

Mr. Knight's political opinions were as free from prejudices as his scientific views; his whole heart was with the liberal party, of which he was all his life a strenuous support.

It is no exaggeration to add, that great as is the loss sustained by his country and his friends, it will be equally difficult to fill his vacancy in science. No living man now before the world can be said to rank with him in that particular branch of science to which his life was devoted.

Mr. Knight died in London, at the house of Mrs. Walpole, one of his daughters, after a short illness, on the 11th of May in the 80th year of his age.

MONTHLY CHRONICLE.

This "National Journal of Politics, Literature, Science, and Art" has completed its first volume. Conducted by such eminent men as Bulwer, Brewster, Lardner, Phillips, Powell etc. etc., it has already attained to a high degree of celebrity. Its plan differs very materially from any of the other monthly or quarterly journals. It has all the advantages of a newspaper, with all the more solid benefits of a review. In the number for May we have an admirable article on "Lord Brougham." The remarks on the famous enunciation, "The schoolmaster is abroad," while simple in thought and expression, are really profound, and reach to the very soul of the noble orator's intellectual peculiarity and power. The review of "Lockhart's Scott," is written by one enamoured of his subject. It abounds with the choicest snatches from the memoirs; and even the minutest details of Sir Walter's life are presented in a concentrated yet most attractive form. It is, indeed, a rapid but complete and delightful sketch of this great man. There is much force and wisdom in the contrast the reviewer introduces between the rearing, social relations, and worldly circumstances, of Scott and Byron. These men may be contrasted, indeed, in every view; but they can never be compared. They were, and always must have been, essentially different men. Scott possessed the highest moral endowments, the germs of which were beautifully put forth even in his childhood: Byron was steeped in selfishness and vanity, from a boy. The "Notes of the Months" are very racy and piquant. A few extracts from the Monthly Chronicle we annex.

CHARACTER OF WILBERFORCE.—The character of Mr. Wilberforce, as it is developed in these affectionate but unexaggerated pages, must excite admiration even from those, if such there be, who, upon narrow and sectarian grounds, have hitherto imagined that his religious zeal unfitted him for that sphere of worldly utilities and interests, in which he moved like an inspired Intelligence. There never was a man in whom an unwavering, uniform, and deep belief in Revealed Truth were so felicitously blended with practical views of life and persevering activity in their pursuit. This was the great and distinguishing peculiarity that raised him above all contemporary enthusiasts and politicians—that abated in him all tendencies to excess either way—and that enabled him to achieve such remarkable triumphs over the prejudices and sordid spirit of the age, without provoking the ridicule or exciting the hostility of his opponents. In Mr. Wilberforce fortunately, there was none of the gloom of religious severity; his mind was essentially catholic. If he was expressly claimed by one party, which arrogated to itself a right of monopoly in doing good, he belonged to none; but was emphatically the agent of a great moral revolution, which included in its operation all sects and divisions of the people. * * The best evidence, perhaps, of the implicit respect which his public character inspired was, that men of all parties, and of the highest station, testified their admiration of his virtues, by following his remains to the grave, and by the suspension of public business on the day of his funeral.

TELLING A LONG STORY.—A long story is a trait of incorrect manners. Such is the quantum of matter stirring in London that London will not endure it. Sir Andrew Narrative told one lately at a house dinner at the Athenæum with very good effect. It was to the following purport or effect:—A decent young woman entered a Paddington omnibus with an infant in her arms, of whom the other passengers admired the beauty. Sir Andrew and the young woman, when the vehicle arrived in Skinner-street, were the only parties left in the carriage. "Will you have the goodness, sir," said the damsel, "just to hold this child while I step into that shop?"—"Certainly," answered Sir Andrew. The living burden was accordingly deposited, and away went the proprietor of it. A few minutes elapsed—she returned not. The cad banged to the door, ejaculating "All right," and the omnibus proceeded on its journey, carrying Sir Andrew in the situation of Don John in the Chances. When the driver arrived at the corner of Ironmonger-lane, a grave, elderly gentleman was taken up, who in his turn, expressed his admiration of the infant's beauty. "Will you have the goodness, sir, to hold this child for one minute?" said Sir Andrew, in his turn, beckoning the cad to stop at Bow Church.—"By all means, sir," answered the elderly gentleman. Hereupon Sir Andrew boanded from the carriage, paid the cad his sixpence, and ran down Friday-street like the innkeeper in Joseph Andrews, "without any fear of breaking his neck." Dick Duplicate was so pleased with this story, that he determined to tell it at a dinner of Americans, who were going afterwards to

