

thall Swift (whose grandfather, Deane Swift, was a cousin of the famous Dean Swift) was, till the ninety-ninth year of his life, a frequent contributor to the *London Notes and Queries*. As an accomplished scholar, and an authority on the English language, Mr. Swift had few equals, and his accuracy as to historical facts was unquestioned. In *Notes and Queries* of July 9, 1870, he began an article thus: "The witty profligate, John Wilkes, observed that an old man's dotage is *anec-dotage*." At greater length the Rev. Edwin Paxton Hood in his "World of Moral and Religious Anecdote" (London, 1870) writes: "When the notorious John Wilkes had to listen to the stories of some person who was prolix in telling them, and when some friend excused the story-teller, saying that he had 'got to his dotage,' Wilkes replied: 'Dotage, sir! I tell you he is past dotage—he has got to anecdotage.'" Mr. Pinto's *mot* is, therefore, at least a hundred years old.

Lord Beaconsfield was at all times, both in his novels and in his speeches, "a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles." In Boswell's "Life of Johnson" the Doctor is reported to have said in 1770: "That fellow seems to me to possess but one idea, and that is a wrong one." This caught the eye and fancy of Lord Beaconsfield, and Dr. Johnson's remark is thus resuscitated in "Sybil," Book iv. Chap. 5: "Mr Kremlin was distinguished for ignorance; he had only one idea, and that was wrong." Again, his saying, "Everything comes to him who knows how to wait," or as it is expressed in "Sybil," Book iv. Chap. 2, "It came at last as everything does, if men are firm and calm," is merely the French proverb, "*Tout vient à point à celui qui sait attendre*," or in the older form, "*Tout vient à qui veut attendre*." The last line of one of Longfellow's poems is:

"All things happen unto him who waits."

Another of the Earl's famous *dicta*, "The unexpected always happens," has been anticipated by the comic poet, Plautus, in his *Mostellaria*, l. iii. 40: "*Inesperata accidunt magis solpe quam quæ speres*;" while Thiers, the French historian and statesman, applied in a similar way to politics the proverb, "Nothing is so certain as the unforeseen," and declared that "in politics it is always the unforeseen that happens."

If we take up "Henrietta Temple," we shall find the same tendency to adopt literary foundlings. Here are two examples. "He was a great talker," said Lady Bellair, 'but then he was the tyrant of conversation. Now men were made to listen as well as to talk.' 'Without doubt, for Nature has given us two ears, but only one mouth,' said Count Mirabel. This, by the bye, is quoted at page 62 of "The Wit and Wisdom of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield." Turning to a small volume of one hundred and thirty pages, edited by Mr. F. A. Paley, and entitled, "Greek Wit and Wisdom," we find the following anecdote at page 135, quoted from Stotæus. It occurs also under the heading "Zeno," in the Rev. Henry Vett's "Flowers of Wit," a book which seems to have been a *vade mecum* with Lord Beaconsfield, just as Talleyrand was in the habit of studying the "*Improvisateur Français*," a collection of anecdotes and *bons mots*, in twenty-one volumes. The anecdote in question is as follows: "Zeno said to a youth who was more disposed to talk than to listen, 'Young man, Nature gave us one tongue, but two ears; that we may hear just twice as much as we speak.'" The following is another sample of appropriation: "To the remark, 'Oh! the damned climate!' Count Mirabel replies, 'On the contrary, it is the only good climate there is. In England you can go out every day and at all hours; and then to those who love variety like myself, you are not sure of seeing the same sky every morning you rise.'" Compare what Charles II. is reported to have said of the abused climate of England, in "Flowers of Wit," by the Rev. Henry Vett, Vol. i. page 160: "There are more days in the year, and more hours in the day, in England during which a man can take exercise out of doors than in any country I have ever known."

Let us take another of Lord Beaconsfield's novels, "Endymion." The late Colonel Wiley, of Montreal, wrote as follows to me in August, 1882: "'Sensible men,' says Waldershare in 'Endymion,' 'are all of the same religion.' When pressed to answer what that religion was, he is made to reply: 'Sensible people never tell.' I have seen the same sentiment expressed in the same language long before the publication of 'Endymion'; but I regret that I have forgotten the older author's name, and that of his work. Can you assist me in this matter?" In answer to Colonel Wiley, I referred him to the following passage in G. A. Sala's "Echoes of the Week," in the *Illustrated London News* of May 7, 1882. "I read in *Punch*, apropos of some funeral sermons lately preached, the following quotations, as Lord Beaconsfield's epigram from "Endymion." "'Sensible men,' said Waldershare, 'are all of the same religion.' 'And, pray, what is that?' inquired the Prince. 'Sensible men never tell.'" This of course is in "Endymion;" but the epigram is no more Lord Beaconsfield's than was his famous panegyric on the Duke of Wellington, which was 'lifted' from an *oraison funèbre* on the French Marshal Gouvion de St. Cyr. Lord Beaconsfield, like Molière, and in a degree like Dumas the Elder, took his property wheresoever he found it, and that property lay loose in a great many literary pockets. As for the 'men of sense' epigram, it has been credited to the arch-schemer, Lord Shaftesbury, to Fontenelle, to St. Evremond, and to at least twenty more sceptical wits of the seventeenth century. I have grown to be positive about nothing in the case of original sayers of witty things; I fancy that most of them must have been said by that grand old gardener, Adam; but I am positive that the 'men of sense' story was in print at least a hundred and fifty years before Lord Beaconsfield was born." Subsequently I gave Colonel Wiley the following additional references. In *Notes and Queries* of September 9, 1871 (several years before the publication of "Endymion"), Mr. W. J. Birch wrote as follows: "I was present at a conversation which ascribed to Lord Malmesbury the saying, 'I am of the religion of every sensible

man.' 'What is that?' said a lady. 'That which no sensible man tells any one.' I instantly remarked that I had heard it all my life, and that it was not a modern, but an old saying. Very soon after, in an *Athenæum* of the present year [May 20, 1871, page 615], it was stated that the saying had been attributed to the third Earl of Shaftesbury, as well as to his grandfather, the first Earl—which would make it about two centuries old. The other day, I met with the first volume of Froude's 'Essays,' in one of which he gives the saying to Rogers, the poet. Can you, or any of your readers, tell me to whom the saying belongs?"

