

September 1823

[Byron] *Don Juan*, VI-VIII (1823) and *Don Juan*, IX-XI (1823); *Gentleman's Magazine*, XCIII-ii (Sept. 1823), 250-252. This final review of Byron is the most virulent; the *Gentleman's* thereafter ignored Byron's works.

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58. *The Speech of the Bishop of St. David's, on Wednesday the 9th of July, 1823, on the Marquis of Lansdowne's Motion for the second reading of a Bill for giving the Elective Franchise to the English Roman Catholics.*

QUID dubitax ne feceris is an acknowledged aphorism; and the Bishop strongly says,

"I object, my Lords, to the admission of Roman Catholics to offices of trust and profit, because the principles of their Church are contrary to the allegiance which is due from subjects to their Sovereign, and inconsistent with the safety and tranquillity of the State. The grant of the Elective Franchise would be attended with still greater inconveniences and mischiefs. My Lords, I need not remind your Lordships that Parliament is convened by the writ of summons expressly for the defence of the kingdom and of the Church, not of the kingdom only, but of the kingdom and the Church. A Representative of a Roman Catholic district, if true to his constituents, must, instead of defending the Church of England, be the advocate of measures most adverse to the King's prerogative, and most hostile to the Protestant Religion." P. 7.

Whatever may be political opinions on this subject, of two things we are satisfied, that Protestantism is the greatest Providential blessing ever conferred upon this country; and that claims for political privileges founded upon ideas of liberality and charity, (mere matters of private life) are absurd. Security is the only ground upon which such a question can be argued; and if there are doubts upon the subject, reason requires only conditional and qualified concession. In demanding privileges, the grant is perhaps nothing, if it implies no legislative power; but how persons, bound by their principles to withhold allegiance to the Sovereign, and extirpate Protestants (see p. 5), can in England claim a political right to act accordingly, *may* and *will* be deemed monstrous.

59. *Scientia Biblica; being a copious Collection of parallel Passages, printed in words at length, for the Illustration of the New Testament; the whole co-arranged as to illustrate and confirm the different Clauses of each Verse; together with the Text at large in Greek and English, the various Readings, and the Chronology. Part. I., 8vo. pp. 112.*

THIS excellently-constructed work is to a Divine or Theologian what a

Ready Reckoner is to a tradesman. Indeed it is important for all persons who have any sceptical hesitation concerning Christianity, because it brings at once into view all the Prophecies, which confirm the pretensions of the holy Founder of our Faith: e.g. under Matth. i. 23, we have all the ancient predictions concerning the Incarnation; and so *de ceteris*. The work cannot be too strongly recommended.

60. *Don Juan*, Cantos VI. VII. VIII.—Also, Cantos IX. X. XI. John Hunt.

WE have here two different *genuine* volumes of Lord Byron's poetical lubrications, for the very moderate sum of one shilling each.

On the character of the two first Cantos of *Don Juan*, it would be idle here to expatiate. With all their immorality, they are, perhaps, considered merely in a literary point of view, among the most successful efforts of Lord Byron's pen. In them every thing that is vicious and depraved, glorious and sublime, is so skillfully filtered through the drip-stone of sentimentality, that we know not the nature of the draught until we have imbibed enough of it to make us desirous of swallowing the rest. The next portion of the poem his Lordship thought proper to publish, was marked by the same immorality of purpose with very few of the attractive qualities for which the former part was so distinguished; but the Cantos which have given rise to these remarks are incomparably the most abominable in spirit, and wretched in execution, of all the writings of the author. Many of the verses are merely disjointed prose; clipped into stanzas of eight lines each, without the least regard to their euphony.

To Cantos VI. VII. and VIII. is prefixed a sort of apology for the former ones, with an acknowledgment of the source from whence the details of the VIIth and VIIIth have been obtained. In this advertisement he reverts to his favourite theme, the death of the late Marquis of Londonderry; and on the pretext of referring to one or two stanzas in the poem devoted to the same manly and laudable object, indulges in a foul and brute-like yell of triumph over the grave of his victim, and once more fastens upon the bleeding and mangled corpse

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corpse of this ill-fated Minister, with a vampire thirst for vengeance, that would do justice to the unrelenting malignity of a fiend.

