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H. B. BARLEY





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from  
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Brighton August 2<sup>nd</sup> 1901.

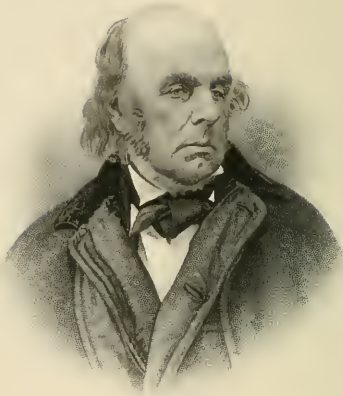


LETTERS  
OF  
EDWARD FITZGERALD









Edmund Schygeralt.

LETTERS  
OF  
EDWARD FITZGERALD

IN TWO VOLUMES  
VOL. I.

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## PREFACE

IN compliance with a very generally expressed wish that the Letters of Edward FitzGerald should be separated from his Literary Remains, they are now issued with some additions to their number which have not before appeared. It was no part of my plan to form a complete collection of his letters, but rather to let the story of his life be told in such of them as gave an indication of his character and pursuits. It would have been easy to increase the number considerably had I printed all that I possess, but it seemed better to create the desire for more than to incur the reproach of having given more than enough.

Since these volumes were completed a large number of letters, addressed by FitzGerald to his life-long friend Mrs. Kemble, have come into the possession of Messrs. Richard Bentley and Son, and

will shortly make their appearance. By the desire of Mr. George Bentley I have undertaken to see them through the press.

WILLIAM ALDIS WRIGHT.

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

31 *March*, 1894.

## NOTE

In vol. ii. p. 181 the date 1875, which was conjectural, has been changed to 1878, in which year September 22—the day on which the letter was written—was a Sunday. There was a Musical Festival at Norwich in both years, and the same Oratorios were performed, and this led me to put the letter out of its place.

W. A. W.

## PREFACE TO LETTERS AND LITERARY REMAINS

AFTER Mr. FitzGerald's death in June 1883 a small tin box addressed to me was found by his executors, containing among other things corrected copies of his printed works, and the following letter, which must have been written shortly after my last visit to him at Easter that year :

WOODBRIDGE: *May 1/83.*

MY DEAR WRIGHT,

I do not suppose it likely that any of my works should be reprinted after my Death. Possibly the three Plays from the Greek, and Calderon's *Mágico* : which have a certain merit in the Form they are cast into, and also in the Versification.

However this may be, I venture to commit to you this Box containing Copies of all that I have corrected in the way that I would have them appear, if any of them ever should be resuscitated.

The C. Lamb papers are only materials for you, or any one else, to use at pleasure.

The Crabbe volume would, I think, serve for an almost sufficient Selection from him ; and some such Selection will have to be made, I believe, if he is to be resuscitated. Two of the Poems—‘The Happy Day’ and ‘The Family of Love’—seem to me to have needed some such abridgement as the ‘Tales of the Hall,’ for which I have done little more than hastily to sketch the Plan. For all the other Poems, simple Extracts from them will suffice : with a short notice concerning their Dates of Composition, etc., at the Beginning.

My poor old Lowestoft Sea-slang may amuse yourself to look over perhaps.

And so, asking your pardon for inflicting this Box upon you I am ever sincerely yours              E. F. G.

In endeavouring to carry out these last wishes of my friend I thought that of the many who know him only as a translator some would be glad to have a picture of him as he appeared to the small circle of his intimate acquaintances. The mere narrative of the life of a man of leisure and literary tastes would have contained too few incidents to be of general interest, and it appeared to me best to let him be his own biographer, telling his own story and revealing his own character in his letters. Fortunately there are many of these, and I have endeavoured to give



such a selection from them as would serve this purpose, adding a few words here and there to connect them and explain what was not sufficiently evident. As the letters begin from the time that he left College and continue with shorter or longer intervals till the day before his death, it was only necessary to introduce them by a short sketch of his early life in order to make the narrative complete.

FitzGerald's letters, like his conversation, were perfectly unaffected and full of quiet humour. In his lonely life they were the chief means he had of talking with his friends, and they were always welcome. In reply to one of them Carlyle wrote: 'Thanks for your friendly human letter; which gave us much entertainment in the reading (at breakfast time the other day), and is still pleasant to think of. One gets so many *inhuman* letters, ovine, bovine, porcine, etc., etc.: I wish you would write a little oftener; when the beneficent Daimon suggests, fail not to lend ear to him.' Another, who has since followed him 'from sunshine to the sunless land,' and to whom he wrote of domestic affairs, said, 'The striking feature in his correspondence with me is the exquisite tenderness of feeling which it exhibits in regard to all family matters; the letters might have been written by a mother or a sister.' He said of himself that his friendships were more like loves, and

as he was constant in affectionate loyalty to others, he might also say with Brutus,

In all my life  
I found no man but he was true to me.

The Poet-Laureate, on hearing of his death, wrote to the late Sir Frederic Pollock: 'I had no truer friend: he was one of the kindest of men, and I have never known one of so fine and delicate a wit. I had written a poem to him the last week, a dedication, which he will never see.'

When Thackeray, not long before he died, was asked by his daughter which of his old friends he had loved most, he replied, 'Why, dear old Fitz, to be sure; and Brookfield.'

And Carlyle, quick of eye to discern the faults and weaknesses of others, had nothing but kindness, with perhaps a touch of condescension, 'for the peaceable, affectionate, and ultra-modest man, and his innocent *far niente* life.'

It was something to have been intimate with three such friends, and one can only regret that more of his letters addressed to them have not been preserved. Of those written to the earliest and dearest friend of all, James Spedding, not one is left.

One of his few surviving contemporaries, speaking from a lifelong experience, described him with perfect

truth as an eccentric man of genius, who took more pains to avoid fame than others do to seek it.

His love of music was one of his earliest passions, and remained with him to the last. I cannot refrain from quoting some recollections of the late Arch-deacon Groome, a friend of his College days, and so near a neighbour in later life that few letters passed between them. 'He was a true musician; not that he was a great performer on any instrument, but that he so truly appreciated all that was good and beautiful in music. He was a good performer on the piano, and could get such full harmonies out of the organ that stood in one corner of his entrance room at Little Grange as did good to the listener. Sometimes it would be a bit from one of Mozart's Masses, or from one of the finales of some one of his or Beethoven's Operas. And then at times he would fill up the harmonies with his voice, true and resonant almost to the last. I have heard him say, "Did you never observe how an Italian organ-grinder will sometimes put in a few notes of his own in such perfect keeping with the air which he was grinding?" He was not a great, but he was a good composer. Some of his songs have been printed, and many still remain in manuscript. Then what pleasant talk I have had with him about the singers of our early years; never forgetting to speak of Mrs. Frere of

Downing, as the most perfect private singer we had ever heard. And so indeed she was. Who that had ever heard her sing Handel's songs can ever forget the purity of her phrasing and the pathos of her voice? She had no particle of vanity in her, and yet she would say, "Of course, I can sing Handel. I was a pupil of John Sale, and he was a pupil of Handel." To her old age she still retained the charm of musical expression, though her voice was but a thread. And so we spoke of her; two old men with all the enthusiastic admiration of fifty years ago. Pleasant was it also to hear him speak of the public singers of those early days. Braham, so great, spite of his vulgarity; Miss Stephens, so sweet to listen to, though she had no voice of power; and poor Vaughan, who had so feeble a voice, and yet was always called "such a chaste singer." How he would roar with laughter, when I would imitate Vaughan singing

His hiddeus (*sic*) love provokes my rage,  
Weak as I am, I must engage,

from *Acis and Galatea*. Then too his reminiscences of the said *Acis and Galatea* as given at the Concerts for Ancient Music. "I can see them now, the dear old *creeters* with the gold eye-glasses and their turbans, noddling their heads as they sang

O the pleasures of the plains!"

‘These old *creeters* being, as he said, the sopranos who had sung first as girls, when George the Third was king.

‘He was a great lover of our old English composers, specially of Shield. Handel, he said, has a scroll in his marble hand in the Abbey on which are written the first bars of

I know that my Redeemer liveth ;

and Shield should hold a like scroll, only on it should be written the first bars of

A flaxen-headed ploughboy.

‘He was fond of telling a story of Handel, which I, at least, have never seen in print. When Handel was blind he composed his “Samson,” in which there is that most touching of all songs, specially to any one whose powers of sight are waning—“Total Eclipse.” Mr. Beard was the great tenor singer of the day, who was to sing this song. Handel sent for him, “Mr. Beard,” he said, “I cannot sing it as it should be sung, but I can tell you how it ought to be sung.” And then he sang it, with what strange pathos need not be told. Beard stood listening, and when it was finished said, with tears in his eyes, “But Mr. Handel, I can never sing it like that.” And so he would tell the story with tears in his voice, such as

those best remember, who ever heard him read some piece of his dear old Crabbe, and break down in the reading.'

With this I will conclude, and I have only now to express my sincere thanks to all who have entrusted me with letters addressed to themselves or to those whom they represent. It has been my endeavour to justify their confidence by discretion. To Messrs. Richard Bentley and Son I am indebted for permission to reprint Virgil's Garden from the Temple Bar Magazine.<sup>1</sup>

The portrait is from a photograph by Cade and White of Ipswich taken in 1873.

WILLIAM ALDIS WRIGHT.

TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.  
20 *May*, 1889.

<sup>1</sup> See Letters and Literary Remains of Edward FitzGerald, vol. iii. p. 464.

LETTERS  
OF  
EDWARD FITZGERALD

EDWARD FITZGERALD was born at Bredfield House in Suffolk, an old Jacobean mansion about two miles from Woodbridge, on the 31st of March, 1809. He was the third son of John Purcell, who married his cousin Mary Frances FitzGerald, and upon the death of her father in 1818 took the name and arms of FitzGerald. In 1816 Mr. Purcell went to France, and for a time settled with his family at St. Germain. FitzGerald in later life would often speak of the royal hunting parties which he remembered seeing in the forest. They afterwards removed to Paris, occupying the house in which Robespierre had once lived, and here FitzGerald had for his drillmaster one of Napoleon's Old Guard. Even at this early period the vivacious humour which afterwards characterized him appears to have shewn itself, for his father writing to some friends in England speaks of little

Edward keeping the whole family in good spirits by his unfailing fun and droll speeches. The dramatic circumstances of the assassination of M. Fualdès, a magistrate at Rodez, in 1817, and the remarkable trial which followed, fastened themselves on Fitzgerald's memory, and he was familiar with all the details which he had heard spoken of when quite a child in Paris. In 1821 he was sent to King Edward the Sixth's School at Bury St. Edmunds, where his two elder brothers were already under the charge of Dr. Malkin, who, like himself in after life, was a great admirer of Crabbe. Among his school-fellows were James Spedding and his elder brother, W. B. Donne, J. M. Kemble, and William Airy the brother of Sir George Airy, formerly Astronomer-Royal. I have often heard him say that the best piece of declamation he had ever listened to was Kemble's recitation of Hotspur's speech, beginning 'My liege, I did deny no prisoners,' on a prize day at Bury. When he left for Cambridge in 1826 the Speddings were at the head of the School. He was entered at Trinity on 6th February 1826 under Mr. (afterwards Dean) Peacock and went into residence in due course in the following October, living in lodgings at Mrs. Perry's (now Oakley's), No. 19 King's Parade. James Spedding did not come up till the year following, and his greatest friends in later life, John Allen, afterwards Archdeacon of Salop, W. M. Thackeray, and W. H. Thompson, afterwards Master of Trinity, were his juniors at the University



by two years. The three Tennysons were also his contemporaries, but it does not appear that he knew them till after he had left Cambridge. Indeed, in a letter to Mrs. Richmond Ritchie (Miss Thackeray), written in 1882, he says of the Laureate, 'I can tell you nothing of his College days; for I did not know him till they were over, though I had seen him two or three times before. I remember him well—a sort of Hyperion.'

FitzGerald was unambitious of University distinctions and was not in the technical sense a reading man, but he passed through his course in a leisurely manner, amusing himself with music and drawing and poetry, and modestly went out in the Poll in January 1830, after a period of suspense during which he was apprehensive of not passing at all. Immediately after taking his degree he went to stay with his brother-in-law, Mr. Kerrich, at Geldestone Hall, near Beccles, where he afterwards spent much of his time. While there, and still undecided as to his future movements, he writes to his friend John Allen that his father had to some extent decided for him by reducing his allowance, a measure which would compel him to go and live in France. It was apparently not in consequence of this, for the difficulty with his father was satisfactorily arranged, that he went in the spring of 1830 to Paris, where his aunt, Miss Purcell, was living. Thackeray joined him for a short time in April, but left suddenly, and was the bearer of a hurried letter written by FitzGerald at the Palais

Royal to the friend who was at this time his chief correspondent.

‘If you see Roe (the Engraver, not the Haberdasher) give him my remembrance and tell him I often wish for him in the Louvre: as I do for you, my dear Allen: for I think you would like it very much. There are delightful portraits (which you love most), and statues so beautiful that you would for ever prefer statues to pictures. There are as fine pictures in England: but not one statue so fine as any here. There is a lovely and very modest Venus: and the Gladiator: and a very majestic Demosthenes, sitting in a chair, with a roll of writing in his hands, and seemingly meditating before rising to speak. It is quite awful.’

FitzGerald remained in France till about the end of May, and before leaving wrote again to Allen, not perhaps altogether seriously, yet with more truth than he imagined, of his future mode of life.

‘I start for England in a week, as I purpose now: I shall go by Havre de Grace and Southampton, and stay for a month or two perhaps at Dartmouth, a place on the Devonshire coast. Tell Thackeray that he is never to invite me to his house, as I intend never to go: not that I would not go out there rather than any place perhaps, but I cannot stand seeing new faces in the polite circles. You must know I am going to become a great bear: and have got all sorts of Utopian ideas into my head about society: these may all be very absurd, but I try the experiment on

myself, so I can do no great hurt. Where I shall go in the summer I know not.'

In the end he made Southampton his headquarters and spent several weeks there, going on short excursions to visit some college acquaintances. In November he was at Naseby, where his father had a considerable estate, including the famous battlefield, of which we shall hear more in his later correspondence. 'This place is solitary enough,' he writes to John Allen, 'but I am well off in a nice farm-house. I wish you could come and see the primitive inhabitants, and the fine field of Naseby. There are grand views on every side: and all is interesting. . . . Do you know, Allen, that this is a very curious place with odd fossils: and mixed with bones and bullets of the fight at Naseby; and the identical spot where King Charles stood to see the battle. . . . I do wish you and Sansum were here to see the curiosities. Can't you come? I am quite the King here I promise you. . . . I am going to-day to dine with the Carpenter, a Mr. Ringrose, and to hear his daughter play on the piano-forte. Fact.

'My blue surtout daily does wonders. At Church its effect is truly delightful.'

It was at Naseby, in the spring of the following year (1831), that he made his earliest attempt in verse, the earliest at any rate which has yet been discovered. Charles Lamb, writing to Moxon in August, tells him, 'The Athenæum has been hoaxed

with some exquisite poetry, that was, two or three months ago, in Hone's Book. . . . The poem I mean is in Hone's Book as far back as April. I do not know who wrote it; but 'tis a poem I envy —*that* and Montgomery's "Last Man": I envy the writers, because I feel I could have done something like them.' It first appeared in Hone's Year Book for April 30, 1831, with the title 'The Meadows in Spring,' and the following letter to the Editor. 'These verses are in the old style; rather homely in expression; but I honestly profess to stick more to the simplicity of the old poets than the moderns, and to love the philosophical good humor of our old writers more than the sickly melancholy of the Byronian wits. If my verses be not good, they are good humored, and that is something.' With a few verbal changes they were sent to the Athenæum, and appeared in that paper on July 9, 1831, accompanied by a note of the Editor's, from which it is evident that he supposed them to have been written by Lamb.

*To the Editor of the Athenæum.*

SIR,

These verses are something in the old style, but not the worse for that: not that I mean to call them good: but I am sure they would not have been better, if dressed up in the newest Montgomery fashion, for which I cannot say I have much love. If they are fitted for your paper, you are welcome

to them. I send them to you, because I find only in your paper a love of our old literature, which is almost monstrous in the eyes of modern ladies and gentlemen. My verses are certainly not in the present fashion; but, I must own, though there may not be the same merit in the thoughts, I think the style much better: and this with no credit to myself, but to the merry old writers of more manly times.

Your humble servant,  
EPSILON.

'Tis a dull sight  
To see the year dying,  
When winter winds  
Set the yellow wood sighing:  
Sighing, oh! sighing.

When such a time cometh,  
I do retire  
Into an old room  
Beside a bright fire:  
Oh, pile a bright fire!

And there I sit  
Reading old things,  
Of knights and lorn damsels,  
While the wind sings—  
Oh, drearily sings!

I never look out  
Nor attend to the blast;  
For all to be seen  
Is the leaves falling fast:  
Falling, falling!

But close at the hearth,  
Like a cricket, sit I,  
Reading of summer  
And chivalry—  
Gallant chivalry !

Then with an old friend  
I talk of our youth—  
How 'twas gladsome, but often  
Foolish, forsooth :  
But gladsome, gladsome !

Or to get merry  
We sing some old rhyme,  
That made the wood ring again  
In summer time—  
Sweet summer time !

Then go we to smoking,  
Silent and snug :  
Nought passes between us,  
Save a brown jug—  
Sometimes !

And sometimes a tear  
Will rise in each eye,  
Seeing the two old friends  
So merrily—  
So merrily !

And ere to bed  
Go we, go we,  
Down on the ashes  
We kneel on the knee,  
Praying together !

Thus, then, live I,  
Till, 'mid all the gloom,  
By heaven ! the bold sun  
Is with me in the room.  
Shining, shining !

Then the clouds part,  
Swallows soaring between ;  
The spring is alive,  
And the meadows are green !

I jump up, like mad,  
Break the old pipe in twain,  
And away to the meadows,  
The meadows again !

I had very little hesitation, from internal evidence alone, in identifying these verses with those which FitzGerald had written, as he said, when a lad, or little more than a lad, and sent to the Athenæum, but all question has been set at rest by the discovery of a copy in a common-place book belonging to the late Archdeacon Allen, with the heading 'E. F. G.,' and the date 'Naseby, Spring, 1831.' This copy differs slightly from those in the Year Book and in the Athenæum, and in place of the tenth stanza it has,

So winter passeth  
Like a long sleep  
From falling autumn  
To primrose-peep.

But although at this time he appears to have written nothing more himself he was not unmindful of what was done by others, for in May 1831 he writes to Allen, 'I have bought A. Tennyson's poems. How good Mariana is!' And again a year later, after a night-ride on the coach to London, 'I forgot to tell you that when I came up in the mail, and fell a dozing in the morning,

the sights of the pages in crimson and the funerals which the Lady of Shalott saw and wove, floated before me : really, the poem has taken lodging in my poor head.'

The correspondence will now for the most part tell its own story, and with it all that is to be told of FitzGerald's life.

In October and November 1831 he was for three weeks in town with Thackeray, and in the following summer was thinking of joining him at Havre when he wrote to his friend Allen.

[SOUTHAMPTON]

*July 31, Tuesday [1832.]*

MY DEAR ALLEN,

. . . And now I will tell you of a pilgrimage I made that put me in mind of you much. I went to Salisbury to see the Cathedral, but more to walk to Bemerton, George Herbert's village. It is about a mile and half from Salisbury alongside a pleasant stream with old-fashioned watermills beside : through fields very fertile. When I got to Bemerton I scarcely knew what to do with myself. It is a very pretty village with the Church and Parsonage much as Herbert must have left it. But there is no memorial of him either in or outside the walls of the church : though there have been Bishops and Deans and I know not what all so close at hand at Salisbury. This is a great shame indeed. I would gladly put up a plain stone if I could get the Rector's leave. I was very



sorry to see no tablet of any kind. The people in the Cottages had heard of a very pious man named Herbert, and had read his books—but they don't know where he lies. I have drawn the church and village: the little woodcut of it in Walton's Lives is very like. I thought I must have passed along the spot in the road where he assisted the man with the fallen horse: and to shew the benefit of good examples, I was serviceable that very evening in the town to some people coming in a cart: for the driver was drunk and driving furiously home from the races, and I believe would have fallen out, but that some folks, amongst whom I was one, stopped the cart. This long history is now at an end. I wanted John Allen much to be with me. I noticed the little window into which Herbert's friend looked, and saw him kneeling so long before the altar, when he was first ordained.

In the summer and autumn of this year FitzGerald spent some weeks at Tenby and was a good deal with Allen to whom he wrote on his return to London.

LONDON, *Nov.* 21, 1832.

MY DEAR ALLEN,

I suppose it must seem strange to you that I should like writing letters: and indeed I don't know that I do like it in general. However, here I see no companions, so I am pleased to talk to my old friend John Allen: which indeed keeps alive my

humanity very much. . . . I have been about to divers Bookshops and have bought several books—a Bacon's Essays, Evelyn's Sylva, Browne's Religio Medici, Hazlitt's Poets, etc. The latter I bought to add to my Paradise, which however has stood still of late. I mean to write out Carew's verses in this letter for you, and your Paradise. As to the Religio, I have read it again: and keep my opinion of it: except admiring the eloquence, and beauty of the notions, more. But the arguments are not more convincing. Nevertheless, it is a very fine piece of English: which is, I believe, all that you contend for. Hazlitt's Poets is the best selection I have ever seen. I have read some Chaucer too, which I like. In short I have been reading a good deal since I have been here: but not much in the way of knowledge.

