

THE GREVILLE MEMOIRS

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The position of Clerk of the Privy Council of Great Britain carries with it some outstanding privileges. The greatest of these, probably, is that the holder of this office is brought into intimate contact with the leading statesmen of his day, and that consequently he has an excellent opportunity of becoming acquainted with those hidden motives and political manoeuvres and that play of forces behind the scenes which account, in part at least, for the march of events across the open stage of history. While, of course, he is strictly sworn to secrecy as to what goes on in the Council Chamber, there is nothing to prevent him from keeping a diary. Several Clerks of the Council have kept and subsequently published their diaries, the latest instance being those two entertaining volumes, *Memoirs by Sir Almeric Fitzroy*. But of all such diaries by far the most interesting and most valuable from an historical point of view, is the Journal of Charles Greville, Clerk of the Council, from 1821 to 1859.

CHARLES Cavendish Fulke Greville (born 1794) was the eldest son of Charles Greville, Esq., grandson of the 5th Lord Warwick. His mother was Lady Charlotte Bentinck, eldest daughter of the 3rd Duke of Portland. He was educated at Eton and Oxford, and began public life as the private secretary to Earl Bathurst. Before long, however, through the influence of his grandfather he was given the sinecure position of Secretary of Jamaica, and a few years later at the age of 27 he was appointed Clerk of the Council. This position he held until his retirement in May 1859. Thus his birth and education, apart from his official position, made it natural for him to associate on terms of equality with the most eminent men in public life. With some of these he was not only a trusted official but a personal friend of shrewd judgment, with whom could be discussed intimately the problems involved in steering the ship of state, whose advice was valued, and who on more than one occasion was entrusted with negotiations requiring insight, finesse, and backbone.

While he spent most of his time in London, he was often away on a round of country-house visiting. At such times he frequently had long conversations with those who were playing, or had played, leading parts in public life. The records of such conversations fill some of the most interesting pages of his Journals. His chief amusement was the Turf, an amusement with which he was at times disgusted, but from the fascination of which he could not shake himself free. An occasional trip to the Continent, the writing of a few books or pamphlets now forgotten if it were not for the famous Journals, complete the circle of the main outward events of Greville's life.

It is hardly necessary in these days to praise Greville. As a diarist, while he is entirely different in tone and temperament, he ranks with Pepys. One finds comparatively little personal gossip¹ and almost nothing about his own private life, but he records many interesting sayings and noteworthy conversations, he draws many fine character sketches of eminent men, and depicts the political and public life of England as it appeared to a keen and well-informed observer.

How rich in great men and important events these forty years were may be briefly recalled by mentioning a few particulars. The most prominent politicians were the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, Lord Brougham, Lord Grey, Palmerston, Melbourne, Lord John Russell, and Lord Derby. Gladstone and Disraeli were growing to maturity. Some of the great public questions were the Reform Bill of 1832, Palmerston's difficulties with France over the Spanish Succession, Sir Robert Peel and the Corn Laws, and the Crimean War. On all these and a multitude of minor men and issues Greville wrote with remarkable fullness of knowledge and usually with impartiality.

The manuscripts of the "Journals" were entrusted to the care of his friend, Henry Reeve, who, after some years, edited and published them in three instalments: the first three volumes cover the reigns of George IV and William IV, in 1874; the second three volumes cover the first fifteen years of the reign of Victoria, in 1885; and the last two volumes carry the entries on to the year 1860, in 1887. They were very favourably received² and before long republished in one continuous series in the Silver Library.

In his introduction to the second series Mr. Reeve admits:

I have exercised to some extent the discretionary powers entrusted to me by the Author with these manuscripts; and I have withheld from publication details which appeared to be of a strictly confidential character, or which related the conversations of living persons.

An edition that has recently appeared purports to give the passages hitherto unpublished. It is, we regret to say, nearly worthless. It does not tell the source of the manuscript it uses (the original diaries are guarded in the British Museum); it does not distinguish by brackets or otherwise between what is new and what is reprinted; it cuts up and re-arranges the diary so that one gets not what Greville wrote with its context, but a mangled affair that the editor

1. Notwithstanding the statements of publishers who hint at scandal to sell their wares.

2. The Queen was very angry, holding that what was said of George IV and William "degraded royalty".

thinks may appeal to the jaded literary appetite of the public of today. As far, then, as serious readers are concerned, this new edition may be dismissed; the earlier ones, though out of print, may fortunately yet be picked up second-hand at a moderate price. It is to be hoped that some day we shall be given a complete edition by a competent editor.