In the same journal (of September 30, 1871), a well-known writer thus replied: "There is no doubt of the existence of the story of the religion in which all men of sense are agreed, and which no man of sense ever tells, before both Lord Malmesbury and Rogers. The story is told of the first Earl of Shaftesbury by Speaker Onslow, in a note on Burnet's 'Own Time' (Vol. i. 96)."

There are numerous other proofs that Lord Beaconsfield, as Sheridan said of Dundas, "generally resorted to his memory for his jokes." Mendelssohn had described Cherubini as looking like an "extinct volcano," long before the Earl, in a speech at Manchester, on April 3, 1872, compared the ministers sitting on the Treasury Benches to "a range of exhausted volcanoes." This is very different from John Bright's facetious allusion to the Conservative Ministry in a speech at Birmingham in 1866: "The Government of Lord Derby in the House of Commons, sitting all in a row, reminds me very much of a number of amusing and ingenious gentlemen, whom I dare say some of you have seen and listened to—I mean the Christy Minstrels." It was this same John Bright, who, when told that "he ought to give credit to Mr. Disraeli for being a self-made man," slyly added, "and he adores his maker."

Lord Beaconsfield's saying in the House of Lords, 1881, that "The key of India is not at Candahar; the key of India is in London," was claimed by Prince Lobanoff at the time; and the phrase, "burning questions," first used by Edward Miall, M.P., was appropriated by Disraeli in March, 1873. When he said of Lord Derby (then Lord Stanley) in the House of Commons, April, 1844, "The noble lord is the Prince Rupert of parliamentary discussion," the comparison, as is evident from the context, was a malicious one. Lord Lytton made a nobler use of the applied name when he thus described Lord Stanley in "The New Timon" (Part I.):

"The brilliant chief, irregularly great,  
Frank, haughty, rash—the Rupert of debate."

In September, 1853, Lord John Russell said at Greenock, "I certainly should be the last to forget, that, if peace cannot be maintained with honour, it is no longer peace." Lord Beaconsfield set his mark on the phrase, when, on his return from the Berlin Congress, July 16, 1878, he said: "Lord Salisbury and myself have brought you back peace—but a peace, I hope, with honour which may satisfy our sovereign, and tend to the welfare of the country." A writer in *Notes and Queries* has pointed out a singular coincidence between these words, and a passage in Fletcher's "Queen of Corinth," Act i., Sc. 1:

*Eraton*: "The general is returned, then?"

*Neanthes*: "With much honour."

*Sosicles*: "And peace concluded with the place of Argos."

*Neanthes*: "To the Queen's wishes."

But, as if it were not enough for Lord Beaconsfield to have "plundered right royally," many sayings of other wits and authors have been wrongly attributed to him on the principle that "to him that hath shall be given." Thus, at the close of an article on "Some Coincidences in Literature," in the *Cornhill Magazine* for May, 1886, the writer says: "Tacitus ('Annals,' iii. 76) may also perhaps claim priority for the happy and hackneyed phrase of Disraeli, 'conspicuous by their absence.'" The author of the "happy phrase" was not Disraeli, but Lord John Russell. In his "Address to the Electors of the City of London" in 1859, he said of Lord Derby's Reform Bill: "Among the defects of the Bill, which are numerous, one provision is conspicuous by its presence, and another by its absence." A short time afterwards, finding that the expression had been sharply criticised, he defended it as being no "bull," but as "a turn of phraseology which is not an original expression of mine, but is taken from one of the greatest historians of antiquity."

The following paragraph is from an article in *Temple Bar* for October, 1883, on "Lord Beaconsfield's Character:" "Lord Haddington got a repartee which made him wince. He remarked loftily, being a pompous man, that there was too much barking on the back Opposition benches: 'I have no opinion of a hound that doesn't obey the "Whip,"' he added. 'Your lordship was doubtless well whipped as a puppy,' retorted Disraeli in a demure tone, amid general laughter. In connection with this rejoinder, we may note Disraeli's definition of 'dogmatism' as 'puppyism grown old.' It was made in after years, and, we believe, touched a noble Whig lord still living."

Few, I hope, will deny that Disraeli's retort to Lord Haddington, if it was ever made, contains far more discourtesy than wit. It was not, however, to say this that I have quoted the extract from *Temple Bar*, but to restore to the rightful owner the definition of "dogmatism." It is as certain as "death and taxes" that the saying was Douglas Jerrold's, and it will be found in a volume of his witticisms, etc., edited by his son. *Suum cuique* is a correct principle; and it perpetuates error when reviews and magazines assign famous phrases to speakers and writers who have never claimed them. In the same way, a short time ago, the *New York Nation* ascribed to Lord Beaconsfield the maxim, "If you want to know a subject thoroughly, you should write a book about it," and recommended that it should be inserted in a book of "Familiar Quotations." The maxim may, or may not, occur in some of the numerous writings of