. . . As I lay in bed this morning, half dozing, I walked in imagination all the way from Tenby to Freestone by the road I know so well: by the water-mill, by Gumfreston, Ivy tower, and through the gates, and the long road that leads to Carew.

Now for the poet Carew:

1.

Ask me no more where Jove bestows,  
When June is past, the fading rose:  
For in your beauty's orient deep,  
The flowers, as in their causes, sleep.

2.

Ask me no more whither do stray  
The golden atoms of the day:

For in pure love did Heav'n prepare  
Those powders to enrich your hair.

3.

Ask me no more whither doth haste  
The nightingale when June is past :  
For in your sweet dividing throat  
She winters, and keeps warm her note.

4.

Ask me no more where those stars light  
That downward fall at dead of night :  
For in your eyes they sit, and there  
Fixed become, as in their sphere.

5.

Ask me no more if east or west  
The phœnix builds her spicy nest :  
For unto you at last she flies,  
And in your fragrant bosom dies.

These lines are exaggerated, as all in Charles's time, but very beautiful. . . .

Yours most affectionately, E.

LONDON, *Nov.* [27, 1832.]

MY DEAR ALLEN,

The first thing I do in answering your letter is to tell you that I am angry at your saying that your conscience pricks you for not having written to me before. I am of that superior race of men, that are quite content to hear themselves talk, and read their own writing. But, in seriousness, I have such love of you, and of myself, that once every week, at least, I feel spurred on by a sort of gathering up of feelings

to vent myself in a letter upon you : but if once I hear you say that it makes your conscience thus uneasy till you answer, I shall give it up. Upon my word I tell you, that I do not in the least require it. You, who do not love writing, cannot think that any one else does : but I am sorry to say that I have a very young-lady-like partiality to writing to those that I love. . . . I have been reading Shakespeare's Sonnets : and I believe I am unprejudiced when I say, I had but half an idea of him, Demigod as he seemed before, till I read them carefully. How can Hazlitt call Warton's the finest sonnets? There is the air of pedantry and labour in his. But Shakespeare's are perfectly simple, and have the very essence of tenderness that is only to be found in the best parts of his Romeo and Juliet besides. I have truly been lapped in these Sonnets for some time : they seem all stuck about my heart, like the ballads that used to be on the walls of London. I have put a great many into my Paradise, giving each a fair white sheet for himself : there being nothing worthy to be in the same page. I could talk for an hour about them : but it is not fit in a letter. . . .

I shall tell you of myself, that I have been better since I wrote to you. Mazzinghi<sup>1</sup> tells me that November weather breeds Blue Devils—so that there is a French proverb, 'In October, de Englishman

<sup>1</sup> Now Librarian of the William Salt Library at Stafford : introduced to FitzGerald at Cambridge by Thackeray. [He died 19th February 1893, aged 82.]

shoot de pheasant: in November he shoot himself.' This I suppose is the case with me: so away with November, as soon as may be. 'Canst thou my Clora' is being put in proper musical trim: and I will write it out for you when all is right. I am sorry you are getting so musical: and if I take your advice about so big a thing as Christianity, take you mine about music. I am sure that this pleasure of music grows so on people, that many of the hours that you would have devoted to Jeremy Taylor, etc. will be melted down into tunes, and the idle train of thought that music puts us into. I fancy I have discovered the true philosophy of this: but I think you must have heard me enlarge. Therefore 'satis.'

I have gabbled on so long that there is scarce room for my quotation. But it shall come though in a shapeless manner, for the sake of room. Have you got in your Christian Poet, a poem by Sir H. Wotton — 'How happy is he born or taught, that serveth not another's will'? It is very beautiful, and fit for a Paradise of any kind. Here are some lines from old Lily, which your ear will put in the proper metre. It gives a fine description of a fellow walking in Spring, and looking here and there, and pricking up his ears, as different birds sing. 'What bird so sings, but doth so wail? Oh! 'tis the ravished nightingale: "Jug, jug, jug, jug, terue," she cries, and still her woes at midnight rise. Brave prick-song! who is't now we hear? It is the lark so shrill and clear: against heaven's gate he claps his wings, the morn not waking

till he sings. Hark, too, with what a pretty note poor Robin Redbreast tunes his throat: Hark how the jolly cuckoos sing "Cuckoo" to welcome in the Spring: "Cuckoo" to welcome in the Spring.' This is very English, and pleasant, I think: and so I hope you will. I could have sent you many a more sentimental thing, but nothing better. I admit nothing into my Paradise, but such as breathe content, and virtue: I count 'Back and syde' to breathe both of these, with a little good drink over.

*Wednesday* [28 Nov. 1832].

P.S. I sealed up my letter yesterday, forgetting to finish. I write thus soon 'because I gets a frank.' You shall benefit by another bit of poetry. I do not admit it into my Paradise, being too gloomy: but it will please both of us. It is the prototype of the *Pensieroso*.

Hence all you vain delights!  
 As short as are the nights  
 Wherein you spend your folly!  
 There's nought in this life sweet,  
 If man were wise to see 't,  
 But only melancholy;  
 Oh sweetest melancholy!  
 Welcome folded arms, and fixed eyes,  
 A sigh, that piercing mortifies,  
 A look that 's fastened to the ground,  
 A tongue chain'd up without a sound!

Fountain heads, and pathless groves,  
 Places which pale passion loves!

Moonlight walks, when all the fowls  
 Are warmly hous'd, save bats and owls !  
 A midnight dell, a passing groan !  
 These are the sounds we feed upon ;  
 Then stretch our bones in a still gloomy valley ;  
 Nothing's so dainty sweet as [lovely] melancholy.

(From the *Nice Valour, or the Passionate Madman*, by Fletcher.)

I think these lines are quite of the finest order, and have a more headlong melancholy than Milton's, which are distinctly copied from these, as you must confess. And now this is a very long letter, and the best thing you can do when you get to the end, is to Da Capo, and read what I ordered you about answering. My dear fellow, it is a great pleasure to me to write to you ; and to write out these dear poems. . . . Believe me that I am your very loving friend,

E. F. G.

[Dec. 7, 1832.]

MY DEAR ALLEN,

You can hardly have got through my last letter by this time. I hope you liked the verses I sent you. The news of this week is that Thackeray has come to London, but is going to leave it again for Devonshire directly. He came very opportunely to divert my Blue Devils : notwithstanding, we do not see very much of each other : and he has now so many friends (especially the Bullers) that he has no such wish for my society. He is as full of good humour and kindness as ever. The next news is that a new volume of Tennyson is out : containing nothing more

than you have in MS. except one or two things not worth having. . . .

When you write back (of which there is no hurry) send me an account that you and your Brother were once telling me at Bosherton, of three Generals condemned to die after the siege of Pembroke in Cromwell's time : and of the lot being brought by a little child. Give me their names, etc. (if you can) pretty circumstantially : or else, tell me where I can find some notice of it. . . .

I have been poring over Wordsworth lately : which has had much effect in bettering my Blue Devils : for his philosophy does not abjure melancholy, but puts a pleasant countenance upon it, and connects it with humanity. It is very well, if the sensibility that makes us fearful of ourselves is diverted to become a cause of sympathy and interest with Nature and mankind : and this I think Wordsworth tends to do. I think I told you of Shakespeare's sonnets before : I cannot tell you what sweetness I find in them.

So by Shakespeare's Sonnets roasted, and Wordsworth's poems  
basted,  
My heart will be well toasted, and excellently tasted.

This beautiful couplet must delight you, I think. I will also give you the two last verses about Clora : though it is more complete and better without them ; strange to say. You must have the goodness to repeat those you know over first, and then fall upon these : for there is a sort of reasoning in them, which



requires proper order, as much as a proposition of Euclid. The first of them is not to my liking, but it is too much trouble about a little thing to work it into a better. You have the two first stanzas<sup>1</sup>—  
“ergo”

## 3.

Nothing can utterly die :  
Music aloft upspringing  
Turns to pure atoms of sky  
Each golden note of thy singing :  
And that to which morning did listen  
At eve in a rainbow may glisten.

## 4.

Beauty, when laid in the grave,  
Feedeth the lily beside her :  
Therefore the soul cannot have  
Station or honour denied her :  
She will not better her essence,  
But wear a crown in God's presence.

Q. E. D.

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<sup>1</sup> Through the kindness of Mr. Thomas Allen, I have been enabled to recover these missing stanzas :—

## TO A LADY SINGING.

## 1.

Canst thou, my Clora, declare,  
After thy sweet song dieth  
Into the wild summer air,  
Whither it falleth or flieth ?  
Soon would my answer be noted,  
Wert thou but sage as sweet throated.

## 2.

Melody, dying away,  
Into the dark sky closes,  
Like the good soul from her clay  
Like the fair odor of roses :  
Therefore thou now art behind it,  
But thou shalt follow and find it.

And I think there is quite enough of Clora and her music. I am hunting about the town for an ancient drinking cup, which I may use when I am in my house, in quality of housekeeper. Have the goodness to make my remembrances to all at that most pleasant house Freestone : I am quite serious in telling you how it is by far the pleasantest family I ever was among.

My sister is far better. We walk very much and see such sights as the town affords. To-day I have bought a little terrier to keep me company. You will think this is from my reading of Wordsworth : but if that were my cue, I should go no further than keeping a primrose in a pot for society. Farewell, dear Allen. I am astonished to find myself writing a very long letter once a week to you : but it is next to talking to you : and after having seen you so much this summer, I cannot break off suddenly.

I am your most affectionate friend, E. F. G.

Have you got this beginning to your MS. of the Dream of Fair Women ? It is very splendid.

## 1.

As when a man that sails in a balloon  
Down looking sees the solid shining ground  
Stream from beneath him in the broad blue noon,—  
Tilth, hamlet, mead and mound :

## 2.

And takes his flags, and waves them to the mob  
That shout below, all faces turn'd to where  
Glow rubylike the far-up crimson globe  
Filled with a finer air :

3.

So, lifted high, the Poet at his will  
 Lets the great world flit from him, seeing all,  
 Higher through secret splendours mounting still  
 Self-poised, nor fears to fall,

4.

Hearing apart the echoes of his fame—

This is in his best style: no fretful epithet, nor a word too much.

[CASTLE IRWELL]

MANCHESTER, *February 24, 1833.*

DEAR ALLEN,

. . . I am fearful to boast, lest I should lose what I boast of: but I think I have achieved a victory over my evil spirits here: for they have full opportunity to come, and I often observe their approaches, but hitherto I have managed to keep them off. Lord Bacon's Essay on Friendship is wonderful for its truth: and I often feel its truth. He says that with a Friend 'a man *tosseth* his thoughts,' an admirable saying, which one can understand, but not express otherwise. But I feel that, being alone, one's thoughts and feelings, from want of communication, become heaped up and clotted together, as it were: and so lie like undigested food heavy upon the mind: but with a friend one *tosseth* them about, so that the air gets between them, and keeps them fresh and sweet. I know not from what metaphor Bacon took his 'tosseth,' but it seems to me as if it was from the way

haymakers toss hay, so that it does not press into a heavy lump, but is tossed about in the air, and separated, and thus kept sweet. . . .

Your most affectionate friend,

E. FITZGERALD.

*To W. B. Donne.*<sup>1</sup>

GELDESTONE, *Sept.* 27, [1833].

DEAR DONNE,

. . . As to my history since I have seen you, there is little to tell. Divinity is not outraged by your not addressing me as a Reverend—I not being one. I am a very lazy fellow, who do nothing: and this I have been doing in different places ever since I saw you last. I have not been well for the last week: for I am at present rather liable to be overset by any weariness (and where can any be found that can match the effect of two Oratorios?), since for the last three months I have lived on vegetables—that is, I have given up meat. When I was talking of this to Vipan, he told me that you had once tried it, and given it up. I shall hear your account of its effect

<sup>1</sup> 'My dear Donne,' as FitzGerald called him, 'who shares with Spedding my oldest and deepest love.' He afterwards succeeded J. M. Kemble as Licenser of Plays. The late Master of Trinity, then Greek Professor, wrote to me of him more than five and twenty years ago, 'It may do no harm that you should be known to Mr. Donne, whose acquaintance I hope you will keep up. He is one of the finest gentlemen I know, and no ordinary scholar—remarkable also for his fidelity to his friends.'

on you. The truth is, that mine is the wrong time of life to begin a change of that kind : it is either too early, or too late. But I have no doubt at all of the advantage of giving up meat : I find already much good from it, in lightness and airiness of head, whereas I was always before clouded and more or less morbid after meat. The loss of strength is to be expected : I shall keep on and see if that also will turn, and change into strength. I have almost Utopian notions about *vegetable diet*, begging pardon for making use of such a vile, Cheltenhamic, phrase. Why do you not bring up your children to it? To be sure, the chances are, that, after guarding their vegetable morals for years, they would be seduced by some roast partridge with bread sauce, and become ungodly. This actually happened to the son of a Dr. Newton who wrote a book<sup>1</sup> about it and bred up his children to it—but all such things I will tell you when I meet you. Gods ! it is a pleasant notion that one is about to meet an old acquaintance in a day or two.

Believe me then your most sincere friend,

E. FITZGERALD.

Pipes—are their names ever heard with you? I have given them up, except at Cambridge. But the word has something sweet in it—Do you ever smoke?

<sup>1</sup> The Return to Nature, or, a Defence of the Vegetable Regimen, dedicated to Dr. W. Lambe, and written in 1811. It was printed in 1821 in The Pamphleteer, No. 38, p. 497.

7 SOUTHAMPTON ROW, BLOOMSBURY,

[Oct. 25, 1833.]

DEAR DONNE,

. . . As to myself, and my diet, about which you give such excellent advice : I am still determined to give the diet I have proposed a good trial : a year's trial. I agree with you about vegetables, and soups : but my diet is chiefly *bread* : which is only a little less nourishing than flesh : and, being compact, and baked, and dry, has none of the washy, diluent effects of green vegetables. I scarcely ever touch the latter : but only pears, apples, etc. I have found no benefit yet ; except, as I think, in more lightness of spirits : which is a great good. But I shall see in time.

I am living in London in the quarter of the town which I have noticed above : in a very happy bachelor-like way. Would you would come up here for a few days. I can give you bed, board, etc. Do have some business in town, please. Spedding is here : taking lessons of drawing, before he goes for good into Cumberland : whither, for my sake and that of all his friends, I wish he never would go : for there are few such men, as far [as] I know. He and I have been theatricalizing lately. We saw an awful Hamlet the other night—a Mr. Serle—and a very good Wolsey, in Macready : and a very bad Queen Catherine, in Mrs. Sloman, whom you must remember. I am going to-night to see Macready in

Macbeth : I have seen him before in it : and I go for the sake of his two last acts, which are amazingly fine, I think. . . . I am close to the British Museum, in which I take great pleasure in reading in my rambling way. I hear of Kemble lately that he has been making some discoveries in Anglo-Saxon MSS. at Cambridge that, they say, are important to the interests of the church : and there is talk of publishing them, I believe. He is a strange fellow for that fiery industry of his : and, I am sure, deserves some steady recompense.

Tennyson has been in town for some time : he has been making fresh poems, which are finer, they say, than any he has done. But I believe he is chiefly meditating on the purging and subliming of what he has already done : and repents that he has published at all yet. It is fine to see how in each succeeding poem the smaller ornaments and fancies drop away, and leave the grand ideas single. . . .

I have lately bought a little pamphlet which is very difficult to be got, called *The Songs of Innocence*, written and adorned with drawings by W. Blake (if you know his name) who was quite mad, but of a madness that was really the elements of great genius ill-sorted : in fact, a genius with a screw loose, as we used to say. I shall shew you this book when I see you : to me there is particular interest in this man's writing and drawing, from the strangeness of the constitution of his mind. He was a man that used to see visions : and make drawings and paintings

of Alexander the Great, Cæsar, etc., who, he declared, stood before him while he drew. . . .

Your very affectionate friend,

E. FITZGERALD.

7 SOUTHAMPTON ROW,

Nov. 19, 1833.

DEAR DONNE,

Your book I got, and read through all that seemed to concern me the first day. I have doubted whether it would be most considerate to return you thanks for it, making you pay for a letter: or to leave you thankless, with a shilling more in your pocket. You see I have taken the latter [? former], and God forgive me for it. The book is a good one, I think, as any book is, that notes down *facts alone*, especially about health. I wish we had diaries of the lives of half the unknown men that have lived. Like all other men who have got a theory into their heads, I can only see things in the light of that theory; and whatever is brought to me to convince me to the contrary is only wrought and tortured to my view of the question. This lasts till a reaction is brought about by some of the usual means: as time, and love of novelty, etc. I am still very obstinate and persist in my practices. I do not think Stark is an instance of vegetable diet: consider how many things he tried grossly animal: lard, and butter, and fat: besides thwarting Nature in every way by eating when he wanted not to eat, and the contrary. Besides the



editor says in the preface that he thinks his death was brought about as much by vexation as by the course of his diet: but I suppose the truth is that vexation could not have had so strong hold except upon a weakened body. However, altogether I do not at all admit Stark to be any instance: to be set up like a scarecrow to frighten us from the corn, etc. Last night I went to hear a man lecture at Owen of Lanark's establishment (where I had never been before), and the subject happened to be about Vegetable Diet: but it was only the termination of a former lecture, so that I suppose all the good arguments (if there were any) were gone before. Do you know anything of a book by a Doctor Lamb upon this subject? I do not feel it to be disgusting to talk of myself upon this subject, because I think there is great interest in the subject itself. So I shall say that I am just now very well: in fine spirits. I have only eaten meat once for many weeks: and that was at a party where I did not like to be singled out. Neither have I tasted wine, except two or three times. If I fail at last I shall think it a very great bore: but assuredly the first cut of a leg of mutton will be some consolation for my wounded judgement: that first cut is a fine thing. So much for this. . . . Have you heard that Arthur Malkin is to be married? to a Miss Carr, with what Addison might call a pleasing fortune: or perhaps Nicholas Rowe. 'Sweet, pleasing friendship, etc. etc.' Mrs. Malkin is in high spirits about it, I hear: and I am very glad indeed. God send that

you have not heard this before : for a man likes to be the first teller of a pretty piece of news. Spedding and I went to see Macready in Hamlet the other night : with which he was pretty well content, but not wholly. For my part, I have given up deciding on how Hamlet should be played : or rather have decided it shouldn't be played at all. I take pleasure in reading things I don't wholly understand ; just as the old women like sermons : I think it is of a piece with an admiration of all Nature around us. I think there is a greater charm in the half meanings and glimpses of meaning that come in through Blake's wilder visions : though his difficulties arose from a very different source from Shakespeare's. But somewhat too much of this. I suspect I have found out this as an useful solution, when I am asked the meaning of any thing that I am admiring, and don't know it.

Believe me, dear Donne, 'to be ever your affectionate friend,

E. FITZGERALD.

FitzGerald spent the May term of 1834 at Cambridge 'rejoicing in the sunshine of James Spedding's presence.'

*To John Allen.*

WHERSTEAD LODGE, IPSWICH.<sup>1</sup>

June 31 (so) 1834.

DEAR MY JOHNNY,

I have been reading the Spectator since I have been here : and I like it very much. Don't you think

<sup>1</sup> Wherstead Lodge on the West bank of the Orwell, about two miles from Ipswich, formerly belonged to the Vernon family. The

it would make a nice book to publish all the papers about Sir Roger de Coverley alone, with illustrations by Thackeray? It is a thing that is wanted : to bring that standard of the old English Gentleman forward out of the mass of little topics, and fashions, that occupy the greater part of the Spectator. Thackeray has illustrated my Undine in about fourteen little coloured drawings—very nicely. . . .

I am here in the country in brave health : rising at six withal : and pruning of rose trees in the garden. Why don't you get up early? in the summer at least. The next time we meet in town I mean to get an artist to make me your portrait : for I often wish for it. It must be looking at me. Now write very soon : else I shall be gone : and know that I am your very true friend,

E. F. G.

GELDESTONE HALL, *Sept.* 9, [1834].

DEAR ALLEN,

I have really nothing to say, and I am ashamed to be sending this third letter all the way from here to Pembrokeshire for no earthly purpose : but I have just received yours : and you will know how very welcome all your letters are to me when you see how the perusal of this one has excited me to such an instant reply. It has indeed been a long time coming : but it is all the more delicious. Perhaps you can't imagine how wistfully I have looked for it : how,

FitzGerald's lived there for about ten years, from 1825 to 1835, when they removed to Boulge, near Woodbridge, the adjoining parish to Bredfield.

after a walk, my eyes have turned to the table, on coming into the room, to see it. Sometimes I have been tempted to be angry with you: but then I thought that I was sure you would come a hundred miles to serve me, though you were too lazy to sit down to a letter. I suppose that people who are engaged in serious ways of life, and are of well filled minds, don't think much about the interchange of letters with any anxiety: but I am an idle fellow, of a very ladylike turn of sentiment: and my friendships are more like loves, I think. Your letter found me reading the Merry Wives of Windsor too: I had been laughing aloud to myself: think of what another coat of happiness came over my former good mood. You are a dear good fellow, and I love you with all my heart and soul. The truth is I was anxious about this letter, as I really didn't know whether you were married or not—or ill—I fancied you might be anything, or anywhere. . . .