THE JOURNALS AND HISTORY.

While Greville does not perhaps contribute much to historical facts not otherwise known, his Journals are of high value in giving us the spirit of his times. The idea of the Journals, as the editor, Mr. Reeve, remarks, was to record "the less known causes and details of public events which came under the author's observation". Greville himself said: "As I don't write history I omit to note such facts as are recorded in the newspapers, and merely mention the odd things I pick up which are not generally known, and which may hereafter throw some light on those which are". Moreover, he points out that he gives "a contemporary record of facts and opinions not altered to square with subsequent experience",—though in revisions of his diaries he sometimes inserted footnotes to mark where his earlier opinion or information was at fault. After all, what the public feels or believes at any point of time, even if it is not in accord with the truth, is itself an historical fact.

Mr. Leonard Woolf in a recent essay expresses this idea in his vivacious way:

It is in such diaries and letters and memoirs, it seems to me, that one gets the most vivid and important vision of a pageant of history. It is not the pageant in the old sense, the cavalcade of kings and great men, with the drums and trumpets of marching armies and the pomp of Councils and Congresses and Parliaments. It is not the pageant of the ordinary man going about his ordinary work. It is the pageant of what went on in the heads of ordinary men and women whether they were the Lords of Lyme and Moncoffer or village grocers or middle-class young ladies. And that is the pageant of civilisation.

There were many great inventions and discoveries made in the years of the diary, and an occasional entry lets us see the effect they made on the minds of contemporaries. In July, 1837, Greville took his first ride on a railway train. He was going to the Liverpool races and took the train from Birmingham:

Nothing can be more comfortable than the vehicle in which I was put, a sort of chariot with two places, and there is nothing disagreeable about it but the occasional whiffs of stinking air which it is impossible to exclude altogether. The first sensation

is a slight degree of nervousness and a feeling of being run away with, but a sense of security soon supervenes, and the velocity is delightful. The train was very long, and heads were continually popping out of the several carriages, attracted by well-known voices, and then came the greetings and exclamations of surprise, the "Where are you going"? and "How on earth came you here"? Considering the novelty of its establishment, there is very little embarrassment, and it certainly renders all other travelling irksome and tedious by comparison.

About ten years later he first saw chloroform used, and was tremendously impressed:

I went yesterday to St. George's Hospital to see the chloroform tried. I have no words to express my admiration for this invention, which is the greatest blessing ever bestowed on mankind, and the inventor of it the greatest of benefactors, whose memory ought to be venerated by countless millions for ages yet to come. . . Wonderful as are the powers and the feats of the steam-engine and the electric telegraph, the chloroform far transcends them all in its beneficent and consolatory operations.

The best example of Greville's contribution to the record of contemporary opinion and the minutiae of history is probably to be found in his account of the struggle over the first Reform Bill—an account which fills the greater part of Volume II of the first series. From the introduction of the Bill in the House of Commons to its final passage through the House of Lords, a matter of some fifteen months, he watched its vicissitudes closely, talked with both leaders and rank and file about it, and reported as far as he could the feelings of the country. In his own attitude toward it he reflected the opinion of the moderate Whigs.

On March 2nd, 1831, Greville described in these words the introduction of the first Bill:

The great day at length arrived; yesterday Lord John Russell moved for leave to bring in his Reform Bill. To describe the curiosity, the intensity of the expectation and excitement, would be impossible, and the secret had been so well kept that not a soul knew what the measure was (though most people guessed pretty well) till they heard it. He rose at six o'clock, and spoke for two hours and a quarter—a sweeping measure indeed, much more so than anyone had imagined, because the Ministers had said it was one which would give *general* satisfaction, whereas this must dissatisfy all the moderate and will probably just stop short enough not to satisfy the Radicals. They say it was ludicrous to see the faces of the members for those places which are to be disfranchised as they were severally announced.

A few days later we are given this glimpse of the public completely absorbed by one idea:

Nothing talked of, thought of, dreamt of, but Reform. Every creature one meets asks, "What is said now? How will it go? What is the last news? What do *you* think?" and so it is from morning till night, in the streets, in the clubs, and in private houses.