The sixth Canto, without the wit which even to depraved minds can alone render such grossness attractive, is almost throughout scandalously licentious and obscene, and fit only for the shelves of a brothel. It describes Juan's abode in the Harem, where he is treated as a female, and forms an attachment which irritates the jealousy of the Sultana, whose regard he had previously engaged so much, that she orders him and his paramour to be thrown into the sea. In the seventh we find him safe in Suwarrow's camp before Ismail, accompanied by his fellow slave, Johnson, an Englishman, and the two females, without learning how he had escaped. The details of the seventh and eighth Cantos are taken from a French book, entitled, *Histoire de la Nouvelle Russie*.

We subjoin a few of the best stanzas:

LOVE.

A slight blush, a soft tremor, a calm kind
Of gentle feminine delight, and shown
More in the eyelids than the eyes, resigned
Rather to hide what pleases most unknown,
Are the best tokens (to a modest mind)
Of love, when seated on his loveliest throne,
A sincere woman's breast,—for over warm
Or over cold annihilates the charm.

SLEEPING BEAUTIES.

There was deep silence in the chamber: dim
And distant from each other burned the
lights,
And slumber hovered o'er each lovely limb
Of the fair occupants: if there be sprites,
They should have walked there in their
spriteliest trim,
By way of change from their sepulchral
sites, [taste
And shewn themselves as Ghosts of better
Than haunting some old Ruin or wide Waste.
Many and beautiful lay those around,
Like flowers of different hue and clime
and root,
In some exotic garden sometimes found,
With cost and care and warmth induced
to shoot.
One with her auburn tresses lightly bound,
And fair brows gently drooping, as the fruit
Nods from the tree, was slumbering with
soft breath [neath,
And lips apart, which shewed the pearls be-
One with her flushed cheek laid on her white
arm,
And raven ringlets gathered in dark crowd
Above her brow, lay dreaming soft and warm:
And smiling through her dream, as through
a cloud

The Moon breaks, half unveiled each further
charm,
As, slightly stirring in her snowy shroud,
Her beauties seized the unconscious hour of
night
All bashfully to struggle into light.

THE ESCAPE.

Upon a taken bastion where there lay
Thousands of slaughtered men, a yet warm
groupe [way
Of murdered women, who had found their
To this vain refuge, made the good heart
droop
And shudder;—while, as beautiful as May,
A female child of ten years tried to stoop
And hide her little palpitating breast
Amidst the bodies lulled in bloody rest.

Two villainous Cossacs pursued the child
With flashing eyes and weapons: matched
with them

The rudest brute that roams Siberia's wild
Has feelings pure and polished as a gem,—
The bear is civilized, the wolf is mild:

And whom for this at last must we con-
demn? [employ
Their natures? or their sovereigns, who
All arts to teach their subjects to destroy?

Their sabres glittered o'er her little head,
Whence her fair hair rose twining with
affright, [dead:

Her hidden face was plunged amidst the
When Juan caught a glimpse of this sad
sight,

I shall not say exactly what he said,
Because it might not solace 'ears polite;
But what he did, was to lay on their backs,
The readiest way of reasoning with Cos-
sacs.

One's hip he slashed, and split the other's
shoulder, [seek
And drove them with their brutal yells to
If there might be chirurgeons who could
solder

The wounds they richly merited, and shriek
Their baffled rage and pain; while waxing
colder

As he turned o'er each pale and gory cheek,
Don Juan raised his little captive from
The heap a moment more had made her tomb.

And she was chill as they, and on her face
A slender streak of blood announced how
near

Her fate had been to that of all her race:
For the same blow which laid her Mother
here, [trace

Had scarred her brow, and left its crimson
As the last link with all she had held dear;
But else unhurt, she opened her large eyes,
And gazed on Juan with a wild surprize.