As to reading I have not done much. I am going through the Spectator: which people nowadays think a poor book: but I honour it much. What a noble kind of Journal it was! There is certainly a good deal of what may be called '*pill*,' but there is a great deal of wisdom, I believe, only it is couched so simply that people can't believe it to be real absolute wisdom. The little book you speak of I will order and buy. I heard from Thackeray, who is just upon the point of going to France; indeed he may be there by this time. I shall miss him much. . . .

Farewell my dearest fellow : you have made me very happy to hear from you : and to know that all is so well with you. Believe me to be your ever affectionate friend,

E. FITZGERALD.

*To W. B. Donne.*

[LONDON, 17 GLOUCESTER STREET, QUEEN SQUARE].  
1834.

DEAR DONNE,

. . . I have been buying two Shakespeares, a second and third Folio—the second Folio pleases me much : and I can read him with a greater zest now. One had need of a big book to remember him by : for he is lost to the theatre : I saw Mr. Vandenhoff play Macbeth in a sad way a few nights ago : and such a set of dirty ragamuffins as the rest were could not disgrace any country barn. Manfred I have missed by some chance : and I believe ‘it was all for the best’ as pious people say. The Theatre is bare beyond anything I ever saw : and one begins to hope that it has touched the bottom of its badness, and will rise again. I was looking the other day at Sir W. Davenant’s alteration of Macbeth : who dies, saying, ‘Farewell, vain world : and that which is vainest in’t, Ambition !’

Edgeworth, whom I think you remember at Cambridge, is come to live in town : and I see him often at the Museum. The want of books chiefly drove him from Italy : besides that he tells me he likes a

constant change of scenes and ideas, and would be always about if he could. He is a very original man I think, and throws out much to be chewed and digested: but he is deficient in some elements that must combine to govern my love and admiration. He has much imagination of head, but none of heart: perhaps these are absurd distinctions: but I am no hand at these definitions. His great study is metaphysics: and Kant is his idol. He is rather without company in London, and I wish much to introduce him to such men as I know: but most of your Apostolic party who could best exchange ideas with him are not in town. He is full of his subjects, and only wants opponents to tilt at. . . .

The life of Coleridge<sup>1</sup> is indeed an unsatisfactory thing: I believe that everybody thinks so. You seem to think that it is purposely unsatisfactory, or rather dissatisfactory: but it seems to me to proceed from a kind of enervation in De Quincey. However, I don't know how he supports himself in other writings. . . .

To fill up my letter I send you a sonnet of C. Lamb's, out of his Album Verses—please to like it—'Leisure.'

*To John Allen.*

MANCHESTER, *May* 23, 1835.

DEAR ALLEN,

I think that the fatal two months have elapsed, by which a letter shall become due to me from

<sup>1</sup> By De Quincey, in Tait's Magazine, Sept. 1834, etc.

you. Ask Mrs. Allen if this is not so. Mind, I don't speak this upbraidingly, because I know that you didn't know where I was. I will tell you all about this by degrees. In the first place, I staid at Mirehouse till the beginning of May, and then, going homeward, spent a week at Ambleside, which, perhaps you don't know, is on the shores of Winandermere. It was very pleasant there : though it was to be wished that the weather had been a little better. I have scarce done anything since I saw you but abuse the weather : but these four last days have made amends for all : and are, I hope, the beginning of summer at last. Alfred Tennyson staid with me at Ambleside : Spedding was forced to go home, till the last two days of my stay there. I will say no more of Tennyson than that the more I have seen of him, the more cause I have to think him great. His little humours and grumpinesses were so droll, that I was always laughing : and was often put in mind (strange to say) of my little unknown friend, Undine—I must however say, further, that I felt what Charles Lamb describes, a sense of depression at times from the overshadowing of a so much more lofty intellect than my own : this (though it may seem vain to say so) I never experienced before, though I have often been with much greater intellects : but I could not be mistaken in the universality of his mind ; and perhaps I have received some benefit in the now more distinct consciousness of my dwarfishness. I think that you should keep all this to yourself, my dear Allen : I

mean, that it is only to you that I would write so freely about myself. You know most of my secrets, and I am not afraid of entrusting even my vanities to so true a man. . . .

Pray, do not forget to say how the Freestone party are. My heart jumped to them, when I read in a guide book at Ambleside, that from Scawfell (a mountain in Westmoreland) you could see Snowdon. Perhaps you will not see the chain of ideas: but I suppose there was one, else I don't know how it was that I tumbled, as it were, from the very summit of Scawfell, upon the threshold of Freestone. The mind soon traverses Wales. I have not been reading very much—(as if you ever expected that I did!)—but I mean, not very much for me—some Dante, by the aid of a Dictionary: and some Milton—and some Wordsworth—and some Selections from Jeremy Taylor, Barrow, etc., compiled by Basil Montagu—of course you know the book: it is published by Pickering. I do not think that it is very well done: but it has served to delight, and, I think, to instruct me much. Do you know South? He must be very great, I think. It seems to me that our old Divines will hereafter be considered our Classics—(in Prose, I mean)—I am not aware that any other nations have such books. A single selection from Jeremy Taylor is fine: but it requires a skilful hand to put many detached bits from him together: for a common editor only picks out the flowery, metaphorical, morsels: and so rather cloys: and gives quite a



wrong estimate of the Author, to those who had no previous acquaintance with him : for, rich as Taylor's illustrations, and grotesque as his images, are, no one keeps a grander proportion : he never huddles illustration upon the matter so as to overlay it, nor crowds images too thick together : which these Selections might make one unacquainted with him to suppose. This is always the fault of Selections : but Taylor is particularly liable to injury on this score. What a man he is ! He has such a knowledge of the nature of man, and such powers of expressing its properties, that I sometimes feel as if he had had some exact counterpart of my own individual character under his eye, when he lays open the depths of the heart, or traces some sin to its root. The eye of his portrait expresses this keen intuition : and I think I should less like to have stood with a lie on my tongue before him, than before any other I know of. . . .

I beg you to give my best remembrances to your lady, who may be always sure that in all I wish of well for you, she is included : so that I take less care to make mention of her separately. . . .

WHERSTEAD, *July 4, 1835.*

DEAR ALLEN,

. . . My brother John's wife, always delicate, has had an attack this year, which she can never get over : and while we are all living in this house cheerfully, she lives in separate rooms, can scarcely speak to us,

or see us : and bears upon her cheek the marks of death. She has shewn great Christian dignity all through her sickness : was the only cheerful person when they supposed she could not live : and is now very composed and happy. You say sometimes how like things are to dreams : or, as I think, to the shifting scenes of a play. So does this place seem to me. All our family, except my mother, are collected here : all my brothers and sisters, with their wives, husbands, and children : sitting at different occupations, or wandering about the grounds and gardens, discoursing each their separate concerns, but all united into one whole. The weather is delightful : and when I see them passing to and fro, and hear their voices, it is like scenes of a play. I came here only yesterday. I have much to tell you of : I mean, much in my small way : I will keep all till I see you, for I don't know with what to begin in a letter. . . .

Edgeworth introduced me to his wife and sister-in-law, who are very handsome Spanish ladies, seemingly of excellent sense. The wife is the gentler, and more feminine : and the sister more regularly handsome, and vivacious. I think that he is a very remarkable man : and I like him more the more I see of him.

What you say of Tennyson and Wordsworth is not, I think, wholly just. I don't think that a man can turn himself so directly to the service of morality, unless naturally inclined : I think Wordsworth's is a natural bias that way. Besides, one must have labourers of different kinds in the vineyard of

morality, which I certainly look up to as the chief object of our cultivation: Wordsworth is first in the craft: but Tennyson does no little by raising and filling the brain with noble images and thoughts, which, if they do not direct us to our duty, purify and cleanse us from mean and vicious objects, and so prepare and fit us for the reception of the higher philosophy. A man might forsake a drunken party to read Byron's *Corsair*: and Byron's *Corsair* for Shelley's *Alastor*: and the *Alastor* for the *Dream of Fair Women* or the *Palace of Art*: and then I won't say that he would forsake these two last for anything of Wordsworth's, but his mind would be sufficiently refined and spiritualised to admit Wordsworth, and profit by him: and he might keep all the former imaginations as so many pictures, or pieces of music, in his mind. But I think that you will see Tennyson acquire all that at present you miss: when he has *felt* life, he will not die fruitless of instruction to man as he is. But I dislike this kind of criticism, especially in a letter. I don't know any one who has thought out any thing so little as I have. I don't see to any end, and should keep silent till I have got a little more, and that little better arranged.

I am sorry that all this page is filled with this botheration, when I have a thousand truer and better things that I want to talk to you about. I will write to you again soon. If you please to write (but consider it no call upon you, for the letter I have just got from you is a stock that will last me in comfort this

long while) I shall be at Wherstead all July—after that I know not where, but probably in Suffolk. Farewell, my best of fellows: there is no use saying how much I wish that all your sorrow will be turned to hope, and all your hope to joy. As far as we men can judge, you are worthy of all earthly happiness.

At the end of July, 1835, FitzGerald writes from Wherstead to Thackeray, who was then in Paris studying art:

‘My Father is determined to inhabit an empty house of his about fourteen miles off:<sup>1</sup> and we are very sorry to leave this really beautiful place. The other house has no great merit. So there is nothing now but packing up sofas, and pictures, and so on. I rather think that I shall be hanging about this part of the world all the winter: for my two sisters are about to inhabit this new house alone, and I cannot but wish to add my company to them now and then. . . .

‘My dear boy, God bless thee a thousand times over! When are we to see thee? How long are you going to be at Paris? What have you been doing? The drawing you sent me was very pretty. So you don’t like Raphael! Well, I am his inveterate admirer: and say, with as little affectation as I can, that his worst scrap fills my head more than all Rubens and Paul Veronese together—“the mind, the mind, Master Shallow!” You think this cant, I dare

<sup>1</sup> At Boulge.

say: but I say it truly, indeed. Raphael's are the only pictures that cannot be described: no one can get words to describe their perfection. Next to him, I retreat to the Gothic imagination, and love the mysteries of old chairs, Sir Rogers, etc. in which thou, my dear boy, art and shalt be a Raphael. To depict the true old English gentleman, is as great a work as to depict a Saint John, and I think in my heart I would rather have the former than the latter. There are plenty of pictures in London—some good Water-colours by Lewis—Spanish things. Two or three very vulgar portraits by Wilkie, at the Exhibition: and a big one of Columbus, half good, and half bad. There is always a spice of vulgarity about Wilkie. There is an Eastlake, but I missed it. Etty has boats full of naked backs as usual: but what they mean, I didn't stop to enquire. He has one picture, however, of the Bridge of Sighs in Venice, which is sublime: though I believe nobody saw it, or thought about it but myself.'

About the same time that FitzGerald went to Boulge, George Crabbe, the Poet's eldest son and biographer, was appointed to the Vicarage of the adjoining parish of Bredfield, and a friendship sprang up between them which was only terminated by Mr. Crabbe's death in 1857.

*To John Allen.*

BOULGE HALL, WOODBRIDGE,

*October 31, 1835.*

DEAR ALLEN,

I don't know what has come over me of late, that I have not written to you, nor any body else for several months. I am sure it is not from any decrease of affection towards you. I now begin a letter merely on the score of wanting one from you : to let me know how you are ; and Mrs. Allen too, especially. I hope to hear good news of her. Many things may have happened to you since I saw you : you may be a Bishop, for anything I know. I have been in Suffolk ever since I saw you. We are come to settle at this place : and I have been enjoying capital health in my old native air. I meant to have come to London for the winter : but my sisters are here, and I do not like to leave them. This parish is a very small one : it scarce contains fifty people : but that next to it, Bredfield, has more than four hundred : and some very poor indeed. We hope to be of some use : but the new Poor Laws have begun to be set afoot, and we don't know who is to stop in his cottage, or who is to go to the Workhouse. How much depends upon the issue of this measure ! I am no politician : but I fear that no political measure will ever adjust matters well between rich and poor. . . .

I have just read Southey's Life of Cowper ; that is

to say, the first Volume. It is not a book to be read by every man at the fall of the leaf. It is a fearful book. Have you read it? Southey hits hard at Newton in the dark ; which will give offence to many people : but I perfectly agree with him. At the same time, I think that Newton was a man of great power. Did you ever read his life by himself? Pray do, if you have not. His journal to his wife, written at sea, contains some of the most beautiful things I ever read : fine feeling in very fine English. . . .

Pray do write to me : a few lines soon are better than a three-decker a month hence : for I really want to know where and how you are : and so be a good boy for once in your life. Ever yours lovingly,

E. F. G.

*To W. B. Donne.*

LONDON, *March* [21], 1836.

DEAR DONNE,

. . . As to the sponsorship, I was sure that you and Mrs. Donne would receive my apology as I meant it. Indeed I wish with you that people would speak their minds more sincerely than it is the custom to do ; and recoin some of the every day compliments into a simpler form : but this is voted a stale subject, I believe. Anyhow, I will not preach to you who do not err : not to mention that I cannot by any means set up myself as any model of this virtue : whatever you may say to the contrary.

I have consulted my friend John Allen concerning your ancestor's sermons: he says that the book is scarce. . . . I think that you should be possessed of him by all means, considering that you are his descendant. Allen read much of him at the Museum, and has always spoken very highly of him. As to doctrine, I believe Jeremy Taylor has never been quite blameless; but then he wrote many folios instead of Donne's one: and I cannot help agreeing with Bayle that one of the disadvantages of much writing is, that a man is likely to contradict himself. If he does not *positively* do so, he may *seem* to do so, by using different expressions for the same thing, which expressions many readers may construe diversely: and this is especially likely to be the case with so copious and metaphorical a writer as Jeremy.

According to the principles contained in page 1 of this letter I will tell you that I thought the second volume of Southey<sup>1</sup> rather dull. But then I have only read it once; and I think that one is naturally impatient of all matter that does not absolutely touch Cowper: I mean, at the first reading; when one wants to know all about him. I dare say that afterwards I shall relish all the other relative matter, and contemporary history, which seems indeed well done. I am glad that you are so content with the book. We were all talking the other night of Basil Montagu's new Life of Bacon—have you read it? It is said to be very elaborate and tedious. A good life of Bacon

<sup>1</sup> Life of Cowper.



is much wanted. But perhaps it is as difficult to find a proper historian for him as for anyone that ever lived. But enough of grave matters. I have been very little to the Play: Vandenhoff's Iago I did not see: for indeed what I saw of him in other characters did not constrain me to the theatre to see his Iago.

. . . Spedding is just now furnishing chambers in Lincoln's Inn Fields: so that we may look on him as a fixture in London. He and I went to dine with Tennant at Blackheath last Thursday: there we met Edgeworth, who has got a large house at Eltham, and is lying in wait for pupils: I am afraid he will not find many. We passed a very delightful evening. Tennant is making interest for a school at Cambridge:<sup>1</sup> but I do not know if he is likely to succeed. And now I have told all the news I know, except that I hear that Sterling<sup>2</sup> is very ill with an attack on his chest, which keeps him from preaching: and that Trench has been in London. Neither of these men do I know, but I hear of them.

*To John Allen.*

[GELDESTONE HALL],

*January 1, 1837.*

DEAR ALLEN,

A merry new year to you and yours. How have you been since I saw you? . . .

<sup>1</sup> Probably the Perse Grammar School.

<sup>2</sup> See Carlyle's *Life of Sterling*, c. iv.

If you can find an old copy of Taylor's Holy Living and Dying cheap and clean at the same time, pray buy it for me. It is for my old friend Mrs. Schutz: and she would not allow me to give it her: so that I give you her directions. . . .

I am very deep in my Aristophanes, and find the Edition I bought quite sufficient for my wants. One requires a translation of him less than of any of the Greeks I have read, because his construction is so clear and beautiful. Only his long words, and local allusions, make him difficult, so far as I have seen. He has made me laugh heartily, and wonder: but as to your calling him greater than Aeschylus or Sophocles, I do not agree with you. I have read nothing else. What a nice quiet speech Charles Kemble made on quitting the stage: almost the best I can remember on such an occasion. Did Spedding hear him? My dear Allen, I should often wish to see you and him of an evening as heretofore at this season in London: but I don't see any likelihood of my coming till February at nearest. We live here the usual quiet country life: and now that the snow is so deep we are rather at a loss for exercise. It is very hard work toiling along the roads, and besides so blinding to the eyes. I take a spade, and scuppet<sup>1</sup> away the snow from the footpaths. . . .

Write to me at Boulge Hall, Woodbridge; for I think that the snows will be passable, and my sisters arrived there, before you write. There's an insinua-

<sup>1</sup> East Anglian for 'shovel.'

• tion for you. Make my remembrances to Mrs. Allen :  
and believe me

Yours ever most affectionately,

E. FITZGERALD.

[BOULGE HALL],

*Tuesday, January 10, 1837.*

MY DEAR ALLEN,

Another letter in so short a time will surprise you. My old Lady will be glad of a new edition of Jeremy Taylor, beside the old one. I remember you once gave me a very nice large duodecimo one : are these to be had, and cheap? It must have a good type, to suit old eyes. When you are possessed of these and the other books I begged you to ask for (except the Bacon which is for myself) do me one favour more : which is to book them per Coach at the White Horse, Piccadilly, directed to Mrs. Schutz, Gillingham Hall, Beccles. I should not have troubled you again, but that she, poor lady, is anxious to possess the books soon, as she never looks forward to living through a year : and she finds that Jeremy Taylor sounds a good note of preparation for that last hour which she looks upon as drawing nigh. I myself think she will live much longer : as she is wonderfully healthy for her time of life—seventy-six.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes I talk to her about you : and she loves you by report. You never grudge any trouble for your friends : but as this is a little act of kindness for an old and noble lady, I

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Schutz lived till December, 1847.

shall apologize no more for it. I will pay you all you disburse when I come to London.

I was made glad and sad last night in looking over some of your letters to me, ever since my stay at Tenby. I wonder within myself if we are changed since then. Do you remember that day when we sat upon that rock that runs out into the sea, and looked down into the clear water below? I must go to Tenby one of these days, and walk that old walk to Freestone. How well I remember what a quiet delight it was to walk out and meet you, when you were coming to stay a week with me once at my lodgings. . . .

And now, Sir, when you next go to the British Museum, look for a Poet named Vaughan. Do you know him? I read some fine sacred poems of his in a Collection of John Mitford's: he selects them from a book of Vaughan's called 'Silex Scintillans,' 1621. He seems to have great fancy and fervour and some deep thought. Yet many of the things are in the tricky spirit of that time: but there is a little Poem beginning 'They are all gone into a World of Light,' etc., which shews him to be capable of much. Again farewell, my dear Allen: give my best remembrances to Mrs. Allen, who must think that I write to you as if you were still a Bachelor. Indeed, I think you had best burn this letter suddenly, after you have read my commissions. Βρεκεκεκέξ κοάξ κοάξ. There—I believe I can construe that passage as well as Porson.

BOULGE HALL, WOODBRIDGE.

[1837.]

MY DEAR ALLEN,

Another commission in so short a time is rather too bad: but I know not to whom I can apply but to yourself: for our bookseller here could not get me what I want, seeing that I don't exactly know myself. The book I want is an Athenæus, but the edition I know not: and therefore I apply to you who know my taste. . . .

There is a small Cottage of my Father's close to the Lawn gates, where I shall fit up a room most probably. The garden I have already begun to work in. . . . Sometimes when I have sat dreaming about my own comforts I have thought to myself 'If Allen ever would come and stay with me some days at my Cottage if I live there'—but I think you would not: 'could not' you will say, and perhaps truly. . . .

I am reading Plutarch's Lives, which is one of the most delightful books I ever read. He must have been a Gentleman. My Aristophanes is nearly drained: that is, for the present first reading: for he will never be dry, apply as often as I may. My sisters are reading to me Lyell's Geology of an Evening: there is an admirable chapter illustrative of human error and prejudice retarding the truth, which will apply to all sciences, I believe: and, if people would consider it, would be more valuable than the geological knowledge, though that is very valuable, I

am sure. You see my reading is so small that I can soon enumerate all my books: and here you have them. . . .

[BOULGE HALL, WOODBRIDGE,  
21 April, 1837.]

DEAR ALLEN,

Have you done with my Doctor? If you have, will you send him to me here: Boulge Hall, Woodbridge, per Shannon Coach? You may book it at the Boar and Castle, Oxford Street, close by Hanway Passage. This is not far out of your beat. Perhaps I should not have sent for this book (it is Bernard Barton the Quaker who asks to read it) but that it gives me an excuse also to talk a little to you. Ah! I wish you were here to walk with me now that the warm weather is come at last. Things have been delayed but to be more welcome, and to burst forth twice as thick and beautiful. This is boasting however, and counting of the chickens before they are hatched: the East winds may again plunge us back into winter: but the sunshine of this morning fills one's pores with jollity, as if one had taken laughing gas. Then my house is getting on: the books are up in the bookshelves and do my heart good: then Stot-hard's Canterbury Pilgrims are over the fireplace: Shakespeare in a recess: how I wish you were here for a day or two! My sister is very well and cheerful and we have kept house very pleasantly together. My brother John's wife is, I fear, declining very fast:

it is very probable that I shall have to go and see her before long : though this is a visit I should gladly be spared. They say that her mind is in a very beautiful state of peacefulness. She *may* rally in the summer : but the odds are much against her. We shall lose a perfect Lady, in the complete sense of the word, when she dies.