When the Government was defeated and the House dissolved in April there were very turbulent scenes, for the Conservatives were much opposed to dissolution. Greville's description of the scene in the House of Lords is quite spirited:

There the proceedings were if possible still more violent and outrageous; Wharncliffe (Conservative) was to have moved an address to the Crown against dissolving Parliament. . . The Duke of Richmond (Whig) endeavoured to prevent any speaking by raising points of order; this put Lord Londonderry in such a fury that he rose, roared, gesticulated, held up his whip, and four or five Lords held him down by the tail of his coat to prevent his flying on somebody. Lord Lyndhurst was equally furious, and some sharp words passed which were not distinctly heard. In the midst of all the din Lord Mansfield rose and obtained a hearing. Wharncliffe said to him, "For God's sake, Mansfield, take care what you are about, and don't disgrace us more in the state we are in". "Don't be afraid," he said; "I will say nothing that will alarm you"; and accordingly he pronounced a trimming philippic on the Government. . . While he was still speaking the King arrived with Lord Grey. . . George Villiers said that in his life he never saw such a scene, and as he looked at the King upon the throne with the crown loose upon his head, and the tall, grim figure of Lord Grey close beside him, with the sword of state in his hand, it was as if the King had got his executioner by his side, and the whole picture looked strikingly typical of his and our future destinies.

After the elections when the new Parliament had met and the second Bill was in committee, Greville had a conversation with one of the supporters of Reform, which shows with what apprehensions many Englishmen, even some of the Liberals, looked upon this measure:

Hardinge, whom I found at dinner at the Athenaeum yesterday, told me he was convinced that a revolution in this country was inevitable; and such is the opinion of others who support this Bill, not because they think concession will avert it, but will let it come more gradually and with less violence. I have always been convinced that the country was in no danger of revolution.

When the second Bill was defeated in the House of Lords the more ardent reformers in the Cabinet pressed the Premier to create fifty or more new peers. This plan, however, was not then looked upon with favour by King William, and even Grey and

half of his Cabinet wished to avoid it if possible. Consequently in the interval before the introduction of the third Bill in the House of Lords (that is from October 1831 to April 1832) there was great activity among the moderate men of both parties in their endeavour to secure the second reading of the Bill in the House of Lords without the creation of new peers. In this activity three names stand out prominently: Lord Harrowby, Lord Wharncliffe, and Charles Greville. On the side of the Government Palmerston and Lord Grey himself were ready to listen to proposals of conciliation. On February 9th Greville reports an interesting conversation with the Premier (Grey):

Then he asked, "how many had they *sure*"? I said, "At this moment not above eight Lords and eight bishops". He said that was not enough. I said I knew that, but he must have patience, and should remember that when the Duke of Wellington brought the Catholic Bill into the House of Commons he had a majority on paper against him in the House of Lords of twenty-five, and he carried the Bill by a hundred. He said he should like to talk to Harrowby again, which I pressed him to do, and he said he would.

Harrowby, however, was a somewhat difficult man to manage. Greville, acting as intermediary between the parties, called on him to tell him that fifty-six boroughs were to be disfranchised, and that this constituted the first clause of the Act, which he was expected to support.

He instantly flew into a rage. He said "he would not be dragged through the mire by those scoundrels. It was an insolence that was not to be borne; let them make their Peers if they would, not Hell itself should make him vote for *fifty-six*; he would vote for sixty-six or any number but that, that he would not split with the Tories on the first vote".

In this highly-charged atmosphere Greville worked assiduously with the nerve of an old follower of the turf, not to be shaken by little untoward incidents. In his diary he writes his own cool reflection:

I have seen enough of threats, and doubts, and scruples, to be satisfied that there is no certainty that any of them will produce the anticipated effects, but I am resolved I will try, out of these various elements, if I cannot work out something which may be serviceable to the cause itself, though the materials I have to work with are scanty.

Notwithstanding the efforts of the moderate men, the Government was defeated in committee, Grey resigned, and the Duke of

Wellington tried to form a Tory Government. The scene in the House of Commons must have been extraordinary:

On that evening ensued the memorable night in the House of Commons, which everybody agrees was such a scene of violence and excitement as never had been exhibited within those walls. Tavistock told me he had never heard anything at all like it, and to his dying day should not forget it. The House was crammed to suffocation; every violent sentiment and vituperative expression was received with shouts of approbation, but the violent speakers were listened to with the greatest attention. . . . After the debate Baring and Sutton went to Apsley House, and related to the Duke what had taken place, the former saying he would face a thousand devils rather than such a House of Commons. From that moment the whole thing was at an end, and the next morning the Duke repaired to the King, and told him that he could not form an Administration.

This really is the end of the story. Grey resumed office, the Bill passed the House of Lords, and became law.

