

FAULTS OF DISRAELI FRANKLY CONFESSED BY HIS BIOGRAPHY

[From the New York Evening Post.]

DISRAELI.
The Life of Benjamin Disraeli. By
William Flavelle Monypenny. Vol.
II, 1837-1846. New York: The Mac-
millan Company, \$2 Net.

The delay in the appearance of this volume—it is two years since Vol. I was published—is said in the preface to be due to "reasons of health." Unfortunately, the author's death soon followed, so that a new mischance has befallen what seems to be the illustrious official biography of Disraeli. Lord Rowton, private secretary and biographer designate, died without doing anything more than amass materials; and now Mr. Monypenny has passed away, leaving the work less than half done. Regret at this will be the deeper for the proof of his quality that he had given. Besides sufficient literary skill, he had the good judgment and complete honesty which made him just the biographer one would desire to have the handling of the Disraeli papers. While the present volume is not steadily maintained at the high level reached by the first, it carries on the narrative with a way to sustain its interest, and witnesses throughout to Mr. Monypenny's industry and literary integrity.

When Sir Robert Peel formed his ministry in 1841 Disraeli wrote him a letter begging for "recognition"—that is, for office. Mrs. Disraeli wrote to the prime minister at the same time, without her husband's knowledge, she stated. Peel could find no place for him. There is a story that he would have given him something had not Stanley threatened to leave the cabinet if "that scoundrel" Disraeli refused. On this ground, or for more public reasons, Disraeli began his famous series of attacks upon Peel. When the latter was most virulently assailed by the glibest of the other in 1846, he remarked that Disraeli's opinion of him could not have been so low in 1841, when Disraeli applied for office. Disraeli flatly said that he had never done so. But there was his explicit letter! It was afterwards found among the Peel papers, and was first published fifty years later. What have the apologists of Disraeli to do there he been many weak attempts to explain away the sheer contradiction. Wilfrid Meynell, in his life of Disraeli, intimates that Peel's charge came so suddenly that Disraeli "showed a shaking unpreparedness." Other shifts have been tried. But none of them would do for so honest a biographer as Mr. Monypenny. He examines all the evidence, and then comes to the verdict: "Having asked Peel for office in 1841, Disraeli in 1846, not to press the other occasion (there was another) publicly denied that he had done so; and he must pay the full penalty of not producing the letter and crush Disraeli on the spot. It is not discussed in this volume. Perhaps it cannot be solved now. One knows the story of the encounter looking for the letter and not being able to find it. But the Duke of Newcastle personally told Goldwin Smith that, 'calling at Peel's house on the way to the House of Commons, he had been shown by Peel, who took it from his bag, a letter from Disraeli asking place.' Thus there was at least a basis for the theory of Peel's 'manly magnanimity' or scruple about giving out a personal letter. Its publication by Mr. Parker in his life of Peel was resented by Augustine Birrell on the ground that it prevented Peel's magnanimity from being 'complete and eternal.' Disraeli never pretended to be a man of nicety," adds Mr. Birrell. "He ate his peck of dirt." Peel may have thought to despise his railing, as Pericles scorned to notice the low fellows who insulted him. Another source of inward satisfaction is hinted at by Lord Rosebery when he writes that Peel had "the solace which might be derived from these multiplicity of an elevated supporter, from the possession of the orator's application for office."

But Disraeli himself, recorded in 1838 an instance of Peel's staying his hand when he might have smitten an opponent to the ground. It was Hume of whom Peel said, according to Disraeli, "I might have risen and crushed him, the impudent dog." Disraeli wondered: "Why did he not?" Why did not Peel rise and crush Disraeli, ten years later? It is a question touching the psychology of public men that Mr. Monypenny did not seek to answer.

The ten years of English political history covered by the volume were stirring. It was the period when the agitation against the corn laws reached its climax in success. Public debate was keen and party spirit ran high. It was a time when such an

audacious genius as Disraeli might easily make a name for himself. At forty he does not perhaps make so vivid an impression of sheer genius as at twenty-five, but the proof of his enormous cleverness multiplies. He never lost consciousness of it. In these years of heightening recognition was Disraeli vainly a boy of every mark of approval or scrap of flattery given him. He was continually writing them down for his wife or his sister. At the close of one self-satisfied letter he wrote: "Burn this egotistical trash," but if it had been burned, 20 others as stuffed with vanity would have remained. It is hard to recall any other man of first-class ability who so steadily wrote Disraeli's vanity was buoyed up by great courage, perfect coolness under fire, and an audacity that never failed him. His crest contained the motto, "Forti nihil difficile," which his enemies translated, "The impudence of some men sticks at nothing." Disraeli did not. From his first years in Parliament he acted upon the theory, which he thought he had worked out in the case of Croker, that "men of a certain age like the young ones who lick them." He broke lances with Palmerston. He tilted at Graham and Stanley. Finally, he determined to "strike at the highest," and entered upon his series of speeches against Peel. Some of these were highly effective in themselves; but the laughter and roars of applause which they evoked in the House were partly factitious, and evinced the deepening hatred of Peel on the part of his own party followers, as they saw him swinging to free trade. Nobody else could level such barbed shafts at him as Disraeli, and so nobody else got such cheers from them.