Madame Vestris's theatre, to see Puss in Boots. Here Mr. Duplicate was terribly out in his reckoning for the three following reasons:—1st. Americans eat with railroad velocity; 2nd. They never laugh at a joke; and 3rd. Being engaged to go to the theatre, they must see every thing in order to obtain their money's worth. The consequence was that Dick was left to tell the conclusion of his story to empty decanters. The poor fellow came to me for consolation. "Never mind, Dick," said I, "you are going next Wednesday to York, to visit your two maiden aunts. York is dull and distant, and your aunts have no occupation but a poodle dog. Tell them the story: amplify it *ad libitum*;—you may enlarge upon the utility of omnibuses, speculate upon the condition in life of the young woman, and the probable motive of her thus getting rid of her charge. Talk of Skinner-street. Say you remember when a boy, its non-existence, and its circuitous predecessor, Snow Hill; and after mentioning Bow Church, talk of the dragon on the top of its steeple, with a suitable allusion to Sir Thomas Gresham's grasshopper. All this will be good manners at York; for, depend upon it, your maiden aunts will stand all this and a great deal more if you are in the humour to utter it."

I was led into this vein of admonition, from a circumstance that occurred to myself at the Union Club. A huge double sheeted copy of the Times newspaper was put into my hands by one of the waiters. "Oh! what a bore all this is," said I, surveying the gigantic journal.—"Ah!" answered one of the members who overheard me, "it is all very well for you who are occupied all day by business, and come here to read for your diversion, to call this double paper a bore; but what a blessing it is to a man living in the country;—it's equal to a day's fishing."

LONDON AS IT WAS.—Cast back the memory to those periods when the north bank of the Thames from Temple Bar to Thorney Island, was an open space, dotted with mansions chiefly the residence of the Bishops and a few of the nobility; while on the opposite side stood, perhaps, an ancient church, or some secluded inn of court for the accommodation of country suitors and students. The traveller crossed a dozen streams descending rapidly from the then exposed hills towards the Thames, and which were spanned by several bridges, now buried deep beneath the rising soil and arched foundations of the present Strand. Then, he would pass on by the beautiful cross at the little village of Charing, and through no less than three gates before he entered the sanctuary at Westminster. Here was the Abbey church, surrounded by its monastic buildings, by its far-extending walls, and, on the other side, the buildings of the ancient Palace (now the Parliament Houses and the Courts of Law) jutted out so far as to be confounded with Whitehall. He would pass houses and Palaces famous for their sometime inmates, and remarkable for their galleries of sculpture and painting, open to the artist up to the period of the Reformation; when, in dread of the idolatry of art, those treasures of the chisel and the pencil were shut up, if not buried from the public eye. He would pass the house adorned by the residence of the illustrious Sally, the hotels of many distinguished foreigners, and the house assigned to the homage-bringing kings of Scotland. Earlier, he might have seen the clock-tower, erected out of the fine levied on an unjust judge; if earlier still, the house in which Chaucer lived, almost on the site of the present chapel of Henry VII., would have greeted his curious eye. At a later period he might have seen the exhumed heads of Cromwell, Ireton, and Bradshaw, rock to the wind from poles erected over the roof of Westminster Hall, above the seats on which they had doomed a monarch to the scaffold. At a much more recent date, the more pleasing picture of the old palace and its gardens, as Canaletto saw them, under a warm clear sky, would have delighted our traveller: but he might have lived in our own times, when the land we have described was a peopled wilderness,—the site of the old Palace was covered with a mass of the most incongruous buildings; and this beholding, he might have pardoned the fire which, sweeping them away, afforded an opportunity for the restoration of the ancient Palace of Westminster, dedicated however, to a purpose more exalted than the pageants of a court.

LORD BROUGHAM AS AN AUTHOR.—Brougham gave early proof of scientific capacity, but Edinburgh, the place of his education was not the school of mathematics; and his essays, printed—and forgotten—in the Philosophical Transactions, only prove his aptitude. He has since achieved a popular reputation for scientific acquirements. It is one which men of science, emphatically so called, would not and do not recognise,—but it suffices for his noble mission of leading the march of education and knowledge, and proves the extraordinary compass, clearness, and rapidity of his apprehension. He converses and reads, seizes and fixes, general principles, general laws, leading conclusions, and wields them with a dexterity and boldness which fill the multitude with admiration, but are far from imposing on men really scientific. These soon detect him in some loose phrase or palpable error, which proves that his science is information,—not knowledge. His celebrated discourse, on the Objects and Pleasures of Science, would furnish more than one example. But that discourse could have been written by no other man living; and perhaps will

never be rivalled as a porch by which to lead the popular mind into the temple of scientific truth and useful knowledge.