In the journals of 1836-7 there is a detailed account of how war may be brought on between two nations that have no desire to be enemies, solely through the blundering and ill will of ministers and diplomats. The occasion was the Spanish marriages, and the politicians concerned were Palmerston on the English side, Guizot on the French side, and Normandy, British Ambassador at Paris. Palmerston was dilatory, impertinent, and overbearing; Guizot was touchy, suspicious, and open to the charge of duplicity; Normandy was a blundering diplomat who did more to keep the sore raw than to heal it. Whether there was any danger of war or not, an unauthorized note of Palmerston's came within an ace of breaking off intercourse between the two countries. The story is told in great detail by Greville, who laboured incessantly for a better understanding, and who, during his visit to Paris as an unofficial mediator, talked freely with Guizot and became as well acquainted with the French point of view as he was with the English.

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The truth, or the errors, of history is a subject that several times forced itself on the attention of Greville. Frequently two witnesses, honest and disinterested, will differ in their accounts of a simple occurrence; and witnesses are not always either disinterested or honest. In the case of a complicated event—for example, a revolution—there is still greater room for conflicting stories from witnesses, both biased and unbiased. Of the French Revolution of 1848 Greville received two accounts, one from Guizot

and the other from the deposed king. The contradictions between these threw him into a mood of high scepticism:

Their two statements are quite irreconcilable, and thus occur historical perplexities and the errors and untruths which crowd all history. I have always said that it is nothing but a series of conventional facts. There is no *absolute* truth in history; mankind arrives at probable results and conclusions in the best way it can, and by collecting and comparing evidence it settles down its ideas and its belief to a certain chain and course of events which it accepts as certain.

At another time Greville was struck by the way trifles produce historic consequences. A conference had been held between the Conservatives Lord Harrowby and Lord Wharncliffe and the moderate premier, Lord Grey, to arrange a compromise on some parts of the Reform Bill. Harrowby had a headache and refused to agree to Grey's plans for giving representatives to London.

To this Harrowby would not agree, greatly to Wharncliffe's annoyance, who would have agreed, and I think he would have been in the right; . . . and if Harrowby had not had a headache I think he would have done so. . . The capture of Vandamme was the consequence of a bellyache, and the metropolitan representation depended on a headache. If the truth could be ascertained, perhaps many of the greatest events in history turned upon aches of one sort or another. Montaigne might have written an essay on it.

CHARACTERS.

Greville had a really remarkable gift for drawing characters, a gift which he cultivated during the forty odd years covered by his journals. Between the sketches of the Duke and Duchess of York in 1819, and his final estimate of Macaulay in 1860, there is a whole gallery of portraits. Almost every chapter has its "character". While these vary considerably in fullness and penetration, there is none without value and the best are not far short of masterpieces.

It is not so much in "pen portraits" giving the external appearance of his subject that Greville excelled. Indeed at times he rather neglected appearance or sketched in the outlines with a few bold strokes. His skill is shown rather in analysis of temperament and character.

Our attention has recently been drawn to an interesting volume of "characters" taken from the histories and memoirs of the seventeenth century. We cannot help thinking that if a similar collection were made for the years 1750 to 1850, Greville would share the honours with Gibbon and Macaulay. But there would be

this difference. Gibbon and Macaulay were describing men of past ages; their descriptions were founded on the observations and inferences of other men. Greville depicted the men and women of his own time, relying on his own eyes and penetrative powers. It suggests the difference between a portrait painted from life, and one done after a man's death by an artist who did not know his subject personally but had to gather his impression from photographs and drawings. On the other hand, time often uncovers aspects of the character of a public man that are hidden to most of his contemporaries.

Here is a miniature of a famous English statesman:

Huskisson was about sixty years old, tall, slouching, and ignoble-looking. In society he was extremely agreeable, without much animation, generally cheerful, with a great deal of humour, information, and anecdote, gentlemanlike, unassuming, slow in speech, and with a downcast look, as if he avoided meeting anybody's gaze. It is probably true that there is no man in parliament, or perhaps out of it, so well versed in finance, commerce, trade, and colonial matters.