I have been doing very little since I have been here : having accomplished only a few Idylls of Theocritus, which harmonize with this opening of the fine weather. Is all this poor occupation for a man who has a soul to account for? You think so certainly. My dear Allen, you, with your accustomed humility, asked me if I did not think you changed when I was last in London : never did I see man less so : indeed you stand on too sure a footing to change, I am persuaded. But you will not thank me for telling you these things : but I wish you to believe that I rejoice as much as ever in the thought of you, and feel confident that you will ever be to me the same best of friends that you ever have been. I owe more to you than to all others put together. I am sure, for myself, that the main difference in our opinions (considered so destructive to friendship by so many pious men) is a difference in the Understanding, not in the Heart : and though you may not agree entirely in this, I am confident that it will never separate you from me.

Mrs. Schutz is much delighted with the books you got for her : and still enquires if you hurt your

health in searching. This she does in all simplicity and kindness. She has been very ill all the winter: but I see by a letter I have just had from her that her mind is still cheerful and the same. The *mens sana in corpore sano* of old age is most to be wondered at.

*To Bernard Barton.*<sup>1</sup>

LONDON, *April*, 1838.

DEAR SIR,

John,<sup>2</sup> who is going down into Suffolk, will I hope take this letter and despatch it to you properly. I write more on account of this opportunity than of anything I have to say: for I am very heavy indeed with a kind of Influenza, which has blocked up most of my senses, and put a wet blanket over my brains. This state of head has not been improved by trying to get through a new book much in fashion—Carlyle's French Revolution—written in a German style. An Englishman writes of French Revolutions in a German style. People say the book is very deep: but it appears to me that the meaning *seems* deep from lying under mystical language. There is no repose, nor equable movement in it: all cut up into short sentences half reflective, half narrative; so that one labours through it as vessels do through what is called a short sea—small, contrary going waves caused

<sup>1</sup> The Quaker Poet of Woodbridge, whose daughter FitzGerald afterwards married.

<sup>2</sup> His eldest brother, John Purcell FitzGerald.



by shallows, and straits, and meeting tides, etc. I like to sail before the wind over the surface of an even-rolling eloquence, like that of Bacon or the Opium Eater. There is also pleasant fresh water sailing with such writers as Addison; is there any *pond*-sailing in literature? that is, drowsy, slow, and of small compass? Perhaps we may say, some Sermons. But this is only conjecture. Certainly Jeremy Taylor rolls along as majestically as any of them. We have had Alfred Tennyson here; very droll, and very wayward: and much sitting up of nights till two and three in the morning with pipes in our mouths: at which good hour we would get Alfred to give us some of his magic music, which he does between growling and smoking; and so to bed. All this has not cured my Influenza as you may imagine: but these hours shall be remembered long after the Influenza is forgotten.

I have bought scarce any new books or prints: and am not sorry to see that I want so little more. One large purchase I have made however, the *Biographie Universelle*, 53 Octavo Volumes. It contains everything, and is the very best thing of its kind, and so referred to by all historians, etc. Surely nothing is more pleasant than, when some name crosses one, to go and get acquainted with the owner of the name: and this *Biographie* really has found places for people whom one would have thought almost too small for so comprehensive a work—which sounds like a solecism, or Bull, does it not?

Now I must finish my letter: and a very stupid one it is. Here is a sentence of Warburton's that, I think, is very wittily expressed: though why I put it in here is not very discoverable. 'The Church, like the Ark of Noah, is worth saving: not for the sake of the unclean beasts that almost filled it, and probably made most noise and clamour in it, but for the little corner of rationality, that was as much distressed by the stink within, as by the tempest without.' Is it not good? It is out of his letters:<sup>1</sup> and the best thing in them. It is also the best thing in mine.

With kind remembrances to Miss Barton, believe me, Yours very affectionately

E. FITZGERALD.

[LONDON, 8 *June*, 1838.]

DEAR SIR,

I have just come home after accompanying my Father and Lusia to their starting place in the City: they are off for Suffolk for some days. I should have written to you by them: but I only just now found your letter on the mantelpiece: there it has lain some days during which I have been ruralising in Bedfordshire. Delicious has it been there: such weather, such meadows, to enjoy: and the Ouse still wandering along at his ease through pretty villages and vales of his own beautifying. I am much in love with

<sup>1</sup> Letters from an eminent Prelate to one of his Friends, 2nd ed.; 1809, p. 114, Letter XLVI.

Bedfordshire: it beats our part of the world: and I am sure you would like it. But here I am come back to London for another three weeks I suppose. . . .

I should much like to see your Platonic Brother. By your account he must have a very perfect mental organization: or, phrenologically speaking, he must be fully and equally furnished with the bumps of ideality and causality: which, as Bacon would say, are the two extreme poles on which the perfect 'sound and roundabout' intellect is balanced. A great deficiency of the causality bump causes me to break short in a long discussion which I meant to have favoured you with on this subject. I hope to meet your Brother one of these days: and to learn much from him. 'Guesses at Truth' I know very well: the two Brothers are the Hares: one a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge; the other Author of some Sermons which I think you had from me this winter. 'The Guesses' are well worth reading; nay, buying: very ingenious, with a good deal of pedantry and *onesidedness* (do you know this German word?), which, I believe, chiefly comes from the Trinity Fellow, who was a great pedant. I have just read Mrs. Austin's *Characteristics of Goethe*: which I will bring for you when I come. It is well worth knowing something of the mind of certainly a great man, and who has had more effect on his age than any one else. There is something almost fearful in the energy of his intellect. I wish indeed you were in London to see all these pictures: I am sure their greatness

would not diminish your pleasure in your own small collection. Why should it? There is as genuine a feeling of Nature in one of Nursey's sketches as in the Rubenses and Claudes here: and if that is evident, and serves to cherish and rekindle one's own sympathy with the world about one, the great end is accomplished. I do not know very much of Salvator: is he not rather a melodramatic painter? No doubt, very fine in his way. But Claude and the two Poussins are the great ideal painters of Landscape. Nature looks more steadfast in them than in other painters: all is wrought up into a quietude and harmony that seem eternal. This is also one of the mysterious charms in the Holy Families of Raffaele and of the early painters before him: the faces of the Madonnas are beyond the discomposure of passion, and their very draperies betoken an Elysian atmosphere where wind never blew. The best painter of the unideal Christ is, I think, Rembrandt: as one may see in his picture at the National Gallery, and that most wonderful one of our Saviour and the Disciples at Emmaus in the Louvre: there they sit at supper as they might have sat. Rubens and the Venetian Painters did neither one thing nor the other: their Holy figures are neither ideal nor real: and it is incongruous to see one of Rubens' brawny boors dressed up in the ideal red and blue drapery with which the early Italians clothed their figures of Christ. But enough of all this. I have seen Trench's Sabbath, and like it much: how do you like those

centuries of couplets, which are a German fashion? They are very much in the style of Quarles' Emblems, and other pithy epigrams of that time : only doubtless more artistically polished : perhaps profounder. There were some of the same kind in Blackwood some months ago. My paper is out : and I must again say Good Bye.

*To John Allen.*

LOWESTOFT, SUFFOLK.

*August 28 [1838.]*

DEAR ALLEN,

. . . When I left town I went into Bedfordshire and loitered about there and in Northamptonshire till ten days ago : when I came to join my sisters at this watering place on the Suffolk coast. I have been spending a very pleasant time ; but the worst of it is that the happier I am with Browne the sorrier I am to leave him. To put off this most evil day I have brought him out of Bedfordshire here : and here we are together in a pleasant lodging looking out upon the sea, teaching a great black dog to fetch and carry, playing with our neighbour's children, doing the first five propositions of Euclid (which *I* am teaching him !), shooting gulls on the shore, going out in boats, etc. All this must have an end : and as usual my pleasure in his stay is proportionably darkened by the anticipation of his going, and go he must in a very few days. Well, Carlyle told us that we are not to expect to be so happy. I have thought once or twice

how equally happy I was with you by the sea-side at Tenby. You and Browne (though in rather different ways) have certainly made me more happy than any men living. Sometimes I behave very ill to him, and am much ashamed of myself: but enough of this.

I have been to see two shew places lately: Boughton in Northamptonshire, a seat of the Duke of Buccleugh's, of the Versailles or Clare Hall style of building, in a very great park planted with the longest avenues I ever saw. But I thought the whole affair gloomy and deserted. There are some fine pictures: and two cartoons said to be by Raffaele: of which one is the vision of Ezechiel—I could not judge of their genuineness. The other place I have seen is Woburn Abbey—the Duke of Bedford's—a fine place but not much to my taste either. There are very fine pictures there of all kinds—one room hung with brilliant Canalettis—and altogether the pictures are better arranged and hung than in any place I have seen. But these kind of places have not much character in them: an old Squire's gable-ended house is much more English and aristocratic to my mind. I wish you had been with me and Browne at an old seat of Lord Dysart's, Helmingham in Suffolk, the other day. There is a portrait there of the present Lady Dysart in the prime of her beauty, by Sir Joshua. She is now 95.

. . . I am reading Pindar now and then: I don't much care about him I must say: though I suppose

he is the very best writer in the Poet Laureate style : that is, writing on occasion for so much money. I see great merits doubtless—a concise and simple way of saying great things, etc., but the subjects are not interesting enough to me. I suppose a good poet could have celebrated Dutch Sam<sup>1</sup> as having been descended from King William the Third just as well as Pindar glorifies his boxers with the mythical histories of the Æacidæ, Heraclidæ, etc. . . .

*To Frederic Tennyson.*

GELDESTONE HALL, BECCLES,

[April 10, 1839.]

MY DEAR TENNYSON,

I see in the last Atlas a notice of the first Concert of the Società Armonica—there were you to be found of course seated in black velvet waistcoat (for I hope you remember these are dress concerts) on one of the benches, grumbling at most of the music. You had a long symphony of Beethoven's in B flat—I forget how it goes, but doubtless there was much good in it. The overture to Egmont is also a fine thing. The Atlas (which is the best weekly critic of Music and all other things that I know of) gives great κῦδος to the Società Armonica: especially this season, as the Directors seem determined to replace Donizetti and Mercadante by Mozart and Rossini, in the vocal

<sup>1</sup> A noted prize fighter.

department. A good change doubtless. I hear no music now : except that for the last week I have been staying with Spring Rice's mother-in-law Mrs. Frere,<sup>1</sup> one of the finest judges of Music I know. She was a very fine singer : but her voice fails now. We used to look over the score of Don Giovanni together, and many a mystery and mastery of composition did she shew me in it. Now then there is enough of Music. I wish you would write me a letter, which you can do now and then if you will take it into your head, and let me know how you and my dear old Morton are, and whether you dine and smoke together as heretofore. If you won't write, tell him to do so : or make up a letter between you. What new pictures are there to be seen? Have you settled yet whether spirit can exist separately from matter? Are you convinced of the truth of Murphy's Almanac this year? Have you learned any more Astronomy? I live on in a very seedy way, reading occasionally in books which every one else has gone through at school : and what I do read is just in the same way as ladies work : to pass the time away. For little remains in my head. I dare say you think it very absurd that an idle man like me should poke about here in the country, when I might be in London seeing my friends : but such is the humour of the beast. But it is not always to be the case : I shall see your good physiognomy one of these days, and smoke one of your cigars, and listen

<sup>1</sup> Widow of Serjeant Frere, Master of Downing College, Cambridge.



to Morton saying fine and wild things, 'startling the dull ear of night' with paradoxes that perhaps are truisms in the world where spirits exist independent of matter. You two men have made great commotion in my mind, and left your marks upon it, I can tell you: more than most of the books I read. What is Alfred about, and where is he? Present my homage to him. Don't you rather rejoice in the pickle the King of the French finds himself in? I don't know why, but I have a sneaking dislike of the old knave. How he must pine to summon up Talleyrand's Ghost, and what a Ghost it must be, wherever it is!

*To John Allen.*

[28 April, 1839.]

MY DEAR ALLEN,

Some one from this house is going to London: and I will try and write you some lines now in half an hour before dinner: I am going out for the evening to my old lady who teaches me the names of the stars, and other chaste information.<sup>1</sup> You see, Master John Allen, that if I do not come to London (and I have no thought of going yet) and you will not write, there is likely to be an end of our communication: not by the way that I am never to go to London again: but not just yet. Here I live with tolerable content: perhaps with as much as most people arrive at, and what if one were properly grateful one would perhaps

<sup>1</sup> Probably Mrs. Schutz of Gillingham Hall, already mentioned.

call perfect happiness. Here is a glorious sunshiny day: all the morning I read about Nero in Tacitus lying at full length on a bench in the garden: a nightingale singing, and some red anemones eyeing the sun manfully not far off. A funny mixture all this: Nero, and the delicacy of Spring: all very human however. Then at half past one lunch on Cambridge cream cheese: then a ride over hill and dale: then spudding up some weeds from the grass: and then coming in, I sit down to write to you, my sister winding red worsted from the back of a chair, and the most delightful little girl in the world chattering incessantly. So runs the world away. You think I live in Epicurean ease: but this happens to be a jolly day: one isn't always well, or tolerably good, the weather is not always clear, nor nightingales singing, nor Tacitus full of pleasant atrocity. But such as life is, I believe I have got hold of a good end of it. . . .

Give my love to Thackeray from your upper window across the street.<sup>1</sup> So he has lost a little child: and moreover has been sorry to do so. Well, good-bye my dear John Allen: Auld Lang Syne. My kind regards to your Lady.

Down to the vale this water steers,  
How merrily it goes:  
'T will murmur on a thousand years,  
And flow as now it flows.<sup>2</sup>

E. F. G.

GELDESTONE HALL, BECCLES.

<sup>1</sup> Coram Street.

<sup>2</sup> Wordsworth, *The Fountain*, ed. 1800.

*To Bernard Barton.*BEDFORD, *July 24, 1839.*

DEAR BARTON,

. . . I have brought down here with me Sydney Smith's Works, now first collected: you will delight in them: I shall bring them to Suffolk when I come: and it will not be long, I dare say, before I come, as there is to be rather a large meeting of us at Boulge this August. I have got the fidgets in my right arm and hand (how the inconvenience redoubles as one mentions it)—do you know what the fidgets are?—a true ailment, though perhaps not a dangerous one. Here I am again in the land of old Bunyan—better still in the land of the more perennial Ouse, making many a fantastic winding and going much out of his direct way to fertilize and adorn. Fuller supposes that he lingers thus in the pleasant fields of Bedfordshire, being in no hurry to enter the more barren fens of Lincolnshire. So he says. This house is just on the edge of the town: a garden on one side skirted by the public road which again is skirted by a row of such Poplars as only the Ouse knows how to rear—and pleasantly they rustle now—and the room in which I write is quite cool and opens into a greenhouse which opens into said garden: and it's all deuced pleasant. For in half an hour I shall seek my Piscator,<sup>1</sup> and we shall go to a Village<sup>2</sup> two miles off and fish, and have tea in a pot-house, and so walk home.

<sup>1</sup> William Browne.<sup>2</sup> Probably Bletsoe.

For all which idle ease I think I must be damned. I begin to have dreadful suspicions that this fruitless way of life is not looked upon with satisfaction by the open eyes above. One really ought to dip for a little misery: perhaps however all this ease is only intended to turn sour by and bye, and so to poison one by the very nature of self-indulgence. Perhaps again as idleness is so very great a trial of virtue, the idle man who keeps himself tolerably chaste, etc., may deserve the highest reward; the more idle, the more deserving. Really I don't jest: but I don't propound these things as certain.

There is a fair review of Shelley in the new Edinburgh: saying the truth on many points where the truth was not easily enunciated, as I believe.

Now, dear sir, I have said all I have to say: and Carlyle says, you know, it is dangerous to attempt to say more. So farewell for the present: if you like to write soon, direct to the Post Office, Bedford: if not, I shall soon be at Woodbridge to anticipate the use of your pen.

HALVERSTOWN,<sup>1</sup> *Sunday, Oct. 20, [1839].*

MY DEAR SIR,

I am very glad that you lifted yourself at last from your mahogany desk, and took such a trip as you describe in your last letter. I don't think you could have made a better in the same given space of time. It is some years since I have seen the Castle

<sup>1</sup> Where FitzGerald's uncle, Mr. Peter Purcell, lived.

at Windsor, except from Eton. The view from the Terrace is the noblest I know of, taking it with all its associations together. Gray's Ode rises up into the mind as one looks around—does it not?—a sure proof that, however people may condemn certain conceits and expressions in the poem, the spirit of it is genuine. 'Ye distant spires, ye antique towers'—very large and noble, like the air that breathes upon one as one looks down along the view. My brother John told me he thought the Waterloo gallery very fine: the portraits by Sir Thomas almost as fine as Vandyke. You saw them, of course. You say nothing of having seen the National Gallery in London: indeed I rather fear it is closed these two months. This is a great loss to you: the Rubens landscape you would never have forgot. Thank you for the picture of my dear old Bredfield which you have secured for me: it is most welcome. Poor Nursey once made me a very pretty oil sketch of it: but I gave it to Mr. Jenney. By all means have it engraved for the pocket book: it is well worthy. Some of the tall ash trees about it used to be visible at sea: but I think their topmost branches are decayed now. This circumstance I put in, because it will tell in your verse illustration of the view. From the road before the lawn, people used plainly to see the topmasts of the men-of-war lying in Hollesley bay during the war. I like the idea of this: the old English house holding up its enquiring chimneys and weathercocks (there is great physiognomy in weathercocks) toward the far-

off sea, and the ships upon it. How well I remember when we used all to be in the Nursery, and from the window see the hounds come across the lawn, my Father and Mr. Jenney in their hunting caps, etc., with their long whips—all Daguerretyped into the mind's eye now—and that is all. Perhaps you are not civilised enough to know what Daguerreotype is: no more do I well. We were all going on here as merrily as possible till this day week, when my Piscator got an order from his Father to go home directly. So go he would the day after. I wanted to go also: but they would have me stay here ten days more. So I stay: I suppose I shall be in London toward the end of this week however: and then it will not be long before I pay you a visit. . . .

I have gone through Homer's Iliad—sorry to have finished it. The accounts of the Zoolu people, with Dingarn their king, etc.,<sup>1</sup> give one a very good idea of the Homeric heroes, who were great brutes: but superior to the Gods who governed them: which also has been the case with most nations. It is a lucky thing that God made Man, and that Man has not to make God: we should fare badly, judging by the specimens already produced—Frankenstein Monster Gods, formed out of the worst and rottenest scraps of humanity—gigantic—and to turn destructively upon their Creators—

‘But be ye of good cheer! I have overcome the world—’  
So speaks a gentle voice.

<sup>1</sup> By Captain Allen F. Gardiner, R.N., 1836.

I found here a Number of Tait's Magazine for August last, containing a paper on Southey, Wordsworth, etc., by De Quincey. Incomplete and disproportioned like his other papers: but containing two noble passages: one, on certain years of his own Life when Opium shut him out from the world; the other, on Southey's style: in which he tells a truth which is obvious, directly it is told. Tait seems to be very well worth a shilling a month: that is the price of him, I see. You have bought Carlyle's Miscellanies, have you not? I long to get them: but one must wait till they are out of print before the Dublin booksellers shall have heard of them. Now here is really a very long letter, and what is more, written with a pen of my own mending—more consolatory to me than to you. Mr. Macnish's inscription<sup>1</sup> for Milton is—

His lofty spirit was the home  
Of inspirations high,  
A mighty temple whose great dome  
Was hidden in the sky.

Who Mr. Macnish is, I don't know. Didn't he write some Essays on Drunkenness once? or on Dreams?

<sup>1</sup> In an article in Blackwood's Magazine for April 1830, p. 632, headed Poetical Portraits by a Modern Pythagorean. FitzGerald either quoted the lines from memory, or intentionally altered them. They originally stood,

His spirit was the home  
Of aspirations high;  
A temple, whose huge dome  
Was hidden in the sky.

Robert Macnish, LL.D., was the author of *The Anatomy of Drunkenness* and *The Philosophy of Sleep*.

Farewell for the present, my dear Sir. We shall soon shake hands again. Ever yours,

E. FITZGERALD.

*To John Allen.*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE,  
[4 April, 1840.]

MY DEAR ALLEN,

. . . The country is now showing symptoms of greenness and warmth. Yesterday I walked (not a common thing for me) eleven miles; partly over a heath, covered with furze bushes just come out into bloom, whose odour the fresh wind blew into my face. Such a day it was, only not so warm as when you and I used to sit on those rocks overlooking the sea at Tenby, just eight years ago. I am afraid you are growing too good a Christian for me, Master Allen, if you know what I mean by that. Don't be alarmed however. I have just read the first number of Dickens' new work<sup>1</sup>: it does not promise much, I think.

Love to all Coram Street.<sup>2</sup>

*To Frederic Tennyson.*

THE CORPORATE TOWN OF BEDFORD,  
June 7, 1840.

DEAR FREDERIC,

Your letter dated from the Eternal City on the 15th of May reached me here two days ago. Per-

<sup>1</sup> Master Humphrey's Clock.