His discourse on Natural Theology may be called the tenth Bridgewater Treatise. It however aims only at rivalry, not, collision with its predecessors written by command. This tract has been charged with strenuous and artful advocacy, instead of the search of truth—with pressing into its service what was long familiar to philosophic divines, and could be new only to the uninitiated: but, like most of his productions, it proves his wonderful vigour and versatility.

He has written on various other subjects—some of temporary, others of permanent interest—but all having reference to the education, the liberty, the happiness of the people,—down to his last essay in the Edinburgh Review.

BYRON AND SCOTT.—We lament and deprecate the disparaging and ungenerous parallels insinuated at times between the excellencies of Scott, and what Mr. Lockhart is pleased to call "the malignity of Byron." Scott needed no rivals to be sacrificed on his tomb; and if the genius that has delighted a world and adorned a nation, has some right to claim the indulgence and implore the peace which are given in the grave to the errors of meaner men, Byron has at least an equal right with Scott in the heirlooms he has left to posterity, and a far greater right than Scott in those extenuations of circumstance and position which God and man take into account when they balance our merits against our misdeeds. Scott, carefully and sedulously trained into decorous habits, religious principles, and prudent consideration of worldly seeming—from his cradle to his manhood: Byron, fatherless, and almost worse than motherless, thrown, while yet a boy, into the world, without a guide but the light of an untutored intellect, clouded by uncorrected passions: Scott, confined into worldly rules and sober ceremonials, by the exercise of a stern profession: Byron, without an aim or an object, "halting, rudderless, in the wide sea of wax." Scott, with an easy income, proportioned to his middling station, gradually widening as his wants expanded: Byron, in youth the pauper peer, galled by all the embarrassments with which a haughty spirit can be stung, and which a generous heart could not fail to create: Scott—united by prudent and well-assorted ties to a faithful and affectionate partner, who jarred not against whatever were the inequalities of his character: Byron—shipwrecked in health and home by the very union which, under happier stars, might have corrected his infirmities, and given solidity to his wild and inconsistent virtues: Scott—undertaking his great enterprises, from the midst of tranquil and happy scenes, in the sober discretion of ripened years: Byron—rushing into the stormiest field of letters, in the very heat of boyish passions, and acquiring too soon a character, which made at once his anguish and his glory: Scott—if subject to occasional and severe illness, still of the most robust constitution, and the most hardy nerves: Byron—the prey to maladies, which evinced from his youth a general derangement of some of the most important organs of the human frame—not occasional, but constant—interfering with the most ordinary comforts of life, and making the body itself the tormentor of the mind: the career of Scott, all serenity and gladness—without foes—without obstacles—without envy—without calumny: Byron—ere the beard was well dark upon his chin—persecuted—maligned—shunned—and exiled. His private sorrows, usually sacred to the meanest, but which unhappily the melodious cries of his own deep anguish gave some right to the crowd to canvass, made the matter of a thousand public and most malignant accusations! Can we institute a parallel between their situations and temptations? If not, all parallel between their errors is uncharitable and unfair.

SCOTT AND SHAKESPEARE.—It is a sign of the low state of criticism in this country that Scott has been compared to Shakspeare. No two writers can be more entirely opposed to each other in the qualities of their genius, or the sources to which they applied. Shakspeare ever aiming at the development of the secret man, and half disdaining the mechanism of external incidents; Scott painting the ruffles and the dress, and the features and the gestures—avoiding the movements of the heart, elaborate in the progress of the incident. Scott never caught the mantle of Shakspeare, but he improved on the dresses of his wardrobe, and threw artificial effects into the scenes of his theatres.

GENIUS OF SCOTT.—In the mechanism of external incidents, Scott is the greatest model that fiction possesses; and if we select from his works that in which this mechanism is most artistical, we instance not one of his most brilliant and popular, but one in which he combined all the advantages of his multiform and matured experience in the craft: we mean the "Fair Maid of Perth." By noting well the manner in which, in this tale, the science is ever varied at the right moment and the exact medium preserved between abruptness and *longueur*; how all the incidents are complicated, so as to appear inextricable, yet the solution obtained by the simplest and shortest process, the reader will learn more of the art of mechanical construction, than by all the rules that Aristotle himself, were he living, could lay down.

GENIUS AND CRITICISM.—Genius will arrive at fame by the light of its own star, but Criticism can often serve as a sign-post to save many an unnecessary winding and indicate many a short way.