Charles Buller, secretary to Lord Durham on his Canadian mission, Greville knew very well, and liked. They often met at social gatherings of Liberals, either in London or at country houses. On Buller's death in his prime Greville wrote an estimate of his character and powers from which we quote a few sentences:

He was clever, amiable, accomplished, and honest. His abilities were of a very high order, and though he loved the world and its pursuits, he had great powers of application. . . . Though he was both very ambitious and very poor, he never committed a mean or discreditable act for the sake of either favour or office. A man more honourable and independent never existed, and he would have been indebted for the political exaltation which was certainly in store for him to nothing but the force and influence of his own capacity and power. . . . He was perhaps the most popular member of the House of Commons. By universal acknowledgement he was an admirable speaker, full of matter, lucid, never dull, and generally very amusing, so that he never rose without being sure of an attentive and favourable audience. . . . He had, however, one great defect, which had a very serious and unhappy influence on his political career. He was seduced by his keen perception of the ridiculous and an irresistible propensity to banter into an everlasting mockery of everything and everybody, which not only often became tiresome and provoking, but gave an appearance of levity to his character that largely deducted from the estimation in which he would otherwise have been held. . . . It is incredible what damage this pernicious habit did him; for it created a notion that though he was very witty and entertaining, he had no settled principles and convictions, and that he

“made a mockery of life”. Of this defect. . . he was manifestly curing himself. . . As it is he has left behind him a memory cherished for his delightful social qualities, and a vast credit for undeveloped powers.

During the first half of last century, Holland House was the great rendezvous of eminent Whigs, and Greville who, though neutral in politics, came of a prominent Whig family, was often among the guests. Lady Holland he regarded rather as a curiosity. After a dinner, he wrote:

Though everybody who goes there finds something to abuse or to ridicule in the mistress of the house, all continue to go.

Once they quarrelled, but they made it up again. On her death Greville wrote his candid estimate of the great Whig hostess, from which we cull a few sentences:

Though she was a woman for whom nobody felt any affection, and whose death therefore will have excited no grief, she will be regretted by a great many people, some from kindly, some from selfish motives. . . She was certainly clever, and she had acquired a great deal of information both from books and men, having passed her whole life amidst people remarkable for their abilities and knowledge. She cared very little for her children, but she sometimes pretended to care for them, and she also pretended to entertain strong feelings of friendship for many individuals; and this was not all insincerity, for, in fact, she did entertain them as strongly as her nature permitted. She was often capricious, tyrannical, and troublesome, liking to provoke, and disappoint, and thwart her acquaintances; and she was often obliging, good-natured, and considerate to the same people. To those who were ill and suffering, to whom she could show any personal kindness and attention, among her intimate friends, she never failed to do so. . . Although she was known to be wholly destitute of religious opinions she never encouraged any irreligious talk in her house. She never herself spoke disrespectfully or with levity of any of the institutions or opinions which other people were accustomed to reverence.

A striking contrast is this miniature of the wife of his friend:

Lady Harrowby is superior to all the women I have ever known; “her talk is so crisp”, as Luttrell once said of her. She has no imagination, no invention, no eloquence, no deep reading or retentive memory; but a noble, straightforward, independent character, a sound and vigorous understanding, penetration, judgement, taste. She is perfectly natural, open and sincere, loves conversation and social enjoyment; with her intimate friends there is an abandon and unreserved communion of thoughts, feelings, and opinions which renders her society delightful. Of

all the women I ever saw she united the most masculine mind with the most feminine heart.

While Greville was a firm believer in royalty, he was very severe in his comments on George IV and William IV. He thought a king should measure up to such moderate standards of intelligence and decency as might fairly be applied to any member of the aristocracy. On one occasion, after describing the bearing of George IV towards his servants and his ministers, Greville broke out as follows:

This confirms the opinion I have long had that a more contemptible, cowardly, selfish, unfeeling dog does not exist than this King, on whom such flattery is constantly lavished. He has a sort of capricious good-nature, arising however out of no good principle or good feeling, but which is of use to him, as it cancels in a moment and at small cost a long score of misconduct. Princes have only to behave with common decency and prudence, and they are sure to be popular.

Amusing and grotesque pictures of William IV, anecdotes about him, and repetitions of his droll sayings, fill many pages of the Journals, but we forbear from quoting.

In contrast to his strictures on George and William are his comments on the young Victoria, which, though somewhat cool and critical, are on the whole favourable. He notes the chorus of praise that greeted her first appearance on the royal stage, and remarks that with all her propriety of manner and conduct, "the young Queen begins to exhibit slight signs of a peremptory disposition". A kind act on her part, however, at the coronation ceremonies, fairly overcame Greville. Lord Rolle, a man nearly ninety years old, fell down as he was going up the steps of the throne to do homage. The young Queen, much perturbed, breaking court etiquette, rose from her throne and descended several steps to meet the old peer and spare him further exertion. This gracious act caused a great sensation, and Greville, for once almost enthusiastic, wrote:

It is, in fact, the remarkable union of naïveté, kindness, good-nature, with propriety and dignity, which makes her so admirable and so endearing to those about her, as she certainly is.