<sup>2</sup> Where Thackeray was then also living.



haps you have by this time left Naples to which you bid me direct: or will have left it by the time my letter gets there. . . . Our letters are dated from two very different kinds of places: but perhaps equally well suited to the genius of the two men. For I am becoming more hebete every hour: and have not even the ambition to go up to London all this spring to see the Exhibitions, etc. I live in general quietly at my brother-in-law's in Norfolk<sup>1</sup> and I look with tolerable composure on vegetating there for some time to come, and in due time handing out my eldest nieces to waltz, etc., at the County Balls. People affect to talk of this kind of life as very beautiful and philosophical: but I don't: men ought to have an ambition to stir, and travel, and fill their heads and senses: but so it is. Enough of what is now generally called the subjective style of writing. This word has made considerable progress in England during the year you have been away, so that people begin to fancy they understand what it means. I have been striving at it, because it is a very *sine qua non* condition in a book which I have just been reading, Eastlake's translation of Goethe's Theory of Colours. I recommend it to you, when you can get hold of it. Come back to England quick and read my copy. Goethe is all in opposition to Newton: and reduces the primitive colours to two. Whewell, I believe, does not patronise it: but it is certainly very Baconically put together. While you are wandering among

<sup>1</sup> At Geldestone Hall, near Beccles.

ruins, waterfalls, and temples, and contemplating them as you sit in your lodgings, I poke about with a book and a colour-box by the side of the river Ouse—quiet scenery enough—and make horrible sketches. The best thing to me in Italy would be that you are there. But I hope you will soon come home and install yourself again in Mornington Crescent. I have just come from Leamington: while there, I met Alfred by chance: we made two or three pleasant excursions together: to Stratford upon Avon and Kenilworth, etc. Don't these names sound very thin amid your warm southern nomenclature? But I'll be bound you would be pleased to exchange all your fine burnt up places for a look at a Warwickshire pasture every now and then during these hot days. . . .

The sun shines very bright, and there is a kind of bustle in these clean streets, because there is to be a grand True Blue dinner in the town Hall. Not that I am going: in an hour or two I shall be out in the fields rambling alone. I read Burnet's History—*ex pede Herculem*. Well, say as you will, there is not, and never was, such a country as Old England—never were there such a Gentry as the English. They will be the distinguishing mark and glory of England in History, as the Arts were of Greece, and War of Rome. I am sure no travel would carry me to any land so beautiful, as the good sense, justice, and liberality of my good countrymen make this. And I cling the closer to it, because I feel that we are going down the hill, and shall perhaps live ourselves

to talk of all this independence as a thing that has been. To none of which you assent perhaps. At all events, my paper is done, and it is time to have done with this solemn letter. I can see you sitting at a window that looks out on the bay of Naples, and Vesuvius with a faint smoke in the distance: a half-naked man under you cutting up watermelons, etc. Haven't I seen it all in Annuals, and in the Ballet of Massaniello long ago?

*To John Allen.*

BOULGE HALL,

*Sunday, July 12/40.*

MY DEAR JOHN ALLEN,

I wrote a good bit of a letter to you three weeks ago: but, being non-plussed suddenly, tore it up. Lusia says she has had a letter from Mrs. Allen, telling how you had a troublesome and even dangerous passage to Tenby: but that there you arrived at last. And there I suppose you are. The *veteris vestigia flammæ*, or old pleasant recollections of our being together at that place make me begin another sheet to you. I am almost convicted in my own mind of ingratitude for not having travelled long ago to Pembrokeshire, to show my most kind friends of Freestone that I remember their kindness, and that they made my stay so pleasant as to make me wish to test their hospitality again. Nothing but

my besetting indolence (the strongest thing about me) could have prevented my doing this. I should like much to see Mr. and Mrs. Allen again, and Carew Castle, and walk along the old road traversed by you and me several times between Freestone and Tenby. Does old Penelly Top stand where it did, faintly discernible in these rainy skies? Do you sit ever upon that rock that juts out by Tenby harbour, where you and I sat one day seven years ago, and quoted G. Herbert? Lusia tells me also that nice Mary Allen is to be married to your brother—Charles, I think. She is really one of the pleasantest remembrances of womanhood I have. I suppose she sits still in an upper room, with an old turnip of a watch (tell her I remember this) on the table beside her as she reads wholesome books. As I write, I remember different parts of the house and the garden, and the fields about. Is it absolutely *that* Mary Allen that is to become Mrs. Charles Allen? Pray write, and let me hear of this from yourself. Another thing also: are you to become our Rector in Sussex? This is another of Lusia's scandals. I rather hope it is true: but not quite. Lusia is pretty well: better, I think, than when she first came down from London. . . . She makes herself tolerably happy down here: and wishes to exert herself: which is the highest wish a FitzGerald can form. I go on as usual, and in a way that needs no explanation to you: reading a little, drawing a

little, playing a little, smoking a little, etc. I have got hold of Herodotus now: the most interesting of all Historians. But I find the disadvantage of being so ill-grounded and bad a scholar: I can get at the broad sense: but all the delicacies (in which so much of the beauty and character of an author lie) escape me sadly. The more I read, the more I feel this. But what does it all signify? Time goes on, and we get older; and whether my idleness comprehends the distinctions of the 1st and 2nd Aorist will not be noted much in the Book of Life, either on this or the other side of the leaf. Here is a letter written on this Sunday Night, July 12, 1840. And it shall go to-morrow. My kind remembrances to Mrs. Allen: and (I beg you to transmit them) to all my fore-known friends at Freestone. And believe me yours now as I have been and hope to be ever affectionately,

E. FITZGERALD.

I shall be here till the end of the month.

N.B. I am growing bald.

BOULGE, *July 25/40.*

MY DEAR FELLOW,

Many thanks for your kind long letter. It brought me back to the green before the house at Freestone, and the old schoolroom in it. I have always felt within myself that if ever I did go again to Freestone, I should puzzle myself and every one

else by bringing back old associations among existing things : I should have felt awkward. The place remains quite whole in my mind : Anne Allen's damask cheek forming part of the colouring therein. I remember a little well somewhere in the woods about a mile from the house : and those faint reports of explosions from towards Milford, etc., which we used to hear when we all walked out together. You are to thank Mary Allen for her kind wishes : and tell her she need not doubt that I wish her all good things. I enclose you as you see a little drawing of a Suffolk farm house close here : copied from a sketch of poor Mr. Nursey. If you think it worth giving to Mary Allen, do : it seems, and perhaps is, very namby-pamby to send this : but she and I used to talk of drawings together : and this will let her know that I go on just the same as I did eight years ago. N.B. It is not intended as a nuptial present.

Now, you need not answer this letter : as you have done remarkably well already. I am living (did I tell you this before?) at a little cottage close by the lawn gates, where I have my books, a barrel of beer which I tap myself (can you tap a barrel of beer?), and an old woman to do for me. I have also just concocted two gallons of Tar water under the directions of Bishop Berkeley : it is to be bottled off this very day after a careful skimming : and then drunk by those who can and will. It is to be tried first on my old woman : if she survives,

I am to begin : and it will then gradually spread into the Parish, through England, Europe, etc., 'as the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake.' Good people here are much scandalized at Thirlwall's being made a Bishop: Isabella<sup>1</sup> brought home a report from a clergyman that Thirlwall had so bad a character at Trinity that many would not associate with him. I do not think however that I would have made him Bishop: I am all for good and not great Bishops. Old Evans<sup>2</sup> would have done better. I am become an Oxford High Church Divine after Newman: whose sermons are the best that ever were written in my judgment. Cecil I have read: and liked for his good sense. Is the croft at Tenby still green: and does Mary Allen take a turn on it in a riding habit as of old? And I remember a ravine on the horn of the bay opposite the town where the sea rushes up. I mean as you go on past the croft. I can walk there as in a dream. I see Thackeray's book<sup>3</sup> announced as about to be published, and I hear Spedding has written a Review of Carlyle's Revolution in the Edinburgh. I don't know a book more certain to evaporate away from posterity than that, except it be supported by his other works. Parts may perhaps be found two hundred years hence and translated into Erse by some inverted Macpherson. 'These things seem strange,' says Herodotus,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> His sister.

<sup>2</sup> R. W. Evans, Vicar of Heversham.

<sup>3</sup> The Paris Sketch Book.

<sup>4</sup> V. 9.

γένοιτο δ' ἂν πᾶν ἐν τῷ μακρῷ χρόνῳ. Herodotus makes few general assertions : so when he does make them, they tell. I could talk more to you, but my paper is out. John Allen, I rejoice in you.

*To Bernard Barton.*

BEDFORD, Aug. 31/40.

DEAR SIR,

I duly received your letter. I am just returned from staying three days at a delightful Inn by the river Ouse, where we always go to fish. I dare say I have told you about it before. The Inn is the cleanest, the sweetest, the civillest, the quietest, the liveliest, and the cheapest that ever was built or conducted. Its name, the Falcon of Bletsoe. On one side it has a garden, then the meadows through which winds the Ouse : on the other, the public road, with its coaches hurrying on to London, its market people halting to drink, its farmers, horsemen, and foot travellers. So, as one's humour is, one can have whichever phase of life one pleases : quietude or bustle ; solitude or the busy hum of men : one can sit in the principal room with a tankard and a pipe and see both these phases at once through the windows that open upon either. But through all these delightful places they talk of leading railroads : a sad thing, I am sure : quite impolitic. But Mammon is blind.

I went a week ago to see Luton, Lord Bute's



place ; filled with very fine pictures, of which I have dreamt since. It is the gallery in England that I most wish to see again : but I by no means say it is the most valuable. A great many pictures seemed to me misnamed—especially Correggio has to answer for some he never painted.

I am thinking of going to Naseby for a little while : after which I shall return here : and very likely find my way back to Norfolk before long. At all events, the middle of October will find me at Boulge, unless the Fates are very contrary.

*To Samuel Laurence.*<sup>1</sup>

BOULGE HALL, WOODBRIDGE,  
Nov. 9/40.

DEAR LAURENCE,

. . . We have had much rain which has hindered the sporting part of our company : but has not made

<sup>1</sup> The artist, of whom Spedding wrote to Thompson in 1842 when he wished them to become acquainted, 'There is another man whom I have asked to come a little after 10 ; because you do not know him, and mutual self introductions are a nuisance. If however he should by any misfortune of mine arrive before I do, know that he is Samuel Laurence, a portrait painter of real genius, of whom during the last year I have seen a great deal and boldly pronounce him to be worthy of all good men's love. He is one of the men of whom you feel certain that they will never tire you, and never do anything which you will wish they had not done. His advantages of education have been such as it has pleased God (who was never particular about giving his favourite children a good education) to send him. But he has sent him what really does as well or better—the clearest eye and the truest heart ; and it may be said of him as of Sir Peter that

Nature had but little clay  
Like that of which she moulded him.'

much difference to me. One or two sunshiny days have made me say within myself, 'how felicitously and at once would Laurence hit off an outline in this clear atmosphere.' For this fresh sunlight is not a mere dead medium of light, but is so much vital champagne both to sitter and to artist. London will become worse as it becomes bigger, which it does every hour.

I don't see much prospect of my going to Cumberland this winter: though I should like to go snipe-shooting with that literary shot James Spedding. Do you mean to try and go up Skiddaw? You will get out upon it from your bedroom window: so I advise you to begin before you go down to breakfast. There is a mountain called Dod, which has felt me upon its summit. It is not one of the highest in that range. Remember me to Grisedale Pike; a very well-bred mountain. If you paint — put him not only in a good light, but to leeward of you in a strong current of air. . . .

Farewell for the present.

*To F. Tennyson.*

LONDON, *Jan.* 16, 1841.

DEAR FREDERIC,

I have just concluded, with all the throes of imprudent pleasure, the purchase of a large picture by Constable, of which, if I can continue in the mood, I will enclose you a sketch. It is very good: but

how you and Morton would abuse it! Yet this, being a sketch, escapes some of Constable's faults, and might escape some of your censures. The trees are not splashed with that white sky-mud, which (according to Constable's theory) the Earth scatters up with her wheels in travelling so briskly round the sun; and there is a dash and felicity in the execution that gives one a thrill of good digestion in one's room, and the thought of which makes one inclined to jump over the children's heads in the streets. But if you could see my great enormous Venetian Picture you would be extonished. Does the thought ever strike you, when looking at pictures in a house, that you are to run and jump at one, and go right through it into some behind-scene world on the other side, as Harlequins do? A steady portrait especially invites one to do so: the quietude of it ironically tempts one to outrage it: one feels it would close again over the panel, like water, as if nothing had happened. That portrait of Spedding, for instance, which Laurence has given me: not swords, nor cannon, nor all the Bulls of Bashan butting at it, could, I feel sure, discompose that venerable forehead. No wonder that no hair can grow at such an altitude: no wonder his view of Bacon's virtue is so rarefied that the common consciences of men cannot endure it. Thackeray and I occasionally amuse ourselves with the idea of Spedding's forehead: we find it somehow or other in all things,

just peering out of all things: you see it in a milestone, Thackeray says. He also draws the forehead rising with a sober light over Mont Blanc, and reflected in the lake of Geneva. We have great laughing over this. The forehead is at present in Pembrokeshire, I believe: or Glamorgan-shire: or Monmouthshire: it is hard to say which. It has gone to spend its Christmas there.

[A water-colour sketch of Constable's picture.]

This you see is a sketch of my illustrious new purchase. The two animals in the water are cows: that on the bank a dog: and that in the glade of the wood a man or woman as you may choose. I can't say my drawing gives you much idea of my picture, except as to the composition of it: and even that depends on the colour and disposition of light and shade. The effect of the light breaking under the trees is very beautiful in the original: but this can only be given in water-colours on thick paper, where one can scratch out the lights. One would fancy that Constable had been looking at that fine picture of Gainsborough's in the National: the Watering Place: which is superior, in my mind, to all the Claudes there. But this is perhaps because I am an Englishman and not an Italian.

*To W. H. Thompson.*<sup>1</sup>

[18th Feb. 1841.]

\* BOULGE HALL, WOODBRIDGE.

\* Doesn't this name express heavy clay?<sup>2</sup>

MY DEAR THOMPSON,

I wish you would write to me ten lines to say how you are. You are, I suppose, at Cambridge: and I am buried (with all my fine parts, what a shame!) here: so that I hear of nobody—except that Spedding and I abuse each other about Shakespeare occasionally: a subject on which you must know that he has lost his conscience, if ever he had any. For what did Dr. Allen . . . say when he felt Spedding's head? Why, that all his bumps were so tempered that there was no merit in his sobriety—then what would have been the use of a Conscience to him? Q. E. D.

Since I saw you, I have entered into a decidedly agricultural course of conduct: read books about composts, etc. I walk about in the fields also where the people are at work, and the more dirt accumulates on my shoes, the more I think I know. Is not this all funny? Gibbon might elegantly compare my retirement from the cares and splendours of the world to that of Diocletian. Have you read Thackeray's little book—the second Funeral of Napoleon? If

<sup>1</sup> Afterwards Greek Professor and Master of Trinity College, Cambridge.

<sup>2</sup> In a letter to me written in August 1881 he says, "Tomorrow comes down my Italian sister to Boulge (Malebolge?), and I await her visits here."

not, pray do ; and buy it, and ask others to buy it : as each copy sold puts  $7\frac{1}{2}d.$  in T.'s pocket : which is very empty just now, I take it. I think this book is the best thing he has done. What an account there is of the Emperor Nicholas in Kemble's last Review,<sup>1</sup> the last sentence of it (which can be by no other man in Europe but Jack himself) has been meat and drink to me for a fortnight. The electric eel at the Adelaide Gallery is nothing to it. Then Edgeworth fires away about the Odes of Pindar,<sup>2</sup> and Donne is very æsthetic about Mr. Hallam's Book.<sup>3</sup> What is the meaning of 'exegetical'? Till I know that, how can I understand the Review?

Pray remember me kindly to Blakesley, Heath, and such other potentates as I knew in the days before they 'assumed the purple.' I am reading Gibbon, and see nothing but this d——d colour before my eyes. It changes occasionally to bright yellow, which is (is it?) the Imperial colour in China, and also the antithesis to purple (*vide* Coleridge and Eastlake's Goethe)—even as the Eastern and Western Dynasties are antithetical, and yet, by the law of extremes, potentially the same (*vide* Coleridge, etc.) Is this æsthetic? is this exegetical? How glad I shall be if you can assure me that it is. But, nonsense apart and begged-pardon-for, pray write me a

<sup>1</sup> The British and Foreign Review, 1840, Art. on 'The Present Government of Russia,' pp. 543-591.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 510-542.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 355, etc., Art. on 'Introduction to the Literature of Europe.'

line to say how you are, directing to this pretty place. 'The soil is in general a moist and retentive clay : with a subsoil or pan of an adhesive silicious brick formation : adapted to the growth of wheat, beans, and clover—requiring however a summer fallow (as is generally stipulated in the lease) every fourth year, etc.' This is not an unpleasing style on Agricultural subjects—nor an uncommon one.

*To F. Tennyson.*

BOULGE HALL, WOODBRIDGE.

[21 March, 1841.]

DEAR FREDERIC TENNYSON,

I was very glad indeed to get a letter from you this morning. You here may judge, by the very nature of things, that I lose no time in answering it. I did not receive your Sicilian letter : and have been for a year and half quite ignorant of what part of the world you were in. I supposed you were alive : though I don't quite know why. *De non existentibus et non apparentibus eadem est ratio.* I heard from Morton three months ago : he was then at Venice : very tired of it : but lying on such luxurious sofas that he could not make up his mind to move from them. He wanted to meet you : or at all events to hear of you. I wrote to him, but could tell him nothing. I have also seen Alfred once or twice since you have

gone: he is to be found in certain conjunctions of the stars at No. 8 Charlotte Street. . . . All our other friends are in statu quo: Spedding residing calmly in Lincoln's Inn Fields: at the Colonial all day: at the play and smoking at night: occasionally to be found in the Edinburgh Review. Pollock and the Lawyer tribe travel to and fro between their chambers in the Temple and Westminster Hall: occasionally varying their travels, when the Chancellor chooses, to the Courts in Lincoln's Inn. As to me, I am fixed here where your letter found me: very rarely going to London: and staying there but a short time when I do go. You, Morton, Spedding, Thackeray, and Alfred, were my chief solace there: and only Spedding is now to be found. Thackeray lives in Paris.

From this you may judge that I have no such sights to tell of as you have. Neither do *mortaletti* ever go off at Boulogne: which is perhaps not to be regretted. Day follows day with unvaried movement: there is the same level meadow with geese upon it always lying before my eyes: the same pollard oaks: with now and then the butcher or the washerwoman trundling by in their carts. As you have lived in Lincolnshire I will not further describe Suffolk. No new books (except a perfectly insane one of Carlyle,<sup>1</sup> who is becoming very obnoxious now that he is become popular), nor new pictures, no music. A game at picquet of two hours duration closes each day. But

<sup>1</sup> On Hero Worship.



for that I might say with Titus — *perdidi diem*. Oh Lord! all this is not told you that you may admire my philosophic quietude, etc.; pray don't think that. I should travel like you if I had the eyes to see that you have: but, as Goethe says, the eye can but see what it brings with it the power of seeing. If anything I had seen in my short travels had given me any new ideas worth having I should travel more: as it is, I see your Italian lakes and cities in the Picturesque Annuals as well as I should in the reality. You have a more energetic, stirring, acquisitive, and capacious soul. I mean all this seriously, believe me: but I won't say any more about it. Morton also is a capital traveller: I wish he would keep notes of what he sees, and publish them one day.

I must however tell you that I am becoming a Farmer! Can you believe in this? I hope we shall both live to laugh over it together. When do you mean to come back? Pray do not let so long a time elapse again without writing to me: never mind a long letter: write something to say you are alive and where. Rome certainly is nearer England than Naples: so perhaps you are coming back. Bring Morton back with you. I will then go to London and we will smoke together and be as merry as sandboys. We will all sit under the calm shadow of Spedding's forehead. People talk of a war with America. Poor dear old England! she makes a gallant shew in her old age. If Englishmen are to

travel, I am glad that such as you are abroad—good specimens of Englishmen : with the proper *fierté* about them. The greater part are poor wretches that go to see oranges growing, and hear Bellini for eighteen-pence. I hope the English are as proud and disagreeable as ever. What an odd thing that the Italians like such martial demonstrations as you describe—not at all odd, probably—their spirit begins and goes off in noise and smoke. It is like all other grand aspirations. So ——’s Epics crepitate in Sonnets. All I ask of you is to write no Sonnets on what you see or hear—no sonnets can sound well after Daddy Wordsworth, ——, etc., who have now succeeded in quite spoiling one’s pleasure in Milton’s—and they are heavy things. The words ‘subjective and objective’ are getting into general use now, and Donne has begun with *æsthetics* and *exegetical* in Kemble’s review. Kemble himself has written an article on the Emperor Nicholas which must crush him. If you could read it, no salvos of *mortalletti* could ever startle you again. And now my paper is almost covered: and I must say Good bye to you. This is Sunday March 21—a fine sunny blowing day. We shall dine at one o’clock—an hour hence—go to Church—then walk—have tea at six, and pass rather a dull evening, because of no picquet. You will be sauntering in St. Peter’s perhaps, or standing on the Capitol while the sun sets. I should like to see Rome after all. Livy’s lies (as the *æsthetics* prove them to be) do at least animate one so far—

how far?—so far as to wish, and not to do, having perfect power to do.

