

—wild, though powerful in conception, and often extravagant in language—as this production is, and belonging altogether to a school now most properly extinct. But a reader, at all conversant with Byron's poetry, who should undertake the same labour, would hardly fail to be surprised by the similarity in the mode of thinking, and the taste as to subjects and sentiments, between this obscure author and the noble bard. So apparent is this in reading the romance, and so little merit is there in the discovery, either on the part of Mrs. Sheridan, Mr. Galt, or myself, that on turning to the title-page of the fourth volume, I was much amused to find it confirmed by some anonymous reader with whose name I regret that I am unable to favour the world. In short, one of those circulating-library literati, who display their critical talents by making pencil annotations on all works honoured by their perusal, has, besides other notes through the course of the copy that I obtained from the library, under-written the words, 'Joshua Pickersgill, Esq.,' on the title page, as follows:—'No such name ever heard of—Quere? *can this be a boyish production of Lord Byron?*' I have ascertained that the romance *was* written by a Joshua Pickersgill. Of the other part of the note my reader may make what use he pleases.

"As the discovering of plagiarisms, real or supposed, however, is a labour little accordant with either my taste or feelings, I prefer, at least in the first instance, referring to those passages in the romance, which, having a remarkable application to his own case and dispositions, were calculated to make a strong impression upon the ardent mind of the noble poet. The principal character in, 'The Three Brothers,' is a wayward and high-spirited youth, the son of a man of bad passions and most questionable morals, (vide Byron's father,) and born under circumstances of melancholy and mystic presage as to his fate in life. The boy is beautiful both in face and person, and 'his constitution was so instinct with love, that he almost was insensible to an inferior feeling for womankind, and when his eighth year was yet incomplete he affected and amazed his auditors with the inimitable tenderness of his reply to a young lady, who, amusing herself with him, inquired of him what it was to love, answered, "It is to die in yourself, to live in another."—(Vol. iv. p. 254.) By an accident, when with his parents previous to this, the boy's spine is broken, and he is at the same time wounded in the shoulder by a ball from a pistol, which causes a deformity in the back. This misfortune, by destroying the beauty of his form and making him remarkable, and often an object of ridicule to companions, otherwise his inferiors, sours his disposition, as well as disappoints his romantic fancies, until becoming the mental slave of his unsightly hump, he begins to regard it as the grand cause of all the miseries which he is destined to suffer, and the bitter occasion of incessant self-contempt. The power with which the author of the romance unfolds and illustrates the consequences of this deformity, need not be here dwelt upon; but when we know how excessively sensitive Byron was all his life, upon the subject of his misshapen foot—how bitterly, and probably unforgivingly, he brooded over the unreasonable and unfeeling taunt of his mother upon the subject—and how this personal deformity, slight as it was, made him remarkable among his companions, and became connected afterwards with the one great disappointment of his life—we may have some idea of the impression, that every thing in these volumes would make upon a mind like his, narrating as it does so many circumstances and evolving so many feelings, which spoke so home to his experience. When we further reflect, that he regarded his early disappointment concerning Miss Chaworth, as the great event which had not only shaped his after life to misfortune and suffering, but which had, in some sense, disturbed his faculties, (Moore, vol. ii p. 790, notes,) we shall see of what importance the impressions given by this congenial romance may have been, in forming the tone if not the conceptions, of his maturer mind. The manner in which Byron afterwards speaks of Miss Chaworth's refusal of him, and marriage with another, is most affecting. 'A marriage,' he says, 'for which he sacrificed the prospects of two very ancient families, and a heart which was her's from ten years old, and a head which has never been quite right since.'—(ib.) And to what does he in his own 'Memoranda' ascribe this irremediable disappointment? It will be recollected that, in his delightful intercourse with this young lady, there were constant dances in the evening at Matlock, in which, being unable to join on account of his lame foot, he had