

years that followed the Reform of the House of Commons are full of instruction on which a young man would do well to ponder. It is hardly possible that he could rise from the study of these annals, without a confirmed disgust for political intrigue, a dazzling practice, apt at first to fascinate youth, for it appeals at once to our invention and our courage, but one which really should only be the resource of the second rate. *Great minds must trust to great truths and great talents for their rise and nothing else."*

One of the great mistakes made in regard to Mr. Disraeli is to represent him as if he had had no advantages when a young man. He always had a certain amount of independent means to begin with; he was in good London society from the commencement; and the distance between his starting point and the starting point—say of Richard Brinsley Sheridan—was very great. He was a constant visitor at Lady Blessington's when Napoleon III (Prince Louis Bonaparte), Count D'Orsay, the late Lord Lytton, and others frequented her *salon*; and Napoleon and the young Disraeli often talked about their hopes. A story is told that when, many years afterwards, Napoleon and Disraeli, both having been equally successful, met in the drawing room of a tory magnate, they burst out laughing.

I HAVE often regretted I did not note down from time to time the "good things" I heard Mr. Disraeli say, and the "good" stories I heard about him. My memory does not serve me at present for more than is given in this chapter.