

SIR EDWARD EARLE LYTTON BULWER, BRT.

M.P. FOR LINCOLN.

This clever and accomplished writer, is the son of General Bulwer, and descended from an ancient and wealthy family in Norfolk, in which county he was born in 1803. His father dying in 1806, the care of his early youth devolved upon his mother, who sent him to complete his education at the University of Cambridge, where he gained a prize for a poem on sculpture. His first production was entitled, *Weeds and Wild Flowers*, a collection of poems, published in 1826; and was succeeded, in 1827, by another metrical attempt, *O'Neil, or the Rebel*. Neither of these, nor his first prose work, a novel, entitled *Falkland*, which appeared in 1827, attracted particular notice.

The life of an author is to be found in his works; for it is from them we can form a pretty good estimate of his private feelings, his virtues, or his foibles: few other materials in general do the memoirs of authors contain, unless it be a heart-rending recital of disappointment and want. But the life of Sir E. L. Bulwer, Bart., fortunately presents none of these points. Born in the lap of affluence—nurtured with all the care concomitant with the life of a gentleman; blessed with a bountiful and classical education; and endowed with wealth—he came forth as an author, not in the hopes of gaining a competency, but for fame and love of the Muses. It is, therefore, solely as an author that we mean to speak of Sir Edward: for it is as such that he will live in the page of English history.

It has been well observed, that "no one can deny to Mr. Bulwer a foremost place among the names which do honour to modern literature. His readers may vary in their preferences—one may like the lively and actual satire of *Pelham*; a second prefer the poetic imagination of the *Disowned*; a third, the deeper conception and dramatic effect of *Paul Clifford*: but the very fact of these preferences shows how much there is from which to choose."

His *Pelham*, in 1828, was much read, and gained the author great celebrity: in the preface to the second edition of which, he thus explains the grounds whereon he founded his work:—"It is a beautiful part in the economy of this world, that nothing is without its use; every weed in the great thoroughfares of life has a honey, which observation can easily extract; and we may gain no unimportant wisdom from folly itself, if we distinguish while we survey, and satirize while we share it. It is in this belief, that these volumes have their origin. I have not been willing that even the common-places of society should afford neither a record nor a moral; and it is, therefore, from the common-places of society that the materials of this novel have been wrought. By treating trifles naturally they may be rendered amusing, and that which adherence to *Nature* renders amusing, the same cause also may render instructive: for *Nature* is the source of all morals, and the enchanted well, from which not a single drop can be taken that has not the power of curing some of our diseases. * * * I have drawn for the hero of my work, such a person as seemed to me best fitted to retail the opinions and customs of the class and age to which he belongs; a personal combination of antitheses—a sop and a philosopher, a voluptuary and a moralist—a trifle in appearance, but rather one to whom trifles are instructive, than one to whom trifles are natural—an Aristippus on a limited scale, accustomed to draw sage conclusions from the follies he adopts, and while professing himself a votary of Pleasure, in reality a disciple of Wisdom."

In 1833, his *England and the English* appeared: a work rather political, and in which he was severe on the aristocracy of our country: yet it contained many excellent remarks devoid of politics.

In 1831, his *Eugene Aram* appeared in three volumes. It is decidedly the most finished of Mr. Bulwer's productions. An admirably wrought-out story, of which we never lose sight, gradually rises in interest, till the feeling becomes equally intense and painful. There are scenes, in the third volume especially, superior in power and effect to any thing he has yet done. *Eugene Aram* is a fine, and most original conception. In this graphically told novel are many papers displaying great pathos, and powerful imagination. Amidst the display of guilty actions, the author has checkered the melancholy scene with the following description of Autumn:—"Along the serene and melancholy wood, the autumnal winds creep, with a lowly but gathering moan. Where the water held its course, a damp and ghostly mist clogged the air; but the skies were calm, and checkered only by a few clouds that swept in long, white, spectral streaks over the solemn stars. Now and then, the bat wheeled swiftly round, almost touching the figure of the student, as he walked musingly onward. And the owl, that before the month waned many days, would be seen no more in that region, came heavily from the trees, like a guilty thought that deser's its shade. It was one of those nights, half dim, half glorious, which mark the early decline of the year. Nature seemed restless and instinct with change; there were these signs in the atmosphere which leave the most experienced in doubt whether the morning may rise in storm or sunshine. And in this particular period the skies' influence seemed to tincture the animal life with their own mysterious and wayward spirit of change. The birds desert their summer haunts, an unaccountable inquietude pervades the brute creation, even men in this unsettled season have considered them-

selves more (than at others) stirred by the motion and whisperings of their genius. And every creature that flows upon the tide of the universal life of things, feels upon the ruffled surface, the mighty and solemn change which is at work within its depths."

