

THE GREVILLE MEMOIRS.

yet to be written. Lord Campbell had too often felt the superiority of his great contemporary to deal with him fairly. On the other hand the Autobiography is permeated by the vanity of the author, who is inclined to magnify his own services, and to give himself credit on every occasion for the purest intentions. In the Greville Memoirs we meet with Brougham in many situations, dignified and degrading, great and small, from which we may gain some new insight into his extraordinary character. We are reminded also, and very painfully, that in this world the loftiest enthusiasm may be marred by selfish ambition: that philanthropy may exist beside personal animosity: that the most splendid genius may stoop to intrigue: and the haughtiest self-esteem humble itself to sordid considerations.

Mr. Greville thus describes his impressions of Brougham after meeting him for the first time:—

"Brougham is certainly one of the most remarkable men I ever met; to say nothing of what he is in the world, his almost childish gaiety and animal spirits, his humour mixed with sarcasm but not ill-natured, his wonderful information and the facility with which he handles every subject, from the most grave and severe to the most trifling, displaying a mind full of the most varied and extensive information and a memory which has suffered nothing to escape it. I never saw any man whose conversation impressed me with such an idea of his superiority over all others. As Rogers said the morning of his departure, 'This morning Solon, Lycurgus, Demosthenes, Archimedes, Sir Isaac Newton, Lord Chesterfield and a great many more have gone away in one post-chaise.'"

Of the vast and almost universal range of Brougham's knowledge Mr. Greville has recorded some curious illustrations. Fowell Buxton was entertaining a distinguished party and treating them to an inspection of his brewery. There were people waiting to explain everything, but Brougham took the explanation of the whole business into his hand the

mode of brewing, the machinery, down to the feeding of the cart-horses, and when the account books were produced, he entered into a dissertation on book-keeping. On another occasion he went with some people to the British Museum, where all the attendants were in readiness to receive them. He would not let anybody explain anything but did all the honours himself. At last they came to the collection of minerals, when it was expected that he would be brought to a stand-still. Their conductor began to describe them, when Brougham took the words out of his mouth, and dashed off with as much ease and familiarity as if he had been a Buckland or a Cuvier. In truth it would have been difficult to discover a subject about which he did not know something. At an early age he had turned his attention to the natural sciences, and no doubt fancied that he might have rivalled Newton in that field. At the age of 18 he wrote an essay on the Properties of Light, which was printed by the Royal Society. At a later day he contributed articles to the *Edinburgh Review*, upon the same and kindred subjects. His inquiring mind had led him to attend medical lectures, and this enabled him to comment learnedly in the *Review* on "A new method of performing Lithotomy." He is even credited with an article on "Chinese Music," a subject which was once hit upon to test the universal knowledge of Whewell. But the man who takes all knowledge for his sphere must not hope to reach the highest elevation in any particular branch. Brougham might have been great as a scientist, a statesman, an author, a lawyer. His restless ambition would not be content with fame in any one of these vocations: he tried to be great in all but failed of attaining the first place in any. We must admit the correctness of the judgment which Mr. Greville passes upon him.