Some years after the royal marriage he was called to Balmoral for a council meeting, an event which furnished several pages for the Journal. His impression of Prince Albert is given in these words:

I never before was in society with the Prince, or had any conversation with him. On Thursday morning John Russell and I were sitting together after breakfast, when he came in and sat down with us, and we conversed for about three-quarters of an hour. I was greatly struck with him. I saw at once (what I had always heard) that he is very intelligent and highly cultivated, and moreover that he has a thoughtful mind, and thinks of subjects worth thinking about. He seemed very much at his ease, very gay, pleasant, and without the least stiffness or air of dignity.

With the Duke of Wellington Greville was fairly intimate. He rode with him, walked with him, and had long conversations with him. He had a personal liking for the old hero and accepted without question his military genius, but at times he disapproved of the Duke's view in politics. At the time of the Reform Bill, Greville was exasperated at the Duke's stand and even went so far as to write:

I can conceive no greater misfortune at this moment than to have its deliberations (i.e. of the Tory Party) ruled by the obstinacy and prejudices of the Duke. He is a great man in little things, but a little man in great matters—I mean in civil affairs; in those mighty questions which embrace enormous and various interests and considerations.

This judgement, however, Mr. Greville modified in a footnote subjoined seventeen years later:

He is not, nor ever was, a little man in anything, great or small; but I am satisfied that he has made great political blunders, though with the best and most patriotic intentions.

At another time we get a personal impression:

Met the Duke of Wellington at dinner yesterday, and afterwards had a long talk with him, not on politics. I never see and converse with him without reproaching myself for the sort of hostility I feel and express towards his political conduct, for there are a simplicity, a gaiety, and natural urbanity and good-humour in him which are remarkably captivating in so great a man. We talked of Dumont's book and Louis XVIII's *Memoirs*.

When Melbourne was Prime Minister, the Government consulted the Duke about military affairs, and received as full and ready assistance as if his own party were in power. Greville remarks:

There never was a man who so entirely sank all party considerations in national objects, and he has had the glory of living to hear this universally acknowledged. Brougham said of him, "That man's first object is to serve his country, with a sword if necessary, or with a pickaxe".

When the Duke's despatches had just been published and everyone was talking of them, Lord Aberdeen praised them very highly to the Duke, to which he replied with the greatest simplicity:

"It is very true: when I read them I was myself astonished, and I can't think how the devil I could have written them."

On which Greville comments:

This is very characteristic, very curious from a man who has not one grain of conceit in his disposition; but really great men are equally free from undue vanity or affected modesty, and know very well the value of what they do.

A good picture of the high esteem in which the old hero was held is given in the account of a choral festival at Exeter Hall in the year 1842:

But the finest thing was when the Duke of Wellington came in, almost at the end. The piece they were singing stopped at once; the whole audience rose, and a burst of acclamation and waving of handkerchiefs saluted the great old man, who is now the idol of the people. It was grand and affecting and seemed to move everybody but himself.

With Peel, Greville was never intimate, though sometimes the two talked over affairs, and once at least the Clerk of the Council published a pamphlet in support of Sir Robert's policy. Yet on the whole the picture in the Journals is unsympathetic. Peel's opposition to Catholic Emancipation and to the Reform Bill Greville could not forget. Moreover, he complains that as leader of a great party Peel was cold and uninspiring in his manner. Even the praise which the judicial Greville could not withhold from the great statesman, he gave with an appearance of grudging.

He often refers to Lord Durham, whom he disliked; but then so did Crevey, and so did almost everyone else who knew him. Brougham he knew both officially and socially, and his comments show an alternation from admiration of the Chancellor's ability to amazement and contempt at his lack of balance. Of Princess de Leiven, that remarkable Russian diplomat, he became a warm friend, and many pages are given to a summary of their conversations on international politics and other matters. Lord Grey, Wharnccliffe, Harrowby, Palmerston, the Duke of Bedford, Lord John Russell, are only a few of the prominent men who for a short while live again in his pages. It is said that he is unfair to Palmerston; our own opinion is that he more nearly hit the true Palmerston than he did Sir Robert Peel. Greville's views of his contemporaries penetrating, unflinching, and as just as he could see them, are

perhaps the most valuable part of the Journal. Compared to them Crevey's comments are "small beer".

LITERATURE.