Mr. Bulwer published his *Last Days of Pompeii*, in three volumes, in the year 1834. Like most of this gentleman's productions, it is replete with fine imaginings; but perhaps the most interesting character in the work, is the *Blind Flower Girl*—a personification worked up with heart-rending incidents, displaying the greatest intensity of feeling.

Rienzi, the last of the *Tribunes*, was published in 1836.

Mr. Bulwer came before the public as a dramatic author in 1836, in the production of a play, *The Duchess de la Valliere*. It was not well received by the critics, who described the plot as devoid of dramatic interest, and the language deficient in imagination and effect.

In 1837 appeared his *Ernest Maltravers*, in three volumes. This work contains a few fine thoughts—original ideas; but it is also festered with language that we grieve to think came from the pen of the subject of this memoir.

Exclusive of the above enumerated works, Sir Edward has produced several others, particularly the dramas of the *Lady of Lyons*, and *Richelieu*, both successful productions.

In 1838 the Queen was pleased to create Mr. Bulwer a baronet of the United Kingdom.

It is rather strange that a gentleman of Sir Edward's literary attainments can find time to attend his parliamentary duties, he being member for Lincoln. With politics (thank Heaven!) we have nothing to do; but it may be as well just to notice that Sir E. Bulwer is what is termed a *Liberal*. In the Senate he does not form a prominent character, seldom addressing the house.

His lady has lately given a specimen of her literary acquirements, in a novel, called *Cheveley, or the Man of Honour*, which the reader may perhaps recollect called forth some epistolary correspondence. We are ignorant as to whether Sir Edward has any family by this lady.

His brother, Mr. H. L. Bulwer, who was formerly member for the borough of Marylebone, is now Secretary of Embassy at Paris.—*London Mirror*.

THE STAG HUNT.

From *Random Sketches* by a Kentuckian.—Knickerbocker.

A bright frosty morning in November, 1838, tempted me to visit the forest hunting grounds. I was followed by a fine looking hound which had been presented to me a few days previous. I was anxious to test his qualities, and knowing that a mean dog will often hunt well with a good one, I had tied up the eager Bravo, and was attended by the stranger dog alone. A brisk canter of half an hour brought me to the wild forest hills. I slowly wound my way up a brushy slope, and had ascended about half way, when the hound began to exhibit signs of uneasiness; at the same instant a stag sprang from some underbrush, and rushed like a whirlwind up the slope. A word, and the hound was crouching at my feet, and my trained Cherokee, with ear erect, and flashing eye, watched the course of the affrighted animal.

On the very summit of the ridge, one hundred and fifty yards distant, the stag paused and looked proudly down upon us. After a moment of decision, I raised my rifle, and sent the whizzing lead on its errand. A single bound, and the antlered monarch was hidden from my view. Hastily running down a ball, I ascended the slope; I saw the 'gouts of blood' which stained the withered leaves where he stood.—One moment more, and the excited hound was leaping breast high on his trail, and the gallant Cherokee bore his rider like lightning after them.

For hours did we thus hasten on, without once being at fault or checking our headlong speed. The chase had led us miles from the starting point, and now appeared to be bearing up a creek on one side of which arose a precipitous hill, some two miles in length, which I knew the wounded animal would never ascend. Here, then, I must intercept my game, which I was able to by taking a near cut over the ridge, that saved at least a mile.

Giving one parting shout to cheer my dog, Cherokee bore me headlong to the pass. I had scarcely arrived, when, black with sweat, the stag came laboring up the gore, seemingly totally reckless of our presence. Again I poured forth the 'lead' messenger of death, as, meteor-like, he flashed by us. One bound, and the noble animal lay prostrate within fifty feet of where I stood. Leaping from my horse, and placing one knee upon his shoulder, and a hand on his antlers, I drew my hunting knife; but scarce had its keen point touched his neck, when, with a sudden bound, he threw me from his body, and my knife was hurled from my hand. In hunter's parlance, I had only 'creased him.' I saw at once my danger, but it was too late. With one bound he was upon me, wounding and disabling me with his sharp feet and horns. I seized him by his wide spread antlers, and sought to gain possession of my knife; but in vain, each new struggle drew us farther from it.—Cherokee, frightened at this unusual scene, had madly fled to the top of the ridge, where he

stood looking down upon the combat, trembling and quivering in every limb.

