

loving him; and that he was always happy to oblige those in common with whom he had any recollections of good-humoured festivity."

I have said that the tide of Lord Melville's good fortune began to ebb when he received the appointment of First Lord of the Admiralty, in 1804. But previous to that date, his bed had not always been one of roses. "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown;" and the sovereign's lot in this respect is often shared by his servant, the statesman. To this effect we have in Sir John Sinclair's *Memoirs* a remark of Lord Melville's noted. Sir John had waited on him on the new year's morn of 1796, to wish him a happy new year. Melville's reply was: "I hope this year will be happier than the last; for I can scarcely recollect spending one happy day in the whole of it." This confession, coming from one whose whole life had hitherto been a series of triumphs, and who appeared to stand secure on the pinnacle of political ambition, Sir John Sinclair used often to dwell upon as exemplifying the vanity of human wishes.

Lord Melville's death was a sudden one. He had come into Edinburgh from his country residence, to attend the funeral of President Blair, an old friend, when a fit of apoplexy seized him. He had retired to rest in his usual health, but was found dead in his bed next morning. These two early-attached, illustrious friends were thus lying, both suddenly dead, with but a wall between them. Their houses on the north-east side of George Square, Edinburgh, were next each other.

That Lord Melville's end was quite unexpected by himself at the moment, is shewn by a curious circumstance. A letter was discovered lying on the writing table in the room where he was found dead, containing, by anticipation, an account of his emotions at the funeral of President Blair. It was addressed, ready to be sent off, to a member of the Government, with a view to obtain some public provision for Blair's family; and the writer had not reckoned on the possibility of his own demise before his friend's funeral took place. "Such things are always awkward when detected," Lord Cockburn observes, "especially when done by a skilful politician. Nevertheless, an honest and true man might do this," Lord Cockburn observes; "it is easy to anticipate one's feelings at a friend's burial, and putting the description into the form of having returned from it, is mere rhetoric."

Sir Walter Scott speaks with great feeling of the decease of Lord Melville. Thus he writes in a letter to Mr. Morritt: "Poor dear