

ever, I unhesitatingly affirm, that there is no class of Her Majesty's subjects which, comparative numbers taken into account, can boast of greater integrity, intelligence, or true patriotism than the Peerage of Great Britain.

THE MAJOR.—In proof of your assertion I may cite the stir and outcry which ensue, whenever a nobleman renders himself penally amenable to the laws of his country. Mark, for instance, the amount of capital which the home journals are presently manufacturing out of the recent conviction of Lord Frankfort for slander. Why, if the order of this unhappy man (of whose accountability pregnant doubts are entertained) was composed to any extent, of the ruffians and demireps described by Reynolds, the case of Frankfort would excite comparatively no attention, owing to the frequency of similar occurrences.

THE LAIRD.—I think if they chained the abusive novelist to the leering Lord, and made them pick oakum together, it would be an act o' common justice! Wha, in the name o' wonder, patronizes the productions o' sic a land-louper?

THE MAJOR.—Reynolds' fictions appear periodically, in a penny journal published in the British metropolis, the sale of which is mainly confined to the uneducated and dissolute. It circulates extensively in pot-houses and flash taverns, and is a leading favorite with thieves, pick-pockets and swindlers.

THE LAIRD.—And sae the lad writes to please the tastes o' his customers?

THE MAJOR.—Precisely so! In every one of his tales you will discover some chivalrous *cracksman*, who is set up as a favorable foil to the unprincipled, cowardly, and rapacious nobility.

THE DOCTOR.—Enough, and more than enough of such carrion;—let us call a new cause. Here are two parts of Appleton and Company's very beautiful reprint of *Lord John Russell's "Memoirs, Journal, and Correspondence of Thomas Moore."*

THE MAJOR.—Have you looked into the production?

THE DOCTOR.—How can you ask such a needless question? Do you imagine that I could have been in possession of such a work three minutes, without diving into the very heart thereof? No, no! such stoicism forms no part of my composition. The Mercury of Maclear had hardly placed it upon my table when my paper-cutter was at work, and I had it dissected in the tossing of a pancake!

THE LAIRD.—Weel, and what is the verdict which you hae arrived at?

THE DOCTOR.—So far as the Right Honorable editor is concerned, the affair is a palpable failure. Lord John Russell demonstrates that he lacks almost all the requisites for a right performance of the task which he has undertaken. His preface abounds with the most common-place platitudes, and there is a puer-

ility in his attempts at criticism, which reminds one pestilently of the essay of a precocious school-boy. To use the expression of Charles Lamb, "one always detects the odor of bread and butter."

THE MAJOR.—But is not glorious little Tom, or Tom Little, left, in a great measure, to tell his own story?

THE DOCTOR.—Unquestionably he is, but even here the biographer develops himself to be merely "a wit among Lords." Nothing in the shape of tact or discrimination is shewn so far as selection is concerned. Everything is fish that comes to his net, provided it bears the sign manual of the personage whose life he is writing! The most trifling document is deemed deserving of typographical perpetuity, if presenting the autograph of the luckless bard. Here, for instance, is a specimen of the unadulterated twaddle which we find in the correspondence:—

TO HIS MOTHER.

"London, January 5, 1801.

"*I was not allowed to leave Donnington Park till I had promised that as soon as leisure allowed me I should return. They were indeed uncommonly polite. The morning I left it, breakfast was ordered an hour earlier than usual to accommodate me, and Lord Moira requested I should return as soon as I could! !*"

THE LAIRD.—Hech sirs, but that is sma' drink indeed! What do the uncouth millions wha hae laughed, and grat, and burned, and exulted by turns under the magic o' the Irish Melodies,—what, I say, do they care to ken that the maker o' such immortal songs, got a shake down, and an early breakfast frae Lord Moira, or any ither lord.

THE DOCTOR.—Bravo! Laird, you are getting democratic in your old age.

THE LAIRD.—I'm no a bit, ye're clean wrang, democratic in the political sense o' the word? If the bit scart o' letter which you hae read had appeared in the life o' the Peer, it wud hae been quite a different part o' speech. A proud feather it wud hae been in the cap o' the highest magnate o' the land, that Moore had honored his roof-tree and board.—But though the coronet might hae gloried in the reflected light o' the lyre, the lyre could gain na glory from the coronet.

THE MAJOR.—Come, come, children, do not fall out, I beseech you! If it so please you, Sangrado, let us have a sample of the better class of literary wares which Lord John Russell has laid before his customers. Surely with all its tares the book contains a modicum of wheat.

THE DOCTOR.—Assuredly it doth, though I wish that the proportion of nutritious matter had been greater. From the auto-biographical memoir (if that be not a tautologous expression) I will read you the poet's account of his first attempt at the concoction of rhyme.