The ridge road I had taken, had placed us far in advance of the hound, whose bay I could not now hear. The struggles of the furious animal had become dreadful, and every moment I could feel his sharp hoofs cutting deep into my flesh; my grasp upon his antlers was growing less and less firm, and yet I relinquished not my hold; the struggle had brought us near a deep ditch, washed by the heavy fall rains, and into this I endeavoured to force my adversary; but my strength was unequal to the effort; when we approached to the very brink, he leaped over the drain; I relinquished my hold and rolled in, hoping thus to escape him. But he returned, and throwing himself upon me, inflicted numerous cuts upon my face and breast, before I could again seize him. Locking my arms round his antlers, I drew his head close to my breast, and was thus, by a great effort, enabled to prevent his doing me any serious injury. But I felt that this could not last long; every muscle and fibre of my frame was called into action, and human nature could not long bear up under such exertion. Faltering a silent prayer to Heaven, I preferred to meet my fate.

At this moment of despair, I heard the faint bayings of the hound. The stag too, heard the sound, and springing from the ditch, drew me with him. His efforts were now redoubled, and I could scarcely cling to him. Oh, how wildly beat my heart, as I saw the hound emerge from the ravine, and spring forward with a short quick bark, as his eye rested on the game. I released my hold of the stag, who turned upon his new enemy. Exhausted, and unable to rise, I still cheered the dog, that dastard like flew before the infuriated enemy, who again threw himself upon me. I succeeded in throwing my arms around his antlers, but not until he had inflicted several deep and dangerous wound upon my head and face, cutting to the very bone.

Blinded by the flowing blood, exhausted and despairing, I cursed the coward dog who stood near, baying furiously, yet refusing to seize his game. Oh how I prayed for Bravo! The thoughts of death were bitter. To die thus, in the wild forest, alone, and none to help! Thoughts of home and friends coursed like lightning through my brain. At that moment of desperation, when hope herself had fled, deep and clear over the neighboring hill, came the bay of my gallant Bravo. I pealed forth in one faint shout, 'On Bravo! on!' The next moment, with tiger like bounds, the noble animal came leaping down the declivity. 'No pause he knew,' but fixing his fangs in the stag's throat, at once commenced the struggle.

I fell back completely exhausted.—Blinded in blood, I only knew that a terrific struggle was going on. In a few moments all was still, and I felt the warm breath of my faithful dog, as he licked my wounds. Clearing my eyes from gore, I saw my late adversary dead at my feet, and Bravo, standing over me. He yet bore around his neck, a fragment of the rope with which I had tied him. He had gnawed it in two, and following his master through all his windings, arrived in time to rescue him from a horrid death.

TRANSIT OF LETTERS IN ENGLAND.

The post-office system of England, perfected as it has been of late years, is vastly superior to that of any other country.

The mention of the office of chief postmaster of England, occurs in 1581. In 1635, Charles I. directed his "post-master of England for foreign parts" to open a communication by running posts between London and Edinburgh, Holyhead, Exeter, Ireland, &c. In 1653-4, the post-office revenues were farmed by the council of state and Proctor at 10,000*l.* per annum. In 1656, the parliament made some enactments for the erection of a new General Post-office, which was established at the Restoration in 1660, and from that period has only changed by a perpetual growth of activity and usefulness. The mail for letters was first conveyed by stage-coaches, on the 2nd August, 1785, and in 1789, by royal mail coaches.

In order to form some idea of the magnitude, and great facility of transacting business at the General Post-office at the present time, we give the following extract from a recent parliamentary report:—

"There are employed at present at the Inland-office of the General Post-office in London, 84 clerks, 50 sub-sorters, 241 letter-carriers, and about 30 messengers—in all, 405 persons.

"The operations of the Post-office, belonging to the despatch of letters, or the evening work, as it is called, consist in—

"1st. Facing the letters, and stamping them, to show the date of their receipt. Stamping is performed with a hand-stamp, at the rate of 200 letters per minute.

"2. Sorting, according to the different mail routes; in doing which 54 persons are employed. Mr. Bokenham states, that sorting is done at the rate of 30 letters a minute. Sir Edward Lees says, that 60 is the lowest number a sorter ought to sort.

"3. Examining and taxing the letters; in which business 21 persons are employed for one hour and a quarter each. Taxing is performed at the rate of 33 in a minute.

"4. Re-sorting, according to the different post towns.

"5. Telling: that is, making out the bills for the unpaid letters, against the different deputy-postmasters. Twenty tellers are thus employed for somewhat less than one hour and a quarter each.