Disraeli was unable to take Peel's place. He did not become recognized Tory leader till 1849, three years after this volume closes. In reality, his rise was not so rapid as his undoubted powers would have seemed to warrant. The reason is not concealed by Mr. Monypenny. Disraeli was not trusted.

THE PLIGHT OF PERSONS WHO HAVE NOTHING TO DO

Thousands of Them in Old London Lead a Melancholy Existence—Trying to Put in the Time—The Hotel Lounger a Type.

"What can a man mentally and physically do for occupation, profit or pleasure, when he is retired to England from India or elsewhere on a small pension?" writes a man to the Daily Mail.

A fifty-mile cycle journey over the roads in the height of the Indian heat, followed by long hours of brain work, has been to me an ordinary day's work, and I find myself now in excellent health, with 2400 a year, vainly pining for healthy and useful occupation, possibly because I do not know how to set about finding what I want.

I have a good knowledge of vegetable gardening and poultry-keeping. I can dig and cultivate land as well as any

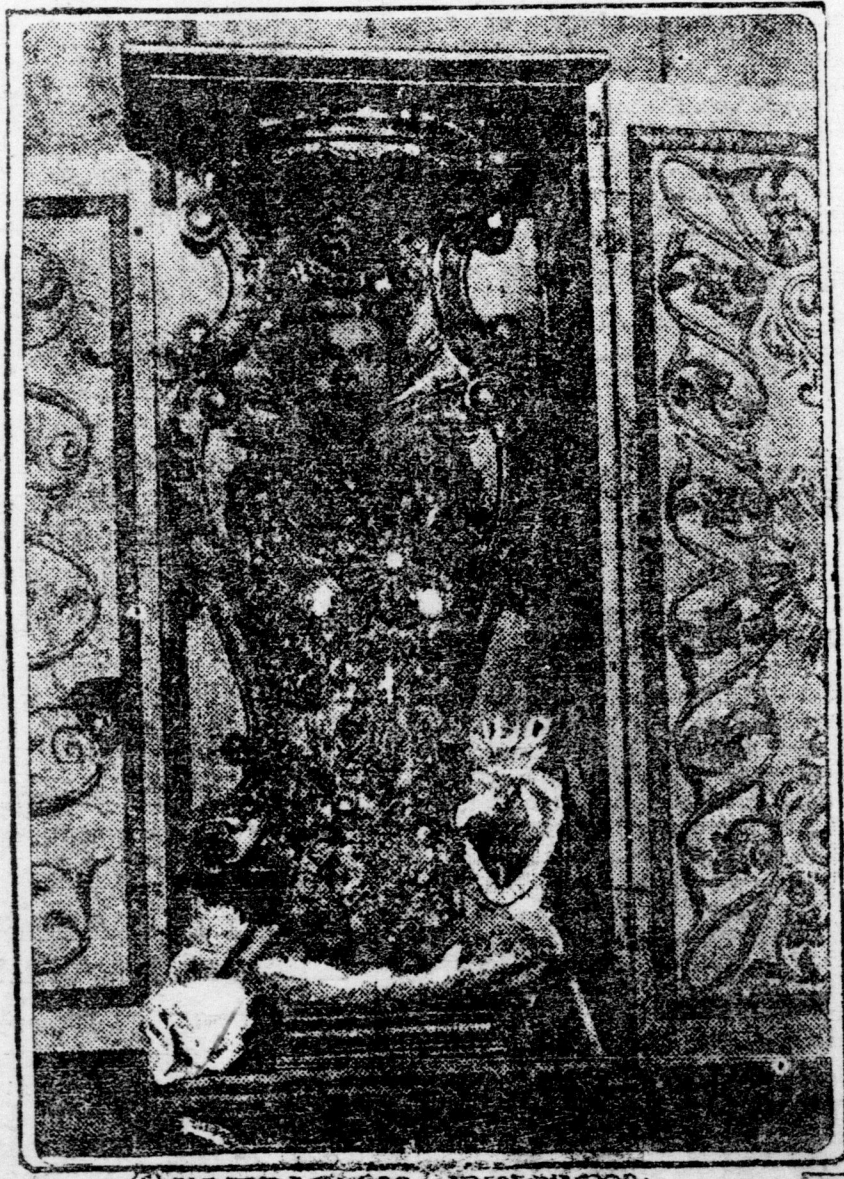
secondary consideration, profit on retiring to England from India or elsewhere on a small pension?" writes a man to the Daily Mail.