As a young man, and in middle age, Greville, a social, cultivated bachelor, went about a good deal and from time to time met eminent literary men. He had a real interest in literature, as his quotations and judgements show; his opinions on books are on the whole characterised by independence and good sense. Indeed, at times he expressed regret that he had not made more of his own powers of writing, and had not attempted to produce something of permanent value.

Occasionally in his journals we catch glimpses of celebrated authors and listen to snatches of their conversation. In July 1831 he makes note of a breakfast party at which Wordsworth was present:

I am just come home from breakfasting with Henry Taylor to meet Wordsworth; the same party as when he had Southey—Mill, Elliot, Charles Villiers. Wordsworth may be bordering on sixty; hard-featured, brown, wrinkled, with prominent teeth and a few scattered grey hairs, but nevertheless not a disagreeable countenance; and very cheerful, merry, courteous, and talkative, much more so than I should have expected from the grave and didactic character of his writings. He held forth on poetry, painting, politics, and metaphysics, and with a great deal of eloquence; he is more conversable and with a greater flow of animal spirits than Southey. He mentioned that he never wrote down as he composed, but composed walking, riding, or in bed, and wrote down after.

Tom Moore he often met in society and found to be very companionable. He liked Moore's singing and tells how, though the piano was bad and the singer not in good voice, it goes straight to the heart for "it produces an exceeding sadness". Once when they were at a country house party together Moore told him how he composed his poems:

It required no thought to write, but there was no end to it; so many fancies on every subject crowded on his brain; that he often read what he had written as if it had been the composition of another, and was amused; that it was the greatest pleasure to him to compose those light and trifling pieces, humorous and satirical, which had been so often successful.

On February 6th, 1832, he describes how he first met Macaulay. It was at a dinner at Holland House. He had come late and was given a place next to "a common-looking man in black". For a

time this man, occupied with his dinner, said nothing, and Greville decided "that he was some obscure man of letters or of medicine, perhaps a cholera doctor". After a little this plain-looking man took part in the conversation and appeared to be extremely well informed. Soon a gentleman sitting opposite said, "Mr. Macaulay, will you drink a glass of wine?"

I thought I should have dropped off my chair. It was *Macaulay*, the man I had been so long most curious to see and to hear, whose genius, eloquence, astonishing knowledge, and diversified talents have excited my wonder and admiration for such a length of time, and here I had been sitting next to him, hearing him talk, and setting him down for a dull fellow. It was not till Macaulay stood up that I was aware of all the vulgarity and ungracefulness of his appearance; a lump of more ordinary clay never enclosed a powerful mind and lively imagination.

Greville got to know Macaulay very well and had a great admiration for his powers as well as a liking for him personally. Nine years after their first meeting he gives this opinion of the outer man and the inner powers:

I never was more struck than upon this occasion by the inexhaustible variety and extent of his information. He is not so agreeable as such powers and resources ought to make any man, because the vessel out of which it is all poured forth is so ungraceful and uncouth; his voice unmusical and monotonous, his face not merely inexpressive but positively heavy and dull, no fire in his eye, no intelligence playing round his mouth, nothing which bespeaks the genius and learning stored within and which burst out with such extraordinary force. It is impossible to mention any book in any language with which he is not familiar; to touch upon any subject, whether relating to persons or things, on which he does not know everything that is to be known. And if he could tread less heavily on the ground, if he could touch the subjects he handles with a lighter hand, if he knew when to stop as well as he knows what to say, his talk would be as attractive as it is wonderful.

He often met Sydney Smith and often roared with laughter at his witty conversation. On the death of Sydney in 1845 Greville gave his impression of him in these words:

It is almost impossible to overrate his wit, humour, and drollery, or their effect in society. Innumerable comical sayings and jokes of his are or have been current, but their repetition gives but an imperfect idea of the flavour and zest of the original. His appearance, voice, and manner added immensely to the effect, and the bursting and uproarious merriment with which he poured forth his good things never failed to communicate itself to his audience, who were always in fits of laughter.

It is a mark, perhaps, of Greville's imperfect literary sympathies, perhaps of how social ideas coloured his life, perhaps even of the slow growth of posthumous literary fame, that there is no mention in the Journals (to the best of my knowledge) of Leigh Hunt, Hazlitt, Lamb, Shelley, or Keats.

WIT AND HUMOUR.

While Greville did not pretend to be a wit himself, he showed his appreciation of good things by entering in his note-books from time to time odd sayings and humorous anecdotes that he had picked up; and occasionally he made some keen, ironical comment on what he saw or heard.