Oh eloquent, just, and mighty Theory of Mortal-etti!

*To W. H. Thompson.*

BOULGE HALL, WOODBRIDGE,  
*March 26/41.*

MY DEAR THOMPSON,

. . . I had a long letter from Morton the other day—he is still luxuriating at Venice. Also a letter from Frederic Tennyson, who has been in Sicily, etc., and is much distracted between enjoyment of those climates and annoyance from Fleas. These two men are to be at Rome together soon: so if any one wants to go to Rome, now is a good time. I wish I was there. F. Tennyson says that he and a party of Englishmen fought a cricket match with the crew of the Bellerophon on the *Parthenopæan hills* (query about the correctness of this—I quote from memory), and *sacked* the sailors by 90 runs. Is not this pleasant?—the notion of good English blood striving in worn out Italy—I like that such men as Frederic should be abroad: so strong, haughty and passionate. They keep up the English character abroad. . . . Have you read poor Carlyle's raving book about heroes? Of course you have, or I would ask you to buy my copy. I don't like to live with it in the house. It smoulders. He ought to

be laughed at a little. But it is pleasant to retire to the Tale of a Tub, Tristram Shandy, and Horace Walpole, after being tossed on his canvas waves. This is blasphemy. Dibdin Pitt of the Coburg could enact one of his heroes. . . .

*To F. Tennyson.*

IRELAND, *July 26, 1841.*

MY DEAR FREDERIC,

I got your letter ten days ago in London on my way here. We have incessant rain, which is as bad as your sciroccos; at least it damps my energies very much. But people are accustomed to it in Ireland: and my uncle (in whose house I am staying) is just set off with three of his children—on horseback—cantering and laughing away in the midst of a hopeless shower. I am afraid some of us are too indolent for such things.

I am glad Morton has taken up painting in good earnest, and I shall encourage him to persevere as much as I can. . . . I have begun to draw a little—the fit comes upon one in summer with the foliage: as to sunshine, so necessary for pictures, I have been obliged to do without that. We have had scarce a ray for a month. . . . I have read nothing, except the Annual Register: which is not amiss in a certain state of mind, and is not easily exhausted. A goodly row of some hundred very thick volumes which may

be found in every country town wherever one goes forbid all danger of exhaustion. So long as there is appetite, there is food: and of that plain substantial nature which, Johnson says, suits the stomach of middle life. Burke, for instance, is a sufficiently poetical politician to interest one just when one's sonneteering age is departing, but before one has come down quite to arid fact. Do you know anything of poor Sir Egerton Brydges?—this, in talking of sonnets—poor fellow, he wrote them for seventy years, fully convinced of their goodness, and only lamenting that the public were unjust and stupid enough not to admire them also. He lived in haughty seclusion, and at the end of life wrote a doating Autobiography. He writes good prose however, and shews himself as he is very candidly: indeed he is proud of the display.

All this is not meant to be a lesson to you who write, everybody says, good sonnets. Sir E. Brydges would have been the same dilettante if he had written Epics—probably worse. I certainly don't like sonnets, as you know: we have been spoiled for them by Daddy Wordsworth, ——, and Co. Moxon must write them too forsooth. What do they seem fit for but to serve as little shapes in which a man may mould very mechanically any single thought which comes into his head, which thought is not lyrical enough in itself to exhale in a more lyrical measure? The difficulty of the sonnet metre in English is a good excuse for the dull didactic thoughts which

naturally incline towards it : fellows know there is no danger of decanting their muddy stuff ever so slowly : they are neither prose nor poetry. I have rather a wish to tie old Wordsworth's volume about his neck and pitch him into one of the deepest holes of his dear Duddon.

But it is very stupid to write all this to Italy, though it would have done very well to have canvassed with you and Morton over our pipes in Mornington Crescent. I suppose you never will come back to stay long in England again : I have given you up to a warmer latitude. If you were more within reach, I would make you go a trip with me to the West of Ireland, whither I am not confident enough to go alone. Yet I wish to see it.

*To Bernard Barton.*

EDGEWORTHSTOWN,  
*September 2/41.*

MY DEAR BARTON,

You must allow I am a good correspondent—this half year at least. This is Sepr. 2, a most horrible day for a Bazaar, judging at least by the weather here. But you may be better off. I came to this house a week ago to visit a male friend, who duly started to England the day before I got here. I therefore found myself domiciled in a house filled with ladies of divers ages—Edgeworth's wife, aged—say 28—his mother aged 74—his sister (the great Maria) aged

72 — and another cousin or something — all these people very pleasant and kind: the house pleasant: the grounds ditto: a good library: . . . so here I am quite at home. But surely I must go to England soon: it seems to me as if that must take place soon: and so send me a letter directed to me at Mr. Watcham's, Naseby, Thornby. Those places are in England. You may put Northampton after Thornby if you like. I am going to look at the winding up of the harvest there.

I am now writing in the Library here: and the great Authoress is as busy as a bee making a catalogue of her books beside me, chattering away. We are great friends. She is as lively, active, and cheerful as if she were but twenty; really a very entertaining person. We talk about Walter Scott whom she adores, and are merry all the day long. I have read about thirty-two sets of novels since I have been here: it has rained nearly all the time.

I long to hear how the Bazaar went off: and so I beg you to tell me all about it. When I began this letter I thought I had something to say: but I believe the truth was I had nothing to do. When you see my dear Major<sup>1</sup> give him my love, and tell him I wish he were here to go to Connemara with me: I have no heart to go alone. The discomfort of Irish inns requires a companion in misery. This part of the country is poorer than any I have yet seen: the

<sup>1</sup> Major Moor of Great Bealings; author of *The Hindu Pantheon*, *Suffolk Words*, *Oriental Fragments*, etc.

people becoming more Spanish also in face and dress. Have you read *The Collegians*?<sup>1</sup>

I have now begun to sketch heads on the blotting paper on which my paper rests—a sure sign, as Miss Edgeworth tells me, that I have said quite enough. She is right. Good-bye. In so far as this country is Ireland I am glad to be here: but inasmuch as it is not England I wish I were there.

*To S. Laurence.*

NASEBY, *Sept.* 28/41.

MY DEAR LAURENCE,

. . . Do you know that I wanted you to come down by the railroad and see me here: where there is nothing else to be seen but myself: which would have been a comfort to you. I have been staying here three weeks alone, smoking with farmers, looking at their lands, and taking long walks alone: during which (as well as when I was in Ireland) I made such sketches as will make you throw down your brush in despair. I wish you would ask at Molteno's or Colnaghi's for a new Lithographic print of a head of Dante, after a fresco by Giotto, lately discovered in some chapel<sup>2</sup> at Florence. It is the most wonderful head that ever was seen—Dante at about twenty-seven years old: rather younger. The Edgeworths had a

<sup>1</sup> By Gerald Griffin.

<sup>2</sup> The chapel of the Palazzo del Podestà, or Bargello, then used as a prison.



print in Ireland: got by great interest in Florence before the legitimate publication: but they told me it was to be abroad in September. If you can get me a copy, pray do.

*To F. Tennyson.*

1<sup>mo</sup> piano. No. o. Strada del Obelisco.

NASEBY. [Oct. 1841.]

MY DEAR FREDERIC,

I am surprised you think my scanty letters are worth encouraging, especially with such long and excellent answers as that I have just got from you. It has found its way down here: and oddly enough does your Italian scenery, painted, I believe, very faithfully upon my inner eye, contrast with the British barrenness of the Field of Naseby. Yet here was fought a battle of some interest to Englishmen: and I am persuading farmers to weed well the corn that grows over those who died there. No, no; in spite of your Vesuviuses and sunshine, I love my poor dear brave barren ugly country. Talk of your Italians! why, they are extinguished by the Austrians because they don't blaze enough of themselves to burn the extinguisher. Only people who deserve despotism are forced to suffer it. We have at last good weather: and the harvest is just drawing to a close in this place. It is a bright brisk morning, and the loaded waggons are rolling cheerfully past my window. But since I wrote what is above a whole day has passed: I have

eaten a bread dinner : taken a lonely walk : made a sketch of Naseby (not the least like yours of Castellamare) : played for an hour on an old tub of a piano : and went out in my dressing-gown to smoke a pipe with a tenant hard by. That tenant (whose name is Love, by the bye) was out with his folks in the stack yard : getting in all the corn they can, as the night looks rainy. So, disappointed of my projected 'talk about runts' and turnips, I am come back—with a good deal of animal spirits at my tongue's and fingers' ends. If I were transported now into your room at Castellamare, I would wag my tongue far beyond midnight with you. These fits of exultation are not very common with me : as (after leaving off beef) my life has become of an even grey paper character : needing no great excitement, and as pleased with Naseby as Naples. . . .

I am reading Schlegel's lectures on the History of Literature : a nice just book : as also the comedies of Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar : the latter very delightful : as also D'Aubigné's History of the Reformation, a good book. When I am tired of one I take up the other : when tired of all, I take up my pipe, or sit down and recollect some of Fidelio on the piano-forte. Ah Master Tennyson, we in England have our pleasures too. As to Alfred, I have heard nothing of him since May : except that some one saw him going to a packet which he believed was going to Rotterdam. . . . When shall you and I go to an Opera again, or hear one of Beethoven's Symphonies together? You

are lost to England, I calculate : and I am given over to turnips and inanity. So runs the world away. Well, if I never see you again, I am very very glad I *have* seen you : and got the idea of a noble fellow all ways into my head. Does this seem like humbug to you ? But it is not. And that fine fellow Morton too. Pray write when you can to me : and when my stars shine so happily about my head as they do at this minute, when my blood feels like champagne, I will answer you. . . .

When you go to Florence, get to see a fresco portrait of Dante by Giotto : newly discovered in some chapel there. Edgeworth saw it, and has brought home a print which is (he says) a tolerable copy. It is a most awful head : Dante, when about twenty-five years old. The likeness to the common portraits of him when old is quite evident. All his great poem seems in it : like the flower in the bud. I read the last cantos of the *Paradiso* over and over again. I forget if you like him : but, if I understand you at all, you must. Farewell !

P.S. Just heard from Edgeworth that Alfred is in London 'busy preparing for the press'!!!

*To Bernard Barton.*

LONDON, *November 27/41.*

DEAR BARTON,

I am afraid you were disappointed last night at finding no picture by the Shannon.<sup>1</sup> Mayhap you

<sup>1</sup> The London coach.

had asked Mr C[hurchyard] to come and give his judgment upon it over toasted cheese. But the truth is, the picture has just been varnished with mastick varnish, which is apt to chill with the cold at this season of the year: and so I thought it best to keep it by me till its conveyance should be safer. I hope that on Monday you will get it. But I must tell you that, besides the reason of the varnish, I have had a sneaking desire to keep the picture by me, and not to lose it from my eyes just yet. I am in love with it. I washed it myself very carefully with only sweet salad oil: perfectly innocuous as you may imagine: and that, with the new lining, and the varnishing, has at least made the difference between a dirty and a clean beauty. And now, whoever it may be painted by, I pronounce it a very beautiful picture: tender, graceful, full of repose. I sit looking at it in my room and like it more and more. All this is independent of its paternity. But if I am asked about that, I should only answer on my own judgment (not a good one in such a matter, as I have told you) that it *is* decidedly by Gainsborough, and in his best way of conception. My argument would be of the Johnsonian kind: if it is not by G., who the devil is it by? There are some perhaps feeble touches here and there in the tree in the centre, though not in those autumnal leaves that shoot into the sky to the right: but who painted that clump of thick solemn trees to the left of the picture:—the light of evening rising like a low fire between their boles? The cattle too

in the water, how they stand ! The picture must be an original of somebody's : and if not of Gainsborough's —whose? It is better painted far than the Market Cart in the National Gallery : but not better, only equal (in a sketchy way) to the beautiful evening Watering Place.

Now I have raised your expectations too high. But when you have looked at the picture some time, you will agree with me. I say all this in sober honesty, for upon my word, whether it be by Gainsborough or not, it is a kind of pang to me to part from the picture : I believe I should like it all the better for its being a little fatherless bastard which I have picked up in the streets, and made clean and comfortable. Yet, if your friend tells you it is by G. I shall be glad you should possess it. Any how, never part with it but to me.

I must tell you my friend Laurence still persists it is not by Gainsborough : but I have thrown him quite overboard. Oh the comfort of independent self confidence ! Said Laurence also observed that Gainsborough was the Goldsmith of Painters : which is perhaps true. I should like to know if he would know an original of Goldsmith, if I read something to him. He is a nice fellow this Laurence by the way.

Our prospect of going down to Suffolk this year is much on the wane : the Doctor has desired that Lusie should remain in town. Though I should like much to see you and others, yet I am on the whole

glad that my sisters should stay here, where they are likely to be better off. I shall stay with them, as I am of use. I may however run down one day to give you a look. I wish you would enquire and let me know how Mr. Jenney<sup>1</sup> is: he was not well when my Father was in Suffolk. Only *don't ask himself*: he hates that. And now farewell. This is a long letter: but look at it by way of notice when the picture comes to you. If it does *not* come on Monday don't be angry: but it probably will.

BRIGHTON, Dec. 29, 1841.

MY DEAR BARTON,

The account you give of my old Squire 'that he is in a poorish way' does not satisfy me: and I want you to ask Mr. Jones the surgeon, whom you know, and who used to attend on the Squire,—to ask him, I say, how that Squire is. He has been ill for the last two or three winters, and may not be worse now than before. He is one of our oldest friends: and though he and I have not very much in common, he is a part of my country of England, and involved in the very idea of the quiet fields of Suffolk. He is the owner of old Bredfield House in which I was born—and the seeing him cross the stiles between Hasketon and Bredfield, and riding with his hounds over the lawn, is among the scenes in that novel called *The Past* which dwell most in my memory. What is the difference between what has been, and

<sup>1</sup> The owner of Bredfield House, where E. F. G. was born.

what never has been, *none*? At the same time this Squire, so hardy, is indignant at the idea of being ill or laid up: so one must inquire of him by some roundabout means. . . .

We had a large party here last night: Horace Smith came: like his brother James, but better looking: and said to be very agreeable. Do you [know] that he gives a dreadful account of Mrs. Southey: that meek and Christian poetess: he says, she's a devil in temper. He told my mother so: had you heard of this? I don't believe it yet: one ought not so soon, ought one?

Goodbye.

*To W. B. Donne.*

MONDAY.

MY DEAR DONNE,

Thompson tells me you are writing a Roman History. But you have not been asked to Lecture at the Ipswich Mechanics' Institution, as I have—'any subject except controversial Divinity, and party Politics.' In the meantime I have begun Livy: I have read one book, and can't help looking at the four thick octavos that remain—

Oh beate Sesti,

Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam.<sup>1</sup>

But it is very stately reading. As to old Niebuhr, it is mean to attack old legends that can't defend

<sup>1</sup> Hor. Od. I. 4. 14, 15.

themselves. And what does it signify in the least if they are true or not? Whoever *actively* believed that Romulus was suckled by a wolf? But I have found in Horace a proper motto for those lumbering Germans :

Quis Parthum paveat? quis gelidum Scythen?  
 Quis Germania quos horrida parturit  
 Fœtus?<sup>1</sup>

*To Bernard Barton.*

[GELDESTONE, *Jan.* 1842.]

MY DEAR SIR,

You tell my Father you mean to write a Poem about my invisibility—and somehow it seems strange to myself that I have been so long absent from Woodbridge. It was a toss up (as boys say—and perhaps Gods) whether I should go now:—the toss has decided I should not. On the contrary I am going to see Donne at Mattishall: a visit, which having put off a fortnight ago, I am now determined to pay. But if I do not see you before I go to London, I shall assuredly be down again by the latter part of February: when toasted cheese and ale shall again unite our souls. You need not however expect that I can return to such familiar intercourse as once (in former days) passed between us. New honours in society have devolved upon me the

<sup>1</sup> Hor. Od. iv. 5, 25-27. horrida . . . fœtus per metasyntaxin  
 'horrid abortions.'



necessity of a more dignified deportment. A letter has been sent from the Secretary of the Ipswich Mechanics' Institution asking me to Lecture—any subject but Party Politics or Controversial Divinity. On my politely declining, another, a fuller, and a more pressing, letter was sent urging me to comply with their demand: I answered to the same effect, but with accelerated dignity. I am now awaiting the third request in confidence: if you see no symptoms of its being mooted, perhaps you will kindly propose it. I have prepared an answer. Donne is mad with envy. He consoles himself with having got a Roman History to write for Lardner's Cabinet Cyclopædia.<sup>1</sup> What a pity it is that only Lying Histories are readable. I am afraid Donne will stick to what is considered the Truth too much.

This is a day like May: I and the children have been scrambling up and down the sides of a pit till our legs ache.

*Jan. 24/42.*

DEAR BARTON,

You mistake. The Poacher was bought in his shell—for £3—did I not name that price? As you desire a packing case, I will order one to day: and I hope you will have him down on Wednesday, just when your Bank work is over, and you will be glad

<sup>1</sup> Not for the Cabinet Cyclopædia, but the Library of Useful Knowledge. It was never finished.

of such good company. One of my friends thought the picture must have been an anticipation of Bill Sykes: put a cap and feathers on his head and you make him Iago, Richard the Third, or any other aristocratic villain. I really think the picture is a very good one of its kind: and one that you will like.<sup>1</sup>

I am going to get my large Constable very lightly framed, and shall bring it down into Suffolk with me to shew you and others. I like it more and more.

. . . There is something poetical, and almost heroic, in this Expedition to the Niger—the motives lofty and Christian—the issue so disastrous. Do you remember in A. Cunningham's Scottish Songs<sup>2</sup> one called 'The Darien Song'? It begins

We will go, maidens, go,  
To the primrose<sup>3</sup> woods and mourn, etc.

Look for it. It applies to this business. Some Scotch young folks went out to colonize Darien, and never came back.

Oh there were white hands wav'd,  
And many a parting hail,  
As their vessel stemm'd the tide,  
And stretch'd her snowy sail.

I remember reading this at Aldbro', and the sound of

<sup>1</sup> See Barton's Letters, p. 70.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. III, p. 318.

<sup>3</sup> 'The correct reading is 'lonesome.'

the sea hangs about it always, as upon the lips of a shell.

Farewell for the present. We shall soon be down amongst you.

P.S. I think Northcote drew this picture from life: and I have no doubt there is some story attached to it. The subject may have been some great malefactor. You know that painters like to draw such at times. Northcote could not have painted so well but from life.

*To F. Tennyson.*

LONDON, *February 6, 1842.*

DEAR FREDERIC,

These fast-following letters of mine seem intended to refute a charge made against me by Morton: that I had only so much impulse of correspondence as resulted from the receipt of a friend's letter. Is it very frivolous to write all these letters, on no business whatsoever? What I think is, that one will soon be going into the country, where one hears no music, and sees no pictures, and so one will have nothing to write about. I mean to take down a Thucydides, to feed on: like a whole Parmesan. But at present here I am in London: last night I went to see *Acis and Galatea* brought out, with Handel's music, and Stanfield's scenery: really the best done thing I have seen for many a year. As I sat alone (alone in spirit) in the pit, I wished for you: and now Sunday is over:

I have been to church: I have dined at Portland Place:<sup>1</sup> and now I come home to my lodgings: light my pipe: and will whisper something over to Italy. You talk of your Naples: and that one cannot understand Theocritus without having been on those shores. I tell you, you can't understand Macready without coming to London and seeing his revival of *Acis and Galatea*. You enter Drury Lane at a quarter to seven: the pit is already nearly full: but you find a seat, and a very pleasant one. Box doors open and shut: ladies take off their shawls and seat themselves: gentlemen twist their side curls: the musicians come up from under the stage one by one: 'tis just upon seven: Macready is very punctual: Mr. T. Cooke is in his place with his marshal's baton in his hand: he lifts it up: and off they set with old Handel's noble overture. As it is playing, the red velvet curtain (which Macready has substituted, not wisely, for the old green one) draws apart: and you see a rich drop scene, all festooned and arabesqued with River Gods, Nymphs, and their emblems; and in the centre a delightful, large, good copy of Poussin's great landscape (of which I used to have a print in my rooms) where the Cyclops is seen seated on a mountain, looking over the sea-shore. The overture ends, the drop scene rises, and there is the sea-shore, a long curling bay: the sea heaving under the moon, and breaking upon the beach, and rolling the surf down

<sup>1</sup> No. 39, where his father and mother lived.

—the stage! This is really capitally done. But enough of description. The choruses were well sung, well acted, well dressed, and well grouped; and the whole thing creditable and pleasant. Do you know the music? It is of Handel's best: and as classical as any man who wore a full-bottomed wig could write. I think Handel never gets out of his wig: that is, out of his age: his Hallelujah chorus is a chorus not of angels, but of well-fed earthly choristers, ranged tier above tier in a Gothic cathedral, with princes for audience, and their military trumpets flourishing over the full volume of the organ. Handel's gods are like Homer's, and his sublime never reaches beyond the region of the clouds. Therefore I think that his great marches, triumphal pieces, and coronation anthems, are his finest works. There is a little bit of Auber's, at the end of the *Bayadère* when the God resumes his divinity and retires into the sky, which has more of pure light and mystical solemnity than anything I know of Handel's: but then this is only a scrap: and Auber could not breathe in that atmosphere long: whereas old Handel's coursers, with necks with thunder clothed and long resounding pace, never tire. Beethoven thought more deeply also: but I don't know if he could sustain himself so well. I suppose you will resent this praise of Beethoven: but you must be tired of the whole matter, written as it is in this vile hand: and so here is an end of it. . . . And now I am going to put on my night-cap: for my paper is nearly ended, and the iron tongue of St.