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SACRED IMAGE OF THE CHRIST CHILD SHOWN AT CHRISTMAS.



This sacred bambino, or image of the Christ child, is in the church of Ara Coeli in Rome. It is brought out to public view every Christmas season and is literally covered with valuable jewels, the gifts of devout Christians.

YOU NEVER CAN TELL.



TASTES AS WHISKY OUGHT TO TASTE

He would have gone higher more quickly if his character had stood higher. Mr. Monypenny again reminds us that it is always dangerous to take any statement of Disraeli's literally. It is shown that he lied unblushingly to his constituents about his debts, which were for years mountainous and harassing. The fact was known, and hindered his advancement. For a long time the air of being an adventurer clung to him. So he had, with all his showy talents and solid parts, to fight his way slowly. He was frankly applauded long before he was confidently followed.

In general, Mr. Monypenny shows more zeal in defending Disraeli's brains than Disraeli's morals. But his frankness and his literary conscience would not permit him to praise highly Disraeli's style at this period of his life. It was not bettered by parliamentary speaking. And in the novels there is "less simplicity" and "more affectation." "It is one of the many contradictions in Disraeli's mind and character that, in spite of his strong grasp of fact, his keen sense of the ridiculous, and his intolerance of cant, he never could quite distinguish between the genuine and the counterfeit, either in language or sentiment."

This is hard saying. Even when the author is wholehearted in praise, he leaves the reader to see the evidence of something lacking. For example, he speaks in the highest terms of Disraeli's extraordinary grasp of foreign affairs at this time, and of his anticipatory future developments. Yet he records Disraeli's sneer, in a confidential paper in 1842, at "Lord Aberdeen's mystical hallucinations of German nationality." Evidently, foreign politics had not in Disraeli attained the rank of a science, or a method. The reviewer cannot lay down Mr. Monypenny's book without again expressing regret that so competent a biographer was not permitted to trace for us the rest of Disraeli's career.

passing another twenty years of life without work," writes another correspondent. "I know two or three men of this class who could not think of leaving London and retiring into the country. Obligated, owing to limited means, to live a solitary kind of life, they find in London more than they could ever find elsewhere. They experience a subtle kind of satisfaction in wandering about the streets. They dare not spend any more money than will just provide them with food, raiment, and lodging, but life, with its round of empty days that must be lived through, life with its nothing-to-do years to fill, can yield more interest in London than in a small town or country village."

"In the country these men would become known, but in London, with its millions, no one looks at them twice or asks them who and what they are. The thousand and one things of interest that can be seen in London for nothing are theirs to see. The old familiar places that have become landmarks in their lives—places the sight of which may perhaps recall some little adventure or romance—sit the dead flies of memory."

The Hotel Lounger.
"The hotel lounge has ever been a problem to hotel managers," says the Mail. "A man with very little money but a great deal of assurance, he stays for an hour or two in the lounge or smoking-room, uses the hotel notepaper, and generally behaves as though he were paying a pound a day for his board and residence."

"Of late the loungers have considerably increased in number. So much so that in one London hotel at least any man who is not known to be a bona-fide visitor is politely asked on entering if he is staying in the hotel or desirous of seeing a visitor."

"A typical hotel lounge was described yesterday by a member of the staff of the hotel: 'He lives in lodgings and uses this hotel as his home. He comes in in the morning about twelve o'clock and orders a bottle of beer. Seating himself in the best lounge armchair, he goes steadily through all the papers he can find. About luncheon time he departs, for he has never been known to take a meal in the hotel. His regular daily expenditure here is not more than sixpence—but on rare occasions he has been known to 'stand' a drink."

"What he does in the afternoon no one knows. He returns to the hotel about 6 o'clock, for he knows that at this hour one or two acquaintances will be there and he will be certain of drinks. Just before dinner he departs again, leaving informed anyone who may be in the hotel that he is dining elsewhere. About 3:30 or 10 in the evening he appears again, arrayed in evening dress. A little more lounging, and then home to his lodgings. He is a good talker and knows how to make himself agreeable. The lounge stands at the bar while his acquaintances pay and he fumbles. The hotel lounge is a monomaniac, his one absorbing desire being to be near all the sparkle and gaiety of the fashionable life of the well-to-do."

Looker-on at Life.
"Referring to the hotel lounge, the chief librarian of a large London free library said that hotel loungers represent a very small proportion of what he calls the 'nothing-to-do' population of London—the thousands of men who, possessed of very small incomes or pensions, pass their days wandering about the city, through all the pleasures of the city, some too old, and others

disciplined for work, but still, in many cases, with twenty or twenty-five years of life before them, these men must kill time or it will kill them. According to the 1901 census men in London with small incomes or pensions and of no occupation numbered 19,300. The corresponding figures in the last census are not yet available, but are expected to show a substantial increase."

