

LYNDHURST AND BROUGHAM.

public animadversion.' As Lord Chief Baron, 'he would not heartily give his mind to his judicial business. His opinion was and is of small weight in Westminster Hall; and I do not recollect any case being decided on any judgment or dictum of his. It was only while in court that he cared or thought of the causes he had to dispose of. The rest of his time he spent in attending the debates in the House of Lords, or in forming cabals with his political partisans, or at the festal board.' After this, and much more of the same sort, it is a comfort to be told that Lyndhurst 'did not take bribes.' The statement is comforting, but not assuring. Possibly the familiar friend of fifty years' standing suffers his stern sense of justice to be tempered by his hankering kindness. Why are we told that Lord Lyndhurst did not take bribes? Was he charged with such corruption? Never. Is not the reader somewhat enlightened? Does he not see how Campbell blends justice with hankering kindness? Do not nail his ear to the post. He did not take bribes. Umph! We understand. We could easily fill columns with such quotations as we have already given, but enough is as good as a feast, and therefore we shall only take one more passage from the 'Life of Lord Lyndhurst.'—

Lyndhurst was about this time much alarmed by a bill I had introduced to abolish imprisonment for debt, and to provide a more efficient remedy for creditors by the personal examination of the debtor as to his property and his past expenditure. The stories about executions in Lyndhurst's house I believe were unfounded; but he was still needy from inconsiderate expenditure, and it was by no means clear that a judgment for a debt might not have been suddenly obtained against him. He came privately to me and pointed out the oppression and extortion that might be practised by the power proposed to be given to judgment creditors, and insisted that as the members of the two Houses were not subject to imprisonment for debt, they ought not to be subject to the inquisition substituted for it.

Here is a portrait black as midnight. The son of a distinguished artist is ashamed of his father because he was not aristocratic. An ultra-Republican becomes an ultra-Tory for the sake of place and pay. The judge of the highest Courts in the realm neglects his duties and devotes his energies to political intrigues, so that the best his familiar loving friend can say is that 'he did not take bribes.' This unprincipled politician and unrighteous judge was also a bad man in his private relations. He lived on bad terms with his first wife, and soon forgot her early death and returned to the pleasures of life. He was a spendthrift, and wanted to have a proposed law framed so that he might still be able to defy his unfortunate creditors. Let us complete the portrait by showing that this monster of iniquity could descend to the pettiest meannesses. In page 168 we read as follows:—

Brougham generally spoke rather respectfully

of Lyndhurst behind his back, while Lyndhurst behind Brougham's back was always ready to join in exaggerating his faults and laughing at his eccentricities. During the rest of the day, till it was time to take an airing in his carriage, Lyndhurst was ready to receive all visitors who might drop in. On these occasions it was expedient to go late and stay the last; for I observed the practice to be, that each visitor on departing furnished a subject of satirical remark for the master of the house and those who remained.

Such is the picture, as drawn by Lord Campbell, of Lord Lyndhurst, who, the son of an artist, became Master of the Rolls, the Lord Chief Baron of the Exchequer, four times Lord High Chancellor, and one of the most respected and venerated members of the House of Lords. This biography is of course a gross libel in fact, and, must we add, in intent? No doubt Campbell disliked Lyndhurst for several reasons. Lord Lyndhurst was a Tory, and Campbell hated Tories. Campbell was a dull, heavy plodder, whilst Lyndhurst was a vivacious and brilliant member of society. Campbell never jested, whilst Lyndhurst was fond of jesting, and no doubt told his acidulated friend any number of ridiculous stories, and possibly represented himself as Campbell has represented him in the book. That is the most probable explanation of this biography, and though it does not excuse Lord Campbell's persistent bitterness and ill-nature, it exonerates him from the grave offence of deliberate and conscious slander.

If Lord Brougham had died in 1834, his reputation would have been so great that he would probably have been classed amongst the marvels of the nineteenth century. But thirty years of conspicuous success were followed by thirty years of conspicuous failure, and Lord Brougham lived to prove that his powers had been overrated by himself and by his contemporaries. At the passing of the Reform Bill, Brougham was at the zenith of his fame. He was the hero of the revolution and the popular idol. Plaster casts of his head were sold by tens of thousands, and a gaping world wondered how one skull could contain so much and such varied knowledge. In science, literature, law, politics, and oratory Henry Brougham was supposed to be without a compeer. He was a modern Cicero and something more. In him were supposed to be united the talents of Newton, Bacon, Gibbon, Camden, Pitt, and Demosthenes. Stories were told of his working twenty hours out of the twenty-four. He rose before the lark, dashed off an article for the *Edinburgh*, and wrote a hundred letters before breakfast. He was in Court from nine till four, amazing judges with his legal lore, or enchanting juries with his eloquence. From the Court of Justice he rushed to the House of Commons, to instruct, dazzle, and delight the listening senate. Then home: but before going to bed, the unwearied phenomenon would indite an essay on science that would throw the discoveries of