Paul's, as reported by an East wind, has told twelve. This is the last news from the city. So Good night. I suppose the violets will be going off in the Papal dominions by the time this letter reaches you: my country cousins are making much of a few aconites. Love to Morton.

P.S. I hope these foolish letters don't cost you and Morton much: I always pay 1s. 7d. for them here: which ought to carry such levities to Hindostan without further charge.

*To Bernard Barton.*

LONDON, *February 21/42.*

I have just got home a new coat for my Constable: which coat cost 33 shillings: just the same price as I gave for a Chesterfield wrapper (as it is called) for myself some weeks ago. People told me I was not improved by my Chesterfield wrapper: and I am vext to see how little my Constable is improved by his coat of Cloth of Gold. But I have been told what is the use of a frame lately: only as it requires nice explanation I shall leave it till I see you. Don't you wish me to buy that little Evening piece I told you of? worth a dozen of your Paul Veroneses put together.

When I rate you (as you call it) about shewing my verses, letters, etc., you know in what spirit I rate you: thanking you all the time for your generous

intention of praising me. It would be very hard, and not desirable, to make you understand why my Mama need not have heard the verses: but it is a very little matter: so no more of it. As to my doing anything else in that way, I know that I could write volume after volume as well as others of the mob of gentlemen who write with ease: but I think unless a man can do better, he had best not do at all; I have not the strong inward call, nor cruel-sweet pangs of parturition, that prove the birth of anything bigger than a mouse. With you the case is different, who have so long been a follower of the Muse, and who have had a kindly, sober, English, wholesome, religious spirit within you that has communicated kindred warmth to many honest souls. Such a creature as Augusta—John's wife—a true Lady, was very fond of your poems: and I think that is no mean praise: a very good assurance that you have not written in vain. I am a man of taste, of whom there are hundreds born every year: only that less easy circumstances than mine at present are compel them to one calling: that calling perhaps a mechanical one, which overlies all their other, and naturally perhaps more energetic impulses. As to an occasional copy of verses, there are few men who have leisure to read, and are possessed of any music in their souls, who are not capable of versifying on some ten or twelve occasions during their natural lives: at a proper conjunction of the stars. There is no harm in taking advantage of such occasions.

This letter-writing fit (one must suppose) can but happen once in one's life: though I hope you and I shall live to have many a little bargain for pictures. But I hold communion with Suffolk through you. In this big London all full of intellect and pleasure and business I feel pleasure in dipping down into the country, and rubbing my hand over the cool dew upon the pastures, as it were. I know very few people here: and care for fewer; I believe I should like to live in a small house just outside a pleasant English town all the days of my life, making myself useful in a humble way, reading my books, and playing a rubber of whist at night. But England cannot expect long such a reign of inward quiet as to suffer men to dwell so easily to themselves. But Time will tell us:

Come what come may,  
Time and the Hour runs through the roughest day.<sup>1</sup>

It is hard to give you so long a letter, so dull an one, and written in so cramped a hand, to read in this hardworking part of your week. But you can read a bit at odd times, you know: or none at all. Anyhow 'tis time to have done. I am going to walk with Lusía. So farewell.

P.S. I always direct to you as 'Mr. Barton' because I know not if Quakers ought to endure Squiredom. How I long to shew you my Constable!

Pray let me know how Mr. Jenney is. I think that we shall get down to Suffolk the end of next week.

<sup>1</sup> Shakespeare, *Macb.* 1. 3, 146, 147.



LONDON, *Febr.* 25/42.

MY DEAR BARTON,

Your reason for liking your Paul Veronese (what an impudence to talk so to a man who has just purchased a real Titian !) does not quite disprove my theory. You like the picture because you like the verses you once made upon it : you associate the picture (naturally enough) with them : and so shall I in future, because I like the verses too. But then you ask further, what made you write the verses if you were not moved by the picture *imprimis*? Why you know the poetic faculty does wonders, as Shakespeare tells us, in imagining the forms of things unseen, etc., and so you made a merit where there was none : and have liked that merit ever since. But I will not disturb you any further in your enjoyment : if you have a vision of your own, why should I undo it?

Yesterday I was busily employed in painting over my Opie, which had suffered by heat, or something of that kind. I borrowed Laurence's palette and brushes and lay upon the floor two hours patching over and renovating. The picture is really greatly improved, and I am more reconciled to it. It has now to be varnished : and then I hope some fool will be surprised into giving £4 for it, as I did. I have selected an advantageous position for it in a dealer's shop, just under a rich window that excludes the light.

On second thoughts I shall not send you down my Twilight: but bring it with me. I like it much, and do not repent the purchase. As to the difficulty of bringing down so many pictures, I shall travel by the steamer; which will bear any quantity. The great new purchase, spoken of in yesterday's letter, will also go with me: it will be insured at a high valuation before it is entrusted to the Deep, of whose treasures I don't at all wish it to become one. My Titian is a great hit: if not by him, it is as near him as ever was painted. But you would not care six straws for it. The history of the finest theory of colouring lies in those few inches of canvas. But Laurence (who has gone for some days into the country) must see it, and tell me about it. He is so good a judge, that I ought never to talk till I have first heard his verdict.

I was amused at a passage in *Clarissa* the other day, which gives one some idea of what the average state of the arts was among the gentry of a hundred years ago. Miss Howe, in drawing up a character of her lost *Clarissa*, says that among other things she had a fine taste for the Pencil: had not time to practise it much, but 'was an absolute mistress of the "should be,"' and then proceeds thus: 'To give a familiar instance for the sake of young Ladies: she (untaught) observed *when but a child*, that the Sun, Moon, and Stars, never appeared at once: and were therefore never to be in one piece: that bears, tygers, lions, were not natives of an English climate, and should not therefore have a place in an English

landscape : that these ravagers of the forest consorted not with lambs, kids, or fawns : nor kites, hawks, or vultures, with doves, partridges, and pheasants.' Such was a prodigy in those days. It is easy to sneer at this passage : but whoever has read anything of the *Masques*, etc., of James's time, will readily recall what absurdities were brought together, even by the good Scholars of the day : and therefore will not wonder at the imperfect *Natural History* that was found in young Ladies' Drawings, and samplers. I remember now to have seen wonderful combinations of phenomena in those samplers which are occasionally to be found hung up in the parlours of Country Inns, and Farm houses.

These letters succeed like the ghosts of Banquo's progeny before the eyes of Macbeth. Lucky that time itself draws on too close for this letter to 'hold a glass that shews you many more.' You did not answer my question about the Gainsboroughs. So I won't ask you another.

#### SONNET ON MY NEW PICTURE.

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Oh Twilight ! Twilight !!

Rot me, if I am in a poetical humour : I can't translate the picture into words.

LONDON, *March 5, 1842.*

MY DEAR BARTON,

Before the cavalcade and suite of Hardinge's (a melancholy procession) reaches you, I think this letter will. You need not envy me my purchases, which are imprudent ones: both because I can't well afford them, and because I have no house to put them. And yet all this gives a sense of stolen enjoyment to them. I am yet haunted with the ghost of a Battle-piece (little in my way) at a shop in Holborn: by whom I know not: but so good as to be cheap at £4:10s., which the man wants for it. My *Twilight* is an upright picture: about a foot wide, and rather more than a foot high.

Mr. Browne has declined taking my *Opie*, unless in conjunction with some others which I won't part with: so the *Forest Girl* must set up her stall at a Broker's. I doubt she will never bring me the money I gave for her. She is the only bad speculation of the season. Were she but sold, I should be rejoicing in the Holborn Battle Piece. After this year however I think I shall bid complete adieu to *picture-hunting*: only taking what comes in my way. There is a great difference between these two things: both in the expense of time, thought, and money. Who can sit down to Plato while his brains are roaming to Holborn, Christie's, Phillips's, etc.?

My Father talks of going down to Suffolk early next week. Whether I shall accompany him is not

certain. Do you remember what a merry Good Friday you and I passed last year? I suppose I shall find the banks covered with primroses, the very name carries a dew upon it.

‘As one who long in populous city pent, etc.’<sup>1</sup>

Good-bye. I am going to pay my compliments at Portland Place, and then to walk in a contrary direction to Holborn.

*To F. Tennyson.*

[31 March, 1842.]

DEAR FREDERIC,

. . . Concerning the bagwigs of composers. Handel’s was not a bagwig, which was simply so named from the little stuffed black silk watch-pocket that hung down behind the back of the wearer. Such were Haydn’s and Mozart’s—much less influential on the character: much less ostentatious in themselves: not towering so high, nor rolling down in following curls so low as to overlay the nature of the brain within. But Handel wore the Sir Godfrey Kneller wig: greatest of wigs: one of which some great General of the day used to take off his head after the fatigue of the battle, and hand over to his valet to have the bullets combed out of it. Such a wig was a fugue in itself. I don’t understand your theory about

<sup>1</sup> Milton, P. L. IX. 445.

trumpets, which have always been so little spiritual *in use*, that they have been the provocatives and celebrators of physical force from the beginning of the world. 'Power,' whether spiritual or physical, is the meaning of the trumpet: and so, well used, as you say, by Handel in his approaches to the Deity. The fugue in the overture to the Messiah expresses perhaps the thorny wandering ways of the world before the voice of the one in the wilderness, and before 'Comfort ye my people, etc.' Mozart, I agree with you, is the most universal musical genius: Beethoven has been too analytical and erudite: but his inspiration is nevertheless true. I have just read his Life by Moscheles: well worth reading. He shewed no very decided preference for music when a child, though he was the son of a composer: and I think that he was, strictly speaking, more of a thinker than a musician. A great genius he was somehow. He was very fond of reading: Plutarch and Shakespeare his great favourites. He tried to think in music: almost to reason in music: whereas perhaps we should be contented with *feeling* in it. It can never speak very definitely. There is that famous 'Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, etc.,' in Handel: nothing can sound more simple and devotional: but it is only lately adapted to these words, being originally (I believe) a love song in Rodelinda. Well, lovers adore their mistresses more than their God. Then the famous music of 'He layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters, etc.,' was originally fitted

to an Italian pastoral song—‘Nasce al bosco in rozza cuna, un felice pastorello, etc.’ That part which seems so well to describe ‘and walketh on the wings of the wind’ falls happily in with ‘e con l’aura di fortuna’ with which this pastorello sailed along. The character of the music is ease and largeness: as the shepherd lived, so God Almighty walked on the wind. The music breathes ease: but words must tell us who takes it easy. Beethoven’s Sonata—Op. 14—is meant to express the discord and gradual atonement of two lovers, or a man and his wife: and he was disgusted that every one did not see what was meant: in truth, it expresses any resistance gradually overcome—Dobson shaving with a blunt razor, for instance. Music is so far the most universal language, that any one piece in a particular strain symbolizes all the analogous phenomena spiritual or material—if you can talk of spiritual phenomena. The Eroica symphony describes the battle of the passions as well as of armed men. This is long and muddy discourse: but the walls of Charlotte Street present little else, especially during this last week of Lent, to twaddle about. The Cambridge Dons have been up in town for the Easter vacation: so we have smoked and talked over Peacock, Whewell, etc. Alfred is busy preparing a new volume for the press: full of doubts, troubles, etc. The reviewers will doubtless be at him: and with justice for many things: but some of the poems will outlive the reviewers. Trench, Wordsworth, Campbell, and Taylor, also appear in new

volumes this Spring, and Milnes, I hear, talks of publishing a popular edition of his poems. He means, a cheap one. Nothing has been heard of Spedding:<sup>1</sup> but we all conclude, from the nature of the case, that he has not been scalped.

*To W. F. Pollock.*<sup>2</sup>

BOULGE HALL, *May 11/42.*

DEAR POLLOCK,

. . . I have just been reading the great Library of Athanasius.<sup>3</sup> Certainly only you and I and Thackeray understand it. When men like Spedding quote to me such a passage as 'Athanasius alas is innocent of many smiles, etc.,' they shew me they don't understand it. The beauty—if one may dare to define—lies more in such expressions as 'adjusting the beaks of the macaws, etc.' I have laughed outright (how seldom one does this alone!) at the Bishops' meeting. 'Mr. Talboys—that candle behind Dr. Allnut—really that I should be obliged—' I suppose this would be the most untranslatable book in the world. I never shall forget how I laughed when I first read it.

<sup>1</sup> Who was in America with Lord Ashburton.

<sup>2</sup> The late Sir W. F. Pollock, formerly Queen's Remembrancer.

<sup>3</sup> The Library of Useless Knowledge, by Athanasius Gasker [E. W. Clarke, son of E. D. Clarke, the Traveller], published in 1837.



[GELDESTONE HALL, 22 *May* 1842.]

DEAR POLLOCK,

. . . So Alfred is come out.<sup>1</sup> I agree with you quite about the skipping-rope, etc. But the bald men<sup>2</sup> of the Embassy would tell you otherwise. I should not wonder if the whole theory of the Embassy, perhaps the discovery of America itself, was involved in that very Poem. Lord Bacon's honesty may, I am sure, be found there. Alfred, whatever he may think, cannot trifle—many are the disputes we have had about his powers of badinage, compliment, waltzing, etc. His smile is rather a grim one. I am glad the book is come out, though I grieve for the insertion of these little things, on which reviewers and dull readers will fix; so that the right appreciation of the book will be retarded a dozen years. . . .

The rain will not come and we are burnt up, and in despair. But the country never looked more delicious than it does. I am as happy here as possible, though I don't like to boast. I am going to see my friend Donne in ten days, he is writing the dullest of histories—one of Rome. What the devil does it signify setting us in these days right as to the Licinian Rogation, and Livy's myths? Every school-boy knew that Livy lied; but the main story was clear enough for all the purposes

<sup>1</sup> Referring to the 1842 edition of Tennyson's Poems.

<sup>2</sup> Spedding was at this time in America with Lord Ashburton.

of experience ; and, that being so, the more fabulous and entertaining the subsidiary matter is the better. Tell Thackeray not to go into Punch yet.

*To S. Laurence.*

GELDESTONE HALL, BECCLES.

SUNDAY, *May 22/42.*

MY DEAR LAURENCE,

. . . I read of the advertisements of sales and auctions, but don't envy you Londoners while I am here in the midst of *green idleness*, as Leigh Hunt might call it. What are pictures? I am all for pure spirit. You have of course read the account of Spedding's forehead landing in America. English sailors hail it in the Channel, mistaking it for Beachy Head. There is a Shakespeare cliff, and a Spedding cliff. Good old fellow! I hope he'll come back safe and sound, forehead and all.

I sit writing this at my bedroom window, while the rain (long-looked for) patters on the window. I prophesied it to-day : which is a great comfort. We have a housefull of the most delightful children : and if the rain would last, and the grass grow, all would be well. I think the rain will last : I shall prophesy so when I go down to our early dinner. For it is Sunday : and we dine children and all at one o'clock : and go to afternoon church, and a great tea at six—then a pipe (except for the young ladies)—a stroll—a bit of supper—and to bed. Wake in

the morning at five—open the window and read Ecclesiasticus. A proverb says that ‘everything is fun in the country.’

My Constable has been greatly admired, and is reckoned quite genuine by our great judge, Mr. Churchyard. Mr. C. paints himself: (not in *body* colours, as you waggishly insinuate) and nicely too. He understands Gainsborough, Constable, and old Crome. Have you ever seen pictures by the latter? some very fine. He was a Norwich man.

BOULGE HALL, *June 19/42.*

MY DEAR LAURENCE,

Keep the head of Raffaele as long as you please. I am glad that one of the three pictures at all events is worth something. I anticipated that Morton's friend would spoil them in the carriage: friends always do. Keep them all, like my other pictures, at your house: and make what use of them you please. The head of Dante is, I suppose, the same as the one L. Hunt shewed us engraved in a book: a theatrical one, I thought. . . ! Have you been to any auction-rooms? I have forgot all about them: and can live very well without pictures. I believe one loses all one's tastes in the country: and one is not the less happy. We have had glorious weather: new pease and young potatoes—fresh milk (how good!) and a cool library to sit in of mornings. . . .

*To F. Tennyson.*

BEDFORD, *August 16, 1842.*

DEAR TENNYSON,

I have been long hoping for a letter from you : it has come this morning, and repays me for all waiting. While you and Morton write to me about Italy I shall never go to see it. And yet your account of Cicero's villa, I confess, gives me a twinge. But of this I am sure : if I saw all these fine things with the bodily eye, I should but see them as a scene in a play, with the additional annoyance of being bitten with fleas perhaps, and being in a state of transition which is not suitable to me : whereas while you see them, and will represent them to me, I see them through your imagination, and that is better than any light of my own. This is very true, I assure you : and you and Morton have given me quite a different view of Italy to what I had before : a much more enchanting one, but not the more likely to seduce me into making the false step of trying to realize it for myself. . . . In the mean time how tired and bored would you be to take one of my travels—a voyage of eight miles from Bedford perhaps—travelled twenty times before—every winding of the river, every church-spire, every country pot house and the quality of its beer, well known. No surprise at all. Nil admirari—I find that old Horace

is a good fellow-traveller in England : so is Virgil. It is odd that those fellows living in the land they did live in should have talked so coldly about it. As to Alfred's book, I believe it has sold well : but I have not seen him for a long while, and have had no means of hearing about the matter except from Thompson, who told me that very many copies had been sold at Cambridge, which indeed will be the chief market for them. Neither have I seen any notice of them in print except that in the Examiner ; and that seemed so quiet that I scarce supposed it was by Forster. Alfred himself is, I believe, in Kent at present. And now, my dear Frederic, why do you think of returning to England ? Depend upon it you are better off as you are. You will never turn magistrate nor bean-dibbler, nor make yourself of use in the country, and therefore why should you not live where you like to live best ? When I read of your laughing and singing and riding into Naples with huge self-supplying beakers full of the warm South I am sure you had best stay where you are. I should indeed be very glad to see you again : but then I should miss hearing from you : and you would only come here to abuse us all and go back again. You Tennysons are born for warm climates. As to poor England, I never see a paper, but I think with you that she is on the go. I used to dread this : but somehow I now contemplate it as a necessary thing, and, till the shoe begins to

pinch me sorely, walk on with some indifference. It seems impossible the manufacturers can go on as they are : and impossible that the demand for our goods can continue as of old in Europe : and impossible but that we must get a rub and licking in some of our colonies : and if all these things come at once, why then the devil's in it. I used to think as you do about France and the French : and we all agreed in London that France should be divided among the other powers as Poland was : but Donne has given me pause : he says that France is the great counteracting democratic principle to Russia. This may be : though I think Russia is too unwieldly and rotten-ripe ever to make a huge progress in conquest. What is to be thought of a nation where the upper classes speak the language of another country, and have varnished over their honest barbarism with the poorest French profligacy and intrigue? Russia does not seem a whole to me. In the mean time, all goes on toward better and better, as is my firm belief : and humanity grows clear by flowing, (very little profited by any single sage or hero), and man shall have wings to fly and something much better than that in the end. . . .

I draw a very little, and think of music as I walk in the fields : but have no piano in this part of the world. . . . I hear there is a fine new Symphony by Mendelssohn, who is by far our best writer now, and in some measure combines Beethoven and Handel. I grow every day more and more to love only the

old God save the King style : the common chords, those truisms of music, like other truisms so little understood in the full. Just look at the mechanism of Robin Adair.

Now pray write to me again when you can. You don't know how much I rejoice in your letters.

*To S. Laurence.*

BEDFORD, *Thursday,*  
[*August, 1842.*]

DEAR LAURENCE,

. . . I have heard from Morton and F. Tennyson ; the letter of the latter very descriptive and fine. He is summering at Castellamare, and Morton at Sorrento. What must Italy be if we are complaining of heat here !

I have just been naming all Mr. Browne's pictures for him. This he has insisted on for three years, and at last this very hot day after an early dinner pens and paper were brought out and I have been writing down awful calumnies about Cuypp, Both, etc. Who could have painted Catharine of Medicis, do you know? We are afraid to call it Vandyke, as he lived (I believe) a century after her : and Mr. B. won't give up its being Catharine's portrait. So here we are in a fix. I went to see Lord Northampton's place Castle Ashby a week ago : expected pictures, and saw very bad ones. The house is very handsome, built by Inigo Jones.

I weigh 14 stone—fact.

*To John Allen.*

[KEYSOE, *August 1842.*]

MY DEAR JOHN ALLEN,

. . . I am much *entêté* at present about one Matthews,<sup>1</sup> a preacher at Bedford, who would do very well for Manchester in opposition to Chartists, etc. If you are here on a Friday or a Sunday go and hear him. I would gladly subscribe to remove him from Bedford. All this you will think absurd; and so perhaps it is.

I have been reading Stobæus' Anthology as I saunter in the fields: a pretty collection of Greek aphorisms in verse and prose. The bits of Menander and the comic poets are very acceptable. And this is really all I have looked at all this summer.

