

## OUR TABLE.

CHEVELEY; OR THE MAN OF HONOUR,—BY  
LADY LYTTON BULWER.

Clever as this work undoubtedly is, we cannot award to it a high share of praise. Containing much that is interesting and truth-like, it is so blended with improbability and exaggeration, that its moral character is lost. Properly speaking, indeed, it is not a novel; but a fictitious narrative, founded upon the family broils of the lady and her husband, towards whom she evinces so much of pique—may of revenge,—that she sometimes forgets the delicacy most becoming in her sex, and frequently indulges in displays of acrimonious feeling, which mar the interest of the book by drawing the thoughts of the reader towards the private wrongs or errors of the fair author.

Sacred, indeed, must be the ties which link two trusting beings in loving fellowship together, and though discussions creeping in, may burst asunder the golden bands, the heart must be truly cold and callous, which can bury all the sweet remembrances of the glorious past—the unforgotten hours of sunny youth and love. If every hallowed feeling be not entombed, memory must “sometimes rekindle the star,” and point to these “greener spots” in life’s dreary waste.

Poets of all times have sung these hallowed loves, and too many there are who have felt, with Coleridge, that

“To be wroth with one we love  
Doth work like madness in the brain;”

and the beautiful words of the same author will well express the undying character of the regrets which must track the course of those who, having once loved, are torn from each other.

They stood aloof, the scars remaining;  
Like rocks which had been rent asunder  
A dreary sea now flows between,  
But neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,  
Shall wholly do away I ween  
The marks of that which once hath been.

It is vain to imagine that pride will conquer love, and teach the “widowed-living” to “let the past as nothing be.” The brow may be wreathed with gladness,—the lip may speak only of bliss,—and the ear may drink tales of flattery and fame, but “’tis a sad mockery all.” Apart from, nay even when mingling with, the glittering throng, the soul is gnawed by the “worm which dieth not.”

The cheek may be tinged with a warm sunny smile, Though the cold heart to ruin runs darkly the while.

There is no “story of the heart” which does not tell how indelible are these affections—which does not prove that the poet poured out the words of truth when he said that,

“Like a vase in which roses have once been distilled,  
You may break, you may ruin the vase if you will,  
But the scent of the roses will hang round it still.”

Byron was proud, haughty to a fault—yet even his proud spirit bent to her with whom he had once drank the brimming cup of bliss, and whom he could not renounce and live—for, to a soul like Byron’s, existence is not life. There are many of us who may be too selfish to regret that the affections of the noble bard were so early and so cruelly blighted, for nothing else would have called forth the stern wild, and dreadful, but splendid and beautiful creations of his mind; yet even his mighty name was dearly won. Sad must have been the heart which the following stanzas picture.

“Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not,  
Love may sink by slow decay,  
But, by sudden wrench, believe not  
Hearts can thus be torn away:

“Still thine own life retaineth,  
Still must mine, though bleeding, beat;  
And the undying thought which paineth,  
Is—that we no more may meet.

“These are words of deeper sorrow,  
Than the wail above the dead;  
Both shall live, but every morrow,  
Wake us from a widowed bed:

“Every feeling hath been shaken;  
Pride, which not a world could bow,  
Bows to thee—by thee forsaken,  
Even my soul forsakes me now;

“But ’tis done—all words are idle,  
Words from me are vainer still;  
But the thoughts we cannot bridle,  
Force their way without the will.”

It may be that the unforgiving spirit which characterises the work of Lady Bulwer, is prompted by a desire to hide even from herself the “undying thought which paineth.” We can scarcely believe it otherwise; nor can we suppose it possible that she can do less than mourn deeply in secret the ruin of early loves—the hopeless blasting of the heart’s choicest treasure. Let her be kindly judged, for evidently the pen which produced the work before us did not obey the impulse of a happy or cheerful spirit.

The principal interest of the story is founded upon the loves of *Mowbray*, the man of honour, and the *Countess de Clifford*, a lady of surpassing beauty, whose husband degrades himself by treating his fair young bride with brutal harshness. They meet in Milan, where *Mowbray* has gone upon a pleasure tour, accompanied by a friend named *Saville*, who loves a sister of the *Countess de Clifford*. The portrait of the beautiful *Countess* is well drawn, and is in the following words:

“Lady De Clifford was taller than her sister; her beauty was altogether of a different kind: her head and the manner in which it was placed upon her shoulders, was quite as classical as *Fanny’s*; but then the contour was more that of *Juno than of Psyche*. Her features, too, were small, yet perfect; a little—a very little less Greek than her sister’s, but more piquant, with a nose that I can only describe