give you a *viva voce* scold for it. Fleming went with me in the chaise to Kendal, and at half-past three we sat down to dinner: Lord Lowther and Portarlington (pronounced Polington), Colonel Lowther, Henry Lowther, Howard of Levens, Colonel Wilson, Noel of Underlay, Bolton, the little Captain, and fifty-six others. It went off with *éclat*, and I speechified a little, but not too much, and gave satisfaction. Barber came over on purpose, and is evidently in the clouds about what I said of his cottage, although he made no allusion

to it. The ball in the evening was apparently a pleasant one, but thin, as it was only fixed *that morning* that there was to be one. At twelve o'clock the mail came in, and I went down myself to the Post-Office, and got the postmaster to open the bag, and, lo and behold, your letter of Tuesday, which took a load of needless anxiety off my soul. God bless you! I returned to the inn, and Barber took me immediately in his chaise to Elleray, which we reached about two, and had a little supper; he then went on, and I to bed.

"I am now preparing, after sound sleep, to call at the Wood and Calgarth. We shall dine at the Wood. The children were to have dined there yesterday, but the rain prevented them. Mrs. Barlow came up in the evening, they tell me, with Miss North. Gale was found guilty of two assaults at Lancaster, but the anti-Catholic doctor allowed him to get off without fine. How absurd altogether the quarrel originating in Catholic Emancipation. I shall probably go to Penny Bridge on Saturday, but will write again to-morrow, so send to the Post-Office on Saturday evening, and on Sunday too, for letters are not delivered till Monday. But be sure you, or Mary, or Johnny, or George Watson, write every night, till farther orders. The little pony, Tickler, and Nanny, the cow, are all well, so is Star; Colonsay is sold for four pounds. The last year's calf is as large as any cow, and there is another calf and two pigs. I shall give you any news I hear in my next. I will write to Johnny soon. Your affectionate and loving husband,

JOHN WILSON."

The "Colonsay" mentioned here as sold "for four pounds," had been at one time a pony of remarkable strength and sagacity. A few summers previously, my father became acquainted with a Mr. Douglas, who, with his family, was then residing near Ambleside. This gentleman possessed a handsome and prepossessing appearance; beyond that he had not much to recommend him, being nothing but a sporting character, and was after a time discovered not to be *sans peur* and *sans tache*. However, he visited in all directions, frequently coming to Elleray. One day he appeared, mounted on a very fine animal, which he said was thorough-bred, and an unrivalled trotter. This statement gave rise to some discussion on the subject of trotting, *à propos* of which, Wilson brought forward the merits of a certain gray cob in his possession, half jestingly proposing a match between it and the above-mentioned "thoroughbred."

Mr. Douglas was delighted to meet with an adventure so entirely to his taste, so then and there the day and hour was fixed for the match to come off—a fortnight from that time.

It is a long-ago story, but I well remember the excitement it created in the *ménage* at Elleray, and the unusual care bestowed upon the cob,—how his feet were kept in cold cloths, and how he was fed, and gently exercised daily. In short, the mystery about all the ongoings at the stable was most interesting, and we began to regard with something akin to awe the hitherto not more than commonly cared for animal.

At last the day anxiously looked for arrived. Full of glee and excitement we ran—sisters and brothers—down the sloping fields, to take a seat upon the top of a wall that separated us from the road, and where we could see the *starting-point*. “Colonsay” was led in triumph to meet his fashionable rival, whose “get-up” was certainly excellent. Both rider and horse wore an air of the turf, while my father, in common riding dress, mounted his somewhat ordinary-looking steed, just as a gentleman would do going to take his morning ride. At last, after many manœuvres of a knowing sort, Mr. Douglas declared himself ready to start, and off they set, in pace very fairly matched,—at least so it seemed to us from the Elleray gate.

To Lowood, as far as I remember, was the distance for this trial. Umpires were stationed at their respective points on the road, and Billy Balmer kept a steady eye from his station upon “Colonsay,” whose propensity for dashing in at open gates was feared might ruin his chance of winning. Meantime, the juvenile band on the wall, along with Mrs. Wilson, were keeping eager watch for the messenger who was to bring intelligence of the conquering hero; and how great was their delight when in due time they heard that “Colonsay” had won the day; Mr. Douglas’s much boasted of trotter having broken into a canter.

This trotting match with the handsome adventurer, was the origin of “Christopher on Colonsay” in the pages of *Blackwood*, which did not appear, however, till ten years afterwards.