

vigorous assistance. How good was Hogg's communicating to Southey what Jeffrey said about his being 'about as conceited a fellow as his neighbour Wordsworth.' To be sure they were both magnificent peacocks! I wish for a good letter of the Professor's.

"Manning is, I fancy, on the whole, next if not equal to Newman for importance as a convert: his influence very great in society at large, as well as among the younger clergy. He is a very agreeable and polished gentleman—a fine ascetical coxcomb (and tuft-hunter)—the image of a Jesuit Cardinal of the sixteenth century, and I expect him to be followed by a long train of *ladies*, including probably the — of —, and Lady —.<sup>1</sup>

"I am hopeful that Rutherford is really recovered, but even so think him wise in taking the Bench, especially under existing circumstances as to Whiggery.—Ever yours affectionately,

"J. G. LOCKHART.

"PROFESSOR WILSON."

The next letter is in answer to one of Wilson's, apparently no longer extant:—

"SUSSEX PLACE, April 15, 1851.

"DEAR PROFESSOR,—I am delighted with John Wilson's letter about you and others—especially for its own excellence in all but the penmanship,

<sup>1</sup> One lady followed, the other did not.

which, too, will soon come right, and after all is not *much* worse than I had seen thirty years ago on occasion.<sup>1</sup> I went a week ago to see Faed's picture of Sir Walter Scott and his friends, and there met Home Drummond. We agreed that Adam Ferguson, T. Thomson, and you were so far like—you had all evidently sat to Faed, and as evidently no one else in the party had, nor could we see resemblance in any one of them. Then all ages are jumbled. Scott is a man of fifty. Ferguson and Thomson are eighty. I am twenty-five, and you are sixty or thereby. This will never do. I did not subscribe. I could do a better picture myself of those people even now, if I had three weeks' free admission to Grant's studio, and the free use of his materials. I think I will try. What an agreeable party that *would* have been! And this will perhaps be re-engraved in 1950. But then we shall be walking serene in some grove of Hades, with Landor, and Southey, and Hazlitt, and Jeremy Bentham; Dr. Parr and Gray of the High School, Johnnie Dow, Delta, &c. &c. I was last night reading here and there in Delta's new bookie,<sup>2</sup> and found you, Aird, Pollock, and others glorified—nay 'Captain Paton's Lament' dug up to justify the placing of the late Dr. Odontist Scotty among the great poets of the half century. This will do. De Quincey, I ob-

<sup>1</sup> Professor Wilson's hand, in letters to Lockhart, is a difficult, untidy scrawl.

<sup>2</sup> Lectures, by Dr. Moir (Delta), on the Literature of the Age.

serve, is the greatest master of language—going or lately gone. This also will do!

“I yesterday read over calmly the Prelude, and am doubly in the dark as to its meaning—doubly dumfounded by its heaviness and unharmony. The Canon's book also I have re-read, and pronounce it raw and bald unbearably. There is nothing of *his* that helps you in the least to a conception of what the living man was. But it is not so with some of the letters by William Wordsworth, or with some of the reminiscences.

“William Wordsworth's arrogant chillness as to all the contemporary bards comes out well—Southey not excepted—indeed with no exception but Coleridge. This we expected—but still there is a *manliness* about William Wordsworth that separates him vastly from Robert Southey. What else can it be? Or is it that the one was really a great poet—the other not—the one's ‘conceit,’ in short, based on a really grand something, though not on any one grand work—the other's erected on no similar foundation? I cannot answer. What I know is that I liked William Wordsworth and never liked Robert Southey, and this though they both equally and completely differed from all my critical notions as to almost all their contemporaries, and as to *all* the best of them. I think, too, that William Wordsworth was a better man than Robert Southey—far better—even in the qualities for which Robert Southey deserves most praise, with the one exception of

pecuniary generosity, of which I fancy William Wordsworth had little or nothing—his early straits having hardened him effectually on that score, and no wonder.

“I have read fifty articles on Wordsworth’s philosophy. Hang me if I don’t suspect ’tis all an airy sham—beyond what lies on the very surface, that is to say, and might be expressed on this page in plain prose—as humble as any scrap of the Prelude is pompous. ‘Words, words.’

“It seems to be assumed that William Wordsworth made some wonderful discovery, which Homer, Dante, &c. &c., lived and died without having had even a glimpse of. I beg to doubt. There is more exact observation of *Nature* implied in the epithets of the Second Iliad than declared in all William Wordsworth’s tomes, and bragged of by all his laudators, from Wilson down to Delta.

“I suspect there is more of artifice than of art in all that has been relied on for proof of this modern originality.

“Let me hear again either from John Wilson or the Professor. They are both far finer fellows than either William Wordsworth or Robert Southey, or even W. S. Landor.—Yours,

“J. G. LOCKHART.”

Wilson replied, and sent notes very hostile to Wordsworth. These, he said, must be published complete, or not at all. Lockhart answers:—