

His father intended him for the bar, and sought to dampen his literary ardour by articling him to a solicitor, but his malady, "bred in the bone," broke out again, and could not be cured or checked.

"Vivian Grey," the first of about a dozen novels that dropped from his pen, appeared when Disraeli was just of age. It created an immense sensation, and became the book of the season. As Froude has said, "Disraeli, like Byron, went to sleep a nameless youth of twenty-one, and woke to find himself famous." The work, to employ a favourite adjective of his own, was a "prodigious" production for one of his years. Its plot is poor, its rhetoric sometimes puerile, and its apostrophic paragraphs too often bear the mark of having been lugged in from among the bombastic essays of a boy's exercise-book. Yet it has grip, and strength, and insight; and it reveals a profound worldly wisdom.

"Why is it," he asks, "there have been statesmen who have never ruled, and heroes who have never conquered? Why have glorious philosophers died in a garret? And why have there been poets whose only admirer has been nature in her echoes? It must be that these beings have thought only of themselves, and, constant and elaborate students of their own glorious natures, have forgotten or disdained the study of all others. Yes; we must mix with the herd; we must enter into their feelings; we must humour their weaknesses; we must sympathize with the sorrows that we do not feel, and share the merriment of fools. Oh, yes; to *rule* men, we must *be* men; to prove that we are strong we must be weak; to prove that we are giants we must be dwarfs; even as the eastern genie was laid in the charmed bottle. Our wisdom must be concealed under folly, and our constancy under caprice."

Isaac Disraeli and his son are unquestionably the prototypes of Mr. Grey and Vivian. Both young men are extremely am-

bitious, and look on the bar with the same abhorrence.

The BAR—pooh! Law and bad jokes till we are forty; and then, with the most brilliant success, the prospect of gout and a coronet. Besides, to succeed as an advocate I must be a great lawyer, and to be a great lawyer I must give up my chance of being a great man."

Each father, too, misunderstands his son; and so we have the sage reflection:

"But so it is in life; a father is, perhaps, the worst judge of his son's capacity, He knows too much—and too little."

Though there was a likeness between his hero and himself, Disraeli protested that they were not one. There were many persons, however, who insisted on their identity. To these he addressed himself in the following paragraphs, which serve to show with what ambidexterity he could wield the whip-lash:

"I am loath to speak even for one moment of the author instead of the hero; but with respect to those who have with singular industry associated the character of the author of 'Vivian Grey' with that of its hero, I must observe, that as this is an inconvenience which I share in company with more celebrated writers, so also it is one which will never prevent me from describing any character which my mind may conceive.

"To those who, alike unacquainted with my person, my life, my habits, have, with that audacious accuracy for which ignorance is celebrated, not only boldly avowed that the original of my hero may be discovered in myself, but that the character, at the same time, forms also a flattering portrait of a more frail original, I shall say nothing. Most of these chatterers are included in that vast catalogue of frivolous beings who carry on in society an espionage on a small scale, not precisely through malice, but from an invincible ambition of having something to say, when they have nothing to think about. A few of these persons, I am informed, cannot even plead a brainless skull as an excuse for their indecent conduct; but dreading that in time the lash