

of Sir Ralph Milbank; but this union, unblest by any real affection, cast a shadow on his future career, and darkened the brightest pages of his life. After a year spent in the discord of an unhappy home, a separation ensued; and the dormant fire of poetry was again aroused to life and action, whilst a new-born energy gave to the literary world the *Siege of Corinth* and *Parisina*. Again his love of wandering led him to stray from home and England; but labor wooed the muse into a lonely strength which threw off the shackles of his idleness, and caused the flame of genius to burn with strange and unwonted brilliancy. During his travels he completed *Childe Harold*, wrote the *Prisoner of Chillon* and *Don Juan*, besides producing several other works of value and interest; but in 1822 the soul of his fancy was waning, and the beacon fire of his tuneful numbers was growing dim on the hills of fame. In 1823, he joined the Greeks in their struggle for freedom; and on the 19th of April, 1824, overcome by an attack of fever and rheumatism, his life ebbed away to the ocean of eternity, and he lay on the bosom of those overlasting waters, a victim sacrificed to liberty and freedom.

Byron wrote in an animated strain, painting thoughts of every shade in words which burn into the very soul and leave their impress there, an indelible memento of a mind pliant to every human passion. A noble earnestness is manifest in every line; and, like falling rain on the emerald green of grassy plains, it imparts a glitter of hue which rivals the glowing pictures of a master painter. Melancholy is the presiding deity of his works; and the mournful cadence of some parts falls upon the ear with such a sad and pathetic murmur that his verse seems a struggling heart bursting with the pent-up sorrow of a lifetime. In his poems of travel he brings before us the ivied domes of ruined castles and the haunted chambers of moss-grown towers; but the mind of the reader wearies not, and scenes of rare and surpassing loveliness chase away the gloom of these sombre yet alluring descriptions. He depicts the grandest sights of nature with a truth and justice, no less admirable than necessary; and with subtle and pleasing skill he makes a rapid transit to the less noble phases of a traveller's life. His *Prisoner of Chillon* is painful yet tender, striking the mind with the hopeless and helpless longing of the poor captive, the severance of all earthly ties and connections, and the loss of every human aspiration for the good and noble. It seems, and is, indeed, the sad dirge of a weary soul, pining away in lonely solitude, and, though thirsting for a draught of life-giving liberty, content to crouch forever in the cell dear and familiar by scenes of suffering; but it lacks the beautiful sentiment of Christian resignation, and not a single word makes reference to the moral sublimity of a mind rusting in fetters, yet ever looking upwards with confidence in God's mercy and goodness. In *Don Juan* we find many passages which are by no means unworthy of at-

ention. They are flowers of the fairest type, blooming amidst the rankest growth of the mind's creation—tender and true to nature, charming with a versatility and softness which please the most exacting; but the downward bent of Byron's fancy has left a lamentable stain upon this poem, and the more its beauty sparkles, the darker appear the foul blots which disfigure its pages.

Much of Byron's misanthropy was caused by the misfortunes which checkered his whole career, and dimmed the light of a nature otherwise joyous and sunny. His unfortunate blindness galled him with a sting which never healed, and the sensitive pride of his soul rebelled against this visitation of a merciful God; whilst he never paused to consider that life is but a bubble, and, however distorted the transient casket, the inner air may be as pure as ever dwelt in the most beautiful of created forms. His disappointment led him on to sin, and shame, and misery; but his erring nature could not draw him from the vortex of sorrow but only helped to make his life more dreary,—a sad wreck, ever lying on the strand of painful memories. He who has read the poems of Byron knows his life, for man requires some confident to whom he may pour forth the throbbing feelings of his soul, and the Muse of Song was the only friend who remained firm and true to the crippled bard of Newstead Abbey.

#### FATHERLAND.

J. J. L.

As the sweet perfume of a summer flower loads the air with a delicious fragrance and clings around us long afterwards, so linger the thoughts of home and country, a bright treasury of loved visions and fond recollections that, unlike the odor of the blossom, time never dispels. Though far away from the land we love, still its memory hovers like a halo of glory round us; still the remembrance of its associations are graven on our minds, burned in our souls, and planted imperishably in our hearts. The love of country is among the most natural of human feelings. Like hope it springs eternal in the human breast, and is one of the most powerful incentives that actuate man to the performance of some great work or the achievement of some act calculated to reflect glory alike on himself and on his country. Men feel highly gratified and correspondingly depressed when they hear that some noble action has been done or some cruel wrong perpetrated by one of their countrymen; and their zeal to win for their native land the credit of a discovery or the honor of an important invention has been abundantly exemplified in all ages. The invention of gunpowder is claimed by several nationalities, and rival historians have not settled among themselves whether Columbus or the Northmen first discovered America. These contests have often waxed high and fierce, and the warmer they