"Many are well educated and spend their days in free libraries. One man, formerly an official in Ireland, has been coming to this library for the past six years. Every morning and afternoon he spends hours poring over books and returns to his dingy lodgings to read again."

"Another man of this class was for many years a solicitor's clerk, before he retired on a small pension. The deadly monotony of life without work or interests killed him. He had no hobbies, became depressed, and finally committed suicide."

Another Use for the Milk Bottle—WEIGH YOUR LETTERS WITH IT.
It is a great bore to have a letter to mail and not know how many stamps will be required for it. There are few people who have a postal scales. It is a great convenience and it is much cheaper to make one than buy it.

They are easily made, too. All that is necessary is a milk bottle or other wide-mouthed bottle, a piece of broom stick, a lead weight and a flat piece of tin.

The broom stick is made of convenient size to fit into the bottle and not go quite to the bottom. The structure is made as shown in the sketch, with the weight attached to the bottom of the stick. The bottle is filled with water.

With the stick fixed in the bottle as shown, a set of known weights are placed on the top and the graduations of the scale, marked on the stick as the weights shove it down into the bottle. Care should be taken to see that the weight it just heavy enough to hold the stick about half way down the bottle, so that plenty of room is given for the weighing of the scales with the letters.

If some of the water escapes by evaporation, more should be added to keep the stick at a uniform level.

OIL AS MOTIVE POWER
Congress Wants to Know About the New Diesel Engine.

New York Evening Post: Representative Steven B. Ayres has introduced a resolution in the House requesting the Secretary of the Navy to inform that body what investigations have been undertaken by the navy as to the Diesel oil engine as a motive power. The House desires to know the result of the investigations with special reference to the development of some type of the Diesel engine for economical use in naval vessels of the United States. Representative Ayres recently paid little, if any, attention to the investigation and adaptation of the Diesel oil motor, to the uses of our battleships and cruisers. He says that in this respect we are falling behind Germany, which is now building at least one battleship-cruiser with this engine as the motive power. The Krupp shipbuilding concern has spent more than \$1,000,000 in experimenting with the Diesel motor, and has succeeded so well in producing a satisfactory type, that they have abandoned the manufacture of reciprocating steam engines, and now construct only turbines and the Diesel.

Great Britain has also adopted the Diesel for the new destroyers now building, and as soon as the admiralty is certain of a satisfactory oil supply will unquestionably equip its new cruisers. The Diesel oil engine has now been demonstrated to be a great improvement in many respects upon the best steam engines. The cost of the oil is much less than coal, the room necessary for fuel storage is about one-third of the coal space required, the firemen and coal passers are entirely dispensed with, and the space remaining in the ship's hull useful for cargo is greatly increased.

MINARD'S LINIMENT CURES GARGET IN COWS.
Items like this make encouraging reading for the travelling public: The latest passenger coaches were given recently by the New York Central Railroad. It was for 207 cars, representing an investment of \$5,000,000. These cars thus cost about \$25,000 each and they are worth it, in assurance of safety to passengers and immunity from damage suits to the railways.

A teacher, says the "Christian Register," asked a class of children what a skeleton was, and a little boy replied, "It's done with the people rubbed off."

An English firm has brought out a new luminous varnish for automobiles, which is said to render a car, without being fitted with lamps, visible for a long distance on a dark night.

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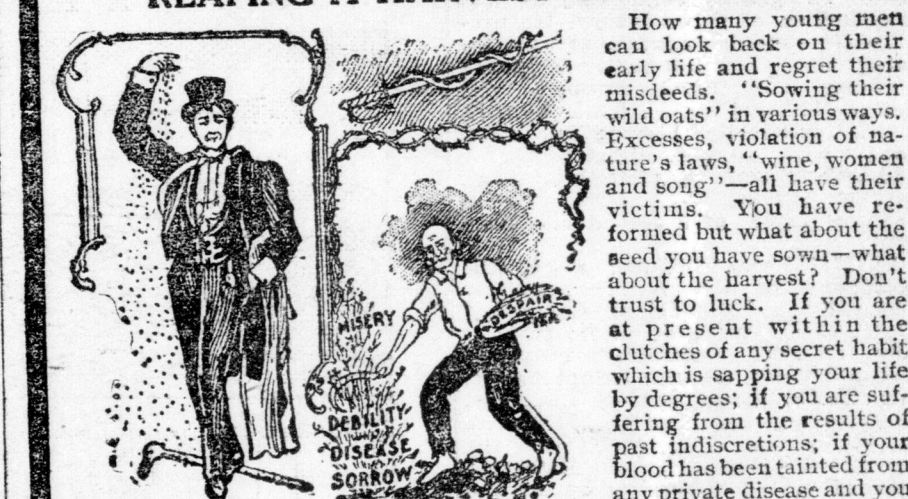
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