

culminated and every power broke down. The sanguine, foolish bravery of the man was such even then that next moment he was calculating upon the possibility of re-election for Westminster, a seat which was one of the prizes sought by favourites of fortune; and, writing to his solicitor after his personal possessions, pictures, books, and nick-nacks, had been sacrificed, comforted him with a cheerful "However, we shall come through!"

Poor Sheridan! the heart bleeds to contemplate him in all his desperate shifts, now maudlin in tears, now wild in foolish gaiety and hope. Prince and party alike left him to sink or swim as he pleased. When it was told him that young Byron, the new hero of society, had praised him as the writer of the best comedy, the best opera, the best oration of his time, the veteran burst into tears. A compliment now was an unwonted delight to one who had received the plaudits of two generations, and who had moved men's minds as few besides had been able to do. A little band of friends, very few and of no great renown, were steadfast to him—Peter Moore, M.P. for Coventry, Samuel Rogers, his physician, Dr. Bain, he who had attended the death-bed of Mrs. Sheridan—stood by him faithfully through all; but he passed through the difficulties of his later years, and descended into the valley of the shadow of death, deserted, but for them, by all who had professed friendship for him. Lord Holland, indeed, is said to have visited him once, and the Duke of Kent wrote him a polite, regretful letter when he announced his inability to attend a meeting; but not even an inquiry came from Carlton House, and all the statesmen whom he had offended, and those to whom he had long been so faithful a colleague, deserted him unanimously. When the troubles of his later life culminated in illness a more forlorn

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