

Next to the pictures in *Punch*, a single sentence of Sydney Smith's has probably done most to characterize this statesman. It occurs in his second letter addressed to Archdeacon Singleton:

"There is not a better man in England than Lord John Russell; but his worst failure is, that he is utterly ignorant of all moral fear; there is nothing he would not undertake. I believe he would perform the operation for the stone, build St. Peter's, or assume (with or without ten minutes' notice) the command of the Channel fleet; and no one would discover by his manner that the patient had died, the church tumbled down, and the Channel fleet been knocked to atoms. I believe his motives are always pure, and his measures often able; but they are endless, and never done with that pedetentous* pace and that pedetentous mind in which it behooves the wise and virtuous improver to walk. He alarms the wise Liberals; and it is impossible to sleep soundly while he has the command of the watch."

In his late volume of "Recollections and Suggestions," Lord Russell takes pains to plead "not guilty" to this indictment.

"We have at this moment before us a vivid recollection of a characteristic little incident in the Earl's career. Seven or eight years ago he spent a few weeks in the autumn in the neighborhood of the Perthshire village of Blairgowrie, and the sturdy

Scotch peasantry, resolving to do honor to the great Liberal statesman, invited him to a 'banquet' at Blairgowrie. The writer happened to be in the neighborhood at the time, and procuring a ticket for the banquet—which was about the roughest village feast at which he was ever present—he went to Blairgowrie to witness Lord Russell's reception. In due time the famous Whig minister came. The people were delighted at having him in their midst, and they cheered him with a lusty vigor which would have done credit to Yorkshire lungs.

"At the door of the Town Hall, or the Market House, which was the scene of the banquet, the Earl descended from his carriage; he stood a moment in the doorway, giving some directions to his servants, and the crowd pressed round him cheering. One respectable-looking man who was standing very near was particularly enthusiastic. Upon him the Earl turned with a freezing look and a haughty gesture. 'Have the goodness not to make such a noise, sir!' said he, and the poor Scot shrunk away utterly abashed, and with doubtless very different feelings with respect to 'Johnny Russell' from those which he had entertained toward him a few minutes previously. And this was a most characteristic scene. Very vain, and not at all insensible to the charms of popular applause, Lord Russell has yet this peculiar coldness and haughtiness of manner which chills the enthusiasm of his admirers, and deprives him of not a little of the popularity which is undoubtedly his due.

* This word is adopted by Sydney Smith from Cicero's word *pedetentim*, meaning step-by-step, cautiously or gradually.