There are several specimens of 'Kit-
chen wit' in the Poem. Sneering al-
lusions are of course introduced to his
Majesty, the Duke of Wellington, and
the battle of Waterloo (Lord Byron
appears to think that the victory was
on

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on the side of the French), but they are really too contemptible for particular notice.

Though, blushing, as we ever must, to see a "Nobleman want manners," we cannot but be thankful that the hand which administered the poison has supplied the antidote. The three last Cantos have effectually neutralized the mischief of their precursors. The halo of Genius has been extinguished for its perversion, in the nebulous dullness, and he who might have "waked to ecstasy the living lyre," lives the wretched Thersites of his day.

61. *Mary Stuart.* By Miss Macauley. 8vo, pp. 138. Sherwood and Co.

THE production before us is termed, by its accomplished authoress, "Historic Delineation of the Character of Mary Stuart;" and in a well-written preface, it is stated to be an attempt to intermingle the fascination of scenic effect with the force of historic accuracy, and the energy of poetic fire.—Miss Macauley seems to have felt the difficulty of the enterprise, and a dignified confidence in her own resources—a confidence, without which nothing great or noble was ever yet achieved—has enabled her to complete a task of no ordinary labour; and if not to our entire satisfaction, still with much credit to her industry and her talents. As a recitation it has failed from causes which no talent, however exalted, and no perseverance, however unintermitted, could prevent. It is addressed to the grave and the intelligent classes of the community, and an appeal so limited would be re-echoed by empty walls and unoccupied benches. As the effort of a single performer, it wants the essential character of variety; and the most patient attention would fail without such occasional reliefs.

As a dramatic poem, *Mary Stuart* abounds with passages of energy, of tenderness, and of beauty. It embraces the period of the birth of this unhappy lady, to her flight from Scotland, and exhibits the workings of a mind, the seat of every conflicting passion,

"Torn by duty—or racked by love."

In the delineation of this extraordinary woman, Miss Macauley has, we think, happily steered clear of those extremes of partiality and hatred which have disfigured the chronicles of her enemies and friends,

Amidst such contentions, her real character seems almost as uncertain as her very features are doubtful by contradictory portraits.

We consider the present attempt as highly creditable to the talents of Miss Macauley, and we hazard nothing in predicting that on a more popular subject she will command, as she deserves, no inconsiderable share of literary reputation.

62. *Royal Naval Biography, or Memoirs of the Services of all the Flag Officers, Captains, Commanders, &c. whose Names appeared on the Admiralty List of Sea Officers at the Commencement of the present Year.* By Lieut. John Marshall (B.), R. N. 8vo, 1 vol. in 2 parts. Longman and Co.

THIS work cannot fail, we think, of being acceptable, not only to the British Navy, but to the British Nation. The author appears to have had access to the best sources of information, and to have employed much diligence in availing himself of the opportunities afforded him, and the result is, that we have found much to amuse our mind and gratify our curiosity. The volume contains 199 memoirs and sketches of living officers, besides numerous notices of deceased officers, to be found in the notes.

This work might be presented with great propriety to the parents and friends of young gentlemen about to embark as midshipmen, as well as to the wardroom of each ship, as useful for reference.

The notes not only elucidate the different actions related in the memoirs, and thereby tender a reference to other naval works unnecessary, but when completed will serve as a substitute for any other general history of maritime events, as it is intended to give at the end of the work a Chronological Table of the Battle, Sieges, &c. which have taken place during the period of 63 years.

The work commences with an account of His Royal Highness the Duke of Clarence; and the descriptions of the great general actions are given in the memoirs of the senior surviving officers who bore a part in them; as, for instance, the battle between Rodney and De Grasse is related in the memoir of Admiral William (now Fremantle), the senior Admiral of the Red. A similar arrangement is made with