

laird's devil's? I have frequently asked the country people what sort of a man his Lordship (our Lord Byron) was. The impression of his eccentric but energetic character was evident in the reply. 'He's the devil of a fellow for comical fancies—he flags th' ould laird to nothing, but he's a hearty fellow for all that.' ”

Horace Walpole (Earl of Oxford), who had visited Newstead, gives, in his usual bitter sarcastic manner, the following account of it :

“As I returned, I saw Newstead and Althorp. I like both. The former is the very Abbey. The great East window of the church remains, and connects with the house; the hall entire: the refectory entire; the cloister untouched, with the ancient cistern of the convent, and their arms on it: it has a private chapel, quite perfect. The park, which is still charming, has not been so much profaned. The present Lord has lost large sums, and paid in old oaks, five thousand pounds worth of which have been cut near the house. *En revenge*, he has built two baby-forts to pay his country in castles, for damage done to the navy, and planted a handful of Scotch firs, that look like ploughboys dressed in old family liveries for a public day. In the hall is a very good collection of pictures, all animals. The refectory, now the great drawing room, is full of Byrons: the vaulted roof remaining, but the windows have new dresses making for them by a Venetian tailor.”

The following detailed description of Byron's paternal abode, is extracted from “A visit to Newstead Abbey in 1828,” in the London Literary Gazette :

“It was on the noon of a cold bleak day in February, that I set out to visit the memorable Abbey at Newstead, once the property and abode of the immortal Byron. The gloomy state of the weather, and the dreary aspect of the surrounding country, produced impressions more appropriate to the views of such a spot, than the cheerful scenery of summer. The estate lies on the left-hand side of the high north road, eight miles beyond Nottingham; but as I approached the place, I looked in vain for some indication of the Abbey. Nothing is seen but a thick plantation of young larch and fir bordering the road, until you arrive at the hut, a small public house by the way side. Nearly opposite to this is a plain white gate, without lodges, opening into the park; before stands a fine spreading oak, one of the few remaining trees of Sherwood forest, the famous haunt of Robin Hood and his associates, which once covered all this part of the country, and whose country was about the domain of Newstead. To this oak, the only one of any size on the estate, Byron was very partial. It is pretty well known that his great uncle (to whom he succeeded) cut down almost all the valuable timber; so that, when Byron came into possession of the estate, and, indeed, the whole time he had it, presented a very bare and desolate appearance. The soil is very poor, and fit only for the growth of larch and fir; and of these upwards of 700 acres have been planted. Byron could not afford the first outlay which was necessary, in order ultimately to increase its worth; so that as long as he held it, the rental did not exceed £1300 n-year. From the gate to the Abbey is a