Several of Greville's stories are connected with the Law Courts. Apropos of Lord Ellenborough's treatment of counsel he relates:

A man was opening his speech, and said, "My Lord, my unfortunate client", and then repeated the words. "Go on, sir", said Lord Ellenborough, "the Court is with you so far."

Among the guests at a country-house party one Sunday were Luttrell and a Mr. Sharp. The latter had formerly been a wholesale hatter. He had a very dingy complexion, which led someone to say that he had transferred the colour of his hats to his face; Luttrell added that it was darkness that might be *felt*.

The custom of our forefathers of keeping up old feuds as a real interest in life gave rise to some humorous situations. Matthew Lewis, commonly referred to as "Monk" Lewis, had a long-standing quarrel with Sir Henry Lushington, his brother-in-law. Having occasion to visit Naples, where Lushington was then residing, he wrote to say:

That their quarrel had better be suspended, and he went and lived with him and his sister in perfect cordiality during his stay. When he departed he wrote to Lushington to say that now they should resume their quarrel, and put matters in the "*status quo ante pacem*", and accordingly he did resume it, with rather more *acharnement* than before.

Sydney Smith was often in the same company as Greville, who was very fond of him, and who loved to put in his diary some of the sayings of the witty clergyman. Professor Leslie had written an article on the North Pole which had been criticised in the *Edinburgh Review*. Consequently he called upon Jeffrey, the editor, just as the latter was getting on horseback and in a great hurry. Leslie began with a grave complaint which Jeffrey impatiently interrupted with—"Oh, damn the North Pole".

Leslie went off in high dudgeon, and soon after met Sydney, who, seeing him disturbed, asked what was the matter. He told him what he had been to Jeffrey about, and that he had in a very unpleasant way said, "Damn the North Pole". "It was very bad", said Sydney, "but, do you know, I am not surprised at it, for I have heard him speak very disrespectfully of the Equator".

Tom Moore, with his songs and his stories, was always the life of social gatherings in London a hundred years ago. Greville often refers to him in terms of affection and occasionally repeats his stories.

Apropos of Irish stories Greville quotes an item from an Irish newspaper, which said "that such a one had abjured the errors of the Roman Catholic Church and embraced those of the Protestant."

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In conclusion, a few more words about the Diarist personally.

Greville, in build, was rather short and stout; hence the nickname which his friends applied to him,—Punch. His face was long and rather heavy, suggesting good blood, shrewdness, and plenty of character. The ruling interests of his life were three: social intercourse, the turf, and politics or public affairs. His wide information, sound judgement, and keenness of interests, made him an agreeable companion; hence many of the intimate and revealing conversations that he records. Here is a not too kindly picture of him spending a social evening at Holland House:

Punch Greville in the evening. He has a shrewd head and some information, not an atom of feeling, but great general good-nature, or at least pretends to have it. He was very pleasant, and sat till late talking very agreeably.

He was a lifelong and not unsuccessful patron of the Sport of Kings. Only an accident prevented a horse he owned from winning the Derby. It is curious to read in the Journals how at times, after a week of racing, he reproached himself with waste of time, with being carried away by the excitement of betting, with mingling with all sorts of rascals. As an influential member of the Jockey Club, he did much to promote good honest sport. Shortly after his death an article on his interest in racing ends with these words:

Beloved by his friends, and feared by his opponents, Mr. Greville will ever be considered one of the most remarkable men that have lent lustre to the English turf.

A bird's eye view of his life is given by his friend and editor, Mr. Reeve:

In the first part he appears as a man of fashion and of pleasure, plunged, as was not inconsistent with his age and his social position, in the dissipation and the amusements of the day, but he was beginning to get tired of them. In the second part he enters with all the energy of which he was capable, though shackled by his official position, upon the great political struggles of the time—the earnest advocate of peace, of moderation, of justice, and of liberal principles—regarding with a discriminating eye and with some severity of judgement the actions of men swayed by motives of ambition and vanity, from which he was himself free. This was the most active period of his life. But years advanced, and with age the infirmities from which he had always suffered withdrew him more and more from society.

Though a professed cynic and epicurean, he was kindly at heart. No one can mistake the real grief with which he speaks of the death of Lady Worcester. His letters to Mrs. Henry Baring show his fondness for children. Moreover, he had a gift for friendship. “No man ever so high or low, we believe, ever sought his advice and assistance in vain”, said a racing acquaintance; and Sir Henry Taylor in his autobiography wrote:

He was a friend of many and always most a friend when friendship was most needed.