BEDFORD, *August 29/42.*

MY DEAREST FELLOW,

Your letter reached me this morning and gave me much pleasure. An old acquaintance is not the

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. T. R. Matthews, of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge: formerly Curate of Bolnhurst and Colmworth, Chaplain of the House of Industry, Bedford, and incumbent of Christ Church in that town. He died 4th Sept. 1845, and his memory is still cherished by those who were brought under his influence. Dr. Brown, the biographer of Bunyan, informs me, 'There is a little Nonconformist community at Ravensden, about three miles from Bedford, first formed by his adherents, and they keep hung upon the wall behind the pulpit the trumpet Mr. Matthews used to blow on village greens and along the highways to gather his congregation.'



worse for its wear, I think. 'This very time ten years ago we were in Wales together : I at Mr. Rees' boarding-house at Tenby : and there I made chance acquaintance with the whiskered man<sup>1</sup> at whose house I am now staying :—then a boy of sixteen. He is now a man of business, of town-politics, and more intent on the first of September than on anything else in the world. I see very little of him. . . .

I occasionally read sentences about the Virtues out of this collection of Stobæus, and look into Sartor Resartus, which has fine things in it : and a little Dante and a little Shakespeare. But the great secret of all is the not eating meat. To that the world must come, I am sure. Only it makes one grasshopper foolish. I also receive letters from Morton and F. Tennyson full of fine accounts of Italy, finer than any I ever read. They came all of a sudden on Cicero's villa—one of them at least, the Formian—with a mosaic pavement leading thro' lemon gardens down to the sea, and a little fountain as old as the Augustan age bubbling up as fresh, Tennyson says, 'as when its silver sounds mixed with the deep voice of the orator as he sate there in the stillness of the noon day, devoting the siesta-hours to study.' When I first read of these things I wish to see them ; but, on reflection, I am sure I see them much better in such letters as these.

I have seen one good picture about here : a

<sup>1</sup> William Browne.

portrait of O. Cromwell by Lely—so said—unlike other Lelys, but very carefully painted : and, I should think, an original portrait. . . . I also read Hayley's Life of Romney the other day. Romney wanted but education and reading to make him a very fine painter : but his ideal was not high nor fixed. How touching is the close of his life ! He married at nineteen, and, because Sir Joshua and others had said that marriage spoilt an artist, almost immediately left his wife in the North, and scarce saw her till the end of his life : when, old, nearly mad, and quite desolate, he went back to her, and she received him, and nursed him till he died. This quiet act of hers is worth all Romney's pictures ; even as a matter of Art, I am sure.

Whether this letter will ever reach you, I don't know. I am going in two days to Naseby for a little while, and shall then find my way home to Suffolk for the greater part of the Winter and Spring, I suppose.

O beate Sesti,  
Vitæ summa brevis spem nos vetat inchoare longam.

I think of hiring a house in some country town like this, but nearer Suffolk, and there have my books, etc. I want a house much : and a very small one will content me, with a few old women close by to play cards with at night. What a life, you will say !

His virtues walked their humble round,  
Nor knew a pause, nor felt a void :

And sure the Eternal Master found  
His single talent well employ'd.

That was not in playing picquet, I doubt. What fine lines of Johnson's<sup>1</sup> these!

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On the 15th of September 1842 FitzGerald first made Carlyle's personal acquaintance. He always spoke of his having first gone to Chelsea in company with Thackeray, and in the Notes which he left of his excavations at Naseby he repeats what he frequently told myself and others. But his memory was clearly at fault, for in a letter to Pollock, written on the 16th, but dated by mistake the 17th, of September, he says, 'I have come up to London for two days on a false errand: and am therefore going back in a pet, to Naseby. . . . I enquired at Spedding's rooms to-day: he is expected by the 20th, which is near. Laurence is the only person I know in town. . . . He and I went to see Carlyle at Chelsea yesterday. That genius has been surveying the field of battle of Naseby in company with Dr. Arnold, who died soon after, poor man! I doubt (from Carlyle's description) if they identified the very ground of the carnage. . . . I have heard nothing of Thackeray for these two months. He was to have visited an Irish brother of mine: but he has not yet done so. I called at Coram Street yesterday, and old John seemed to think he was yet in Ireland.' With this correction I

<sup>1</sup> On Levett; quoted from memory.

now give the Memorandum referred to, which Fitzgerald entrusted to my keeping together with several of Carlyle's letters. An attempt to put up a monument on the real site of the battle proved abortive, as will appear hereafter.

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'About the middle of September 1842, W. M. Thackeray took me to tea with Carlyle whom I had not previously known. He was then busy with Cromwell; had just been, he told us, over the Field of Naseby in company with Dr. Arnold of Rugby, and had sufficiently identified the Ground of the Battle with the contemporaneous Accounts of it. As I happened to know the Field well—the greater part of it then belonging to my Family—I knew that Carlyle and Arnold had been mistaken—misled in part by an Obelisk which my Father had set up as on the highest Ground of the Field, but which they mistook for the centre-ground of the Battle. This I told Carlyle, who was very reluctant to believe that he and Arnold could have been deceived—that he could accept no hearsay Tradition or Theory against the Evidence of his own Eyes, etc. However, as I was just then going down to Naseby, I might enquire further into the matter.

'On arriving at Naseby, I had spade and mattock taken to a hill near half a mile across from the "Blockhead Obelisk," and pitted with several hollows, overgrown with rank Vegetation, which Tradition had always pointed to as the Graves of the Slain. One of

these I had opened ; and there, sure enough, were the remains of Skeletons closely packed together—chiefly teeth—but some remains of Shin-bone, and marks of Skull in the Clay. Some of these, together with some sketches of the Place, I sent to Carlyle.

‘The Naseby Monument, already advised by Carlyle, was not executed at the time : and some how or other was not again talked of till 1855 when the Estate was to be sold from us. I was told however by the Lawyers, etc., that it was better not to interfere while that Business was going on. So the Scheme went to sleep again till 1872, when, Carlyle renewing the subject in some Letter, I applied to the Agent of the Estate who was willing to help us in getting permission to erect the Stone, and to a neighbouring Mason to fashion it as Carlyle desired. We had some difficulty in this latter point, but at last all was settled, when suddenly Agent and Lawyer informed us the thing must not be done—for one reason, that Stone and Inscription were considered too plain.’

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Before the excavations were begun, however, Fitzgerald received the following letter of instructions from Carlyle, written three days after their interview.

CHELSEA, 18 *Sept.*, 1842.

MY DEAR SIR,

Profiting by the unexpected fact that *you* are now master of Naseby Battlefield, I have gone over the whole matter once more, probably for the twentieth time ; I

have copied you my illegible pencil-notes, and re-verified everything,—that so, if you can understand the meaning (which will be difficult, I fear), you may append to it what commentary, collected on the spot, you may judge edifying. Let me, however, again impress upon you that these statements and descriptions are actual *facts*, gathered with industry from some seven or eight eye-witnesses, looking at the business with their own eyes from seven or eight different sides; that the present figure of the ground, in my recollection, corresponds very tolerably well with the whole of them;—and that no ‘theory,’ by what Professor soever, can be of any use to me in comparison. I wish you had Sprigge’s complete Plan of the Battle: but you have it not; you have only that foolish Parson’s<sup>1</sup> very dim copy of it, and must help yourself with that.

The things I wish you to give me are first: The whole story of your Blacksmith, or other oral Chronicler, be it wise and credible, be it absurd and evidently false. Then you can ask, whether there remains any tradition of a windmill at Naseby? One stands in the Plan, not far from North of the village, probably some 300 yards to the west of where the ass of a column now stands: the whole concern, of fighting, rallying, flying, killing and chasing, transacted itself to the *west* of that,—*on* the height, over the brow of the height, down the slope, in the hollow, and up again to the grounds of Dust Hill, where the *final* dispersion took place. Therefore, again, pray ask

Where precisely any dead bodies are known to have

<sup>1</sup> There were two Parsons who wrote accounts of Naseby—Mastin in 1792, and Locking in 1830.—*Note by E. F. G.*

been found? Where and when the *last*-found was come upon; what they made of it,—whether no Antiquarian kept a tooth; at any rate, a button or the like? Cannon-balls ought to be found, especially musket-balls, down in that hollow, and on the slope thitherward: is any extant cabinet master of one?

Farther, are there, on the high ground N.W. or W. of Naseby village, any traces still discoverable of such names as these: 'Lantford hedges' (or perhaps 'hedge'); a kind of thicket running *up* the slope, towards the western environs of Naseby village, nearly from the North;—Fairfax had dragoons hidden here, who fired upon Rupert's right, as he charged upwards: 'Rutput Hill'; 'Fanny Hill' (according to Rushworth, 'Fanny Hill' in Sprigge),—probably two swellings in the ground, that lie between the south end of Lantford Hedges and the village; 'Lean Leaf Hill' seemingly another swelling, parallel to these, which reaches in with its slope *to* the very village—from the west: 'Mill Hill' farther to the east (marked as due west from the windmill, which of course must have stood upon a part of it), lying therefore upon the north part of the village? Is it possible, in spite of all ditching and enclosure bills, there may still some vestige of these names adhere to some fields or messuages; the exact position of which it would be satisfactory to fix. You can also tell me whether Burrough Hill is visible from Naseby, and 'what it is like'; and what the Sibbertoft height, on the other side, and the Harboro' Height are like! I suppose one sees Sibbertoft steeple, but no houses, from Naseby Height? Also that it was undoubtedly Clipston (as the good Dr. Arnold and I supposed) that we saw

there. Dr. A. and I came, as I find, thro' Crick, West Hadden, Cold Ashby; and crossed the Welford and Northampton road, perhaps some three miles from Naseby.

On the whole, my dear Sir, here seems to be work enough for you! But after all is it not worth your while on other accounts? Were it not a most legitimate task for the Proprietor of Naseby, a man of scholarship, intelligence and leisure, to make himself completely acquainted with the true state of all details connected with Naseby Battle and its localities? Few spots of ground in all the world are memorabler to an Englishman. We could still very well stand a *good* little book on Naseby! *Verbum sapienti.*

As for myself, had I the wings of an eagle, most likely I should still fly to you, and to several other quarters; but with railways and tub-gigs, and my talent for insomnolence, and fretting myself to fiddlestrings with all terrestrial locomotion whatsoever—alas, alas!

Believe me always,

My dear Sir,

Very truly yours

T. CARLYLE.

FitzGerald's letter to Carlyle, giving an account of the first results of his excavations, has apparently not been preserved, but it was promptly acknowledged.

CHELSEA, *Saturday*, 25 [24] *Sept.*, 1842.

MY DEAR SIR,

You will do me and the Genius of History a real favour, if you persist in these examinations and excava-



tions to the utmost length possible for you! It is long since I read a letter so interesting as yours of yesterday. Clearly enough you are upon the very battle-ground;—and I, it is also clear, have only looked up towards it from the slope of Mill Hill. Were not the weather so wet, were not, etc., etc., so many *etceteras*, I could almost think of running up to join you still! But that is evidently *unfeasible* at present.

The opening of that burial-heap blazes strangely in my thoughts: these are the very jawbones that were clenched together in deadly rage, on this very ground, 197 years ago! It brings the matter home to one, with a strange veracity,—as if for the first time one saw it to be no fable and theory but a dire fact. I will beg for a tooth and a bullet; authenticated by your own eyes and word of honour!—Our Scotch friend too, making turnip manure of it, he is part of the Picture. I understand almost all the Netherlands battlefields have already given up their bones to British husbandry; why not the old English next? Honour to thrift. If of 5000 wasted men, you can make a few usable turnips, why, do it!

The more sketches and details you can contrive to send me, the better. I want to know for one thing whether there is any *house* on Cloisterwell; what house that was that I saw from the slope of Naseby height (Mill-hill, I suppose), and fancied to be Dust Hill Farm? It must lie about North by West from Naseby Church, perhaps near a mile off. You say, one cannot see Dust Hill at all, much less any farm house of Dust Hill, from that Naseby Height?

But why does the Obelisk stand there? It might as well stand at Charing Cross; the blockhead that it is! I

again wish I had wings : alas, I wish many things ; that the gods would but annihilate Time and Space, which would include all things !

In great haste, Yours most truly, T. CARLYLE.

The following letters will partly supply the place of the missing letter to Carlyle.

*To Bernard Barton.*

LONDON. *Friday, Sept. [16] 1842.*

DEAR BARTON,

Have you supposed me dead or what? Well, so far from it, I have grown more fat than ever, which is quite as much reason for not writing. I have been staying at Naseby, and, having come up here for two days, return to that place by railroad to-morrow. I went to see Carlyle last night. He had just returned from the neighbourhood of Bury. He is full of Cromwell, and, funny enough, went over from Rugby to Naseby this spring with poor Dr. Arnold. They saw nothing, and walked over what was not the field of battle. I want him to go down with me : but he thinks it would be too expensive. So I have engaged to collect what matter I can for him on the spot. At the beginning of October I expect to be back in East Anglia for the winter. Frail is human virtue. I thought I had quite got over picture-dealing, when lo ! walking in Holborn this day I looked into a shop just to shew the strength of my virtue, and fell. That

accursed Battle Piece—I have bought it—and another picture of dead chaffinches, which Mr. C[hurchyard] will like, it is so well done : I expect you to give high prices for these pictures—mind that : and begin to economize in household matters. Leave off sugar in tea and make all your household do so. Also write to me at Naseby, Welford, Northampton. That's my direction—such a glorious country, Barton. I wrote you a letter a week ago, but never posted it. So now goodbye. I shall bring down the Chaffinches with me to Suffolk. Trade has been very bad, the dealers tell me. My fruit Girl still hangs up at a window—an unpleasant sight. Nobody is so hard set as to bid for her. —

*To W. F. Pollock.*

NASEBY, WELFORD, NORTHAMPTON,  
*Sept. 20/42.*

MY DEAR POLLOCK,

. . . London was very close and nasty : so I am glad to get down here : where, however, I am not (as at present proposed) to stay long : my Father requiring my services in Suffolk early in October. Laurence has made a sort of promise to come and see me here next Saturday : I wanted him to come down with me while the weather was fine. The place is very desert, but a battle was probably fought here 200 years ago, as an Obelisk planted by my Papa on the wrong site intimates. Poor Carlyle got into sad error from that deluding Obelisk : which Liston used to call (in this

case with truth) an Obstacle. I am afraid Carlyle will make a mad mess of Cromwell and his Times: what a poor figure Fairfax will cut! I am very tired of these heroics; and I can worship no man who has but a square inch of brains more than myself. I think there is but one Hero: and that is the Maker of Heroes.

Here I am reading Virgil's delightful Georgics for the first time. They really attune perfectly well with the plains and climate of Naseby. Valpy (whose edition I have) cannot quite follow Virgil's plough—in its construction at least. But the main acts of agriculture seem to have changed very little, and the alternation of green and corn crops is a good dodge. And while I heard the fellows going out with their horses to plough as I sat at breakfast this morning, I also read—

Libra die somnique pares ubi fecerit horas,  
 Et medium luci atque umbris jam dividit orbem,  
 Exercete, viri, tauros, serite hordea campis  
 Usque sub extremum brumæ intractabilis imbrem.<sup>1</sup>

One loves Virgil somehow.

*To Bernard Barton.*

[NASEBY], *Sept.* 22/42.

MY DEAR BARTON,

The pictures are left all ready packed up in Portland Place, and shall come down with me, whenever

<sup>1</sup> Georg. 1. 208-211.

that desirable event takes place. In the mean while here I am as before : but having received a long and interesting letter from Carlyle asking information about this Battle field, I have trotted about rather more to ascertain names of places, positions, etc. After all he will make a mad book. I have just seen some of the bones of a dragoon and his horse who were found foundered in a morass in the field—poor dragoon, much dismembered by time : his less worthy members having been left in the owner's summer-house for the last twenty years have disappeared one by one ; but his skull is kept safe in the hall : not a bad skull neither : and in it some teeth yet holding, and *a bit of the iron heel of his boot*, put into the skull by way of convenience. This is what Sir Thomas Browne calls 'making a man act his Antipodes.'<sup>1</sup> I have got a fellow to dig at one of the great general graves in the field : and he tells me to-night that he has come to bones : to-morrow I will select a neat specimen or two. In the mean time let the full harvest moon wonder at them as they lie turned up after lying hid 2400 revolutions of hers. Think of that warm 14th of June when the Battle was fought, and they fell pell-mell : and then the country people came and buried them so shallow that the stench was terrible, and the putrid matter oozed over the ground for several yards : so that the cattle were

<sup>1</sup> Referring to a passage in the Garden of Cyrus, near the end : 'To keep our eyes open longer, were but to act our *Antipodes*. The Huntsmen are up in *America*, and they are already past their first sleep in *Persia*.'

observed to eat those places very close for some years after. Every one to his taste, as one might well say to any woman who kissed the cow that pastured there.

Friday, 23rd. We have dug at a place, as I said, and made such a trench as would hold a dozen fellows: whose remains positively make up the mould. The bones nearly all rotted away, except the teeth which are quite good. At the bottom lay the *form* of a perfect skeleton: most of the bones gone, but the pressure distinct in the clay: the thigh and leg bones yet extant: the skull a little pushed forward, as if there were scanty room. We also tried some other reputed graves, but found nothing: indeed it is not easy to distinguish what are graves from old marlpits, etc. I don't care for all this bone-rummaging myself: but the identification of the graves identifies also where the greatest heat of the battle was. Do you wish for a tooth?

As I began this antiquarian account in a letter to you, so I have finished it, that you may mention it to my Papa, who perhaps will be amused at it. Two farmers insisted on going out exploring with me all day: one a very solid fellow, who talks like the justices in Shakespeare: but who certainly was inspired in finding out this grave: the other a Scotchman full of intelligence, who proposed the flesh-soil for manure for turnips. The old Vicar, whose age reaches half-way back to the day of the Battle, stood tottering over the verge of the trench. Carlyle has shewn

great sagacity in guessing at the localities from the vague descriptions of contemporaries : and his short *pasticcio* of the battle is the best I have seen.<sup>1</sup> But he will spoil all by making a demi-god of Cromwell, who certainly was so far from wise that he brought about the very thing he fought to prevent—the restoration of an unrestricted monarchy.

*To S. Laurence.*

NASEBY, *Sept.* 28/42.

MY DEAR LAURENCE,

I am sorry you did not come, as the weather has become fine, and this wild wide country looks well on these blowing days, with flying shadows running over the distance. Carlyle wrote me a long letter of questions concerning the field of Battle, its traditions, etc. So I have trotted about, examined the natives, and answered a great many of his queries as fully, but as shortly, as I could. However I suppose he growls superciliously at my letter, which was necessarily rather a long one. I have also, in company with two farmers, opened one of the reputed graves in which the killed were said to be repositied : and there sure enough we found decayed bones, skulls, arms, legs, etc., and very sound teeth—the only sound part. For many bodies put together corrupt one another of course, and 200 years have not contributed

<sup>1</sup> This was a series of notes, drawn up by Carlyle for FitzGerald's guidance, and afterwards incorporated almost verbatim in an Appendix to the Life of Cromwell.

to their preservation. People had often dug about the field before and found nothing; and we tried two or three other spots with no success. I am going to dig once more in a place where tradition talks of a large burial of men and horses. . . .

How long I shall yet be here I know not: but not long I doubt. I dare say I shall pass through London on my way to Suffolk: and then perhaps see the trans-Atlantic Secretary.<sup>1</sup>

Don't trouble yourself to write answers to my gossip. I have just been at our Church where we have had five clergymen to officiate: two in shovel-hats. Our Vicar is near ninety; we have two curates: and an old Clergyman and his Archdeacon son came on a visit. The son having a shovel-hat, of course the Father could not be left behind. Shovel-hats (you know) came into use with the gift of Tongs.

*To John Allen.*

[BOULGE COTTAGE.]

Nov. 18/42.

MY DEAR ALLEN,

. . . Do you know that I am really going to look out for some permanent abode, which I think I am well qualified to decide on now. But in this very judgment I may be most of all mistaken. I do not love London enough to pitch my tent there: Wood-

<sup>1</sup> Spedding.



bridge, Ipswich, or Colchester—won't one of them do? . . .

I have been reading Burton's *Anatomy*<sup>1</sup> lately: a captivating book certainly. That story of his going to the bridge at Oxford to listen to the bargemen's slang, etc., he reports of the old Democritus, his prototype: so perhaps biographers thought it must be Burton's taste also. Or perhaps Burton took to doing it after example. I cannot help fancying that I see the foundation (partly) of Carlyle's style in Burton: one passage quite like part of Sartor Resartus. Much of Burton's *Biography* may be picked up out of his own introduction to the *Anatomy*. Maurice's *Introductory Lecture* I shall be very glad to have. I do not fancy I should read his *Kingdom of Christ*, should I? You know.

I have had bad cold and cough which still hang about me: this damp cottage is not good for a cure. . . . And now goodbye.

*To F. Tennyson.*

GELDESTONE HALL, BECCLES.

[? 1843.]

DEAR FREDERIC,

I am glad you are back, and perhaps sorry. But glad let it be, for I shall be in London, as proposed, in another fortnight—more or less—and shall pig there

<sup>1</sup> FitzGerald's copy of the 1676 edition is now in my possession.

in a garret for two months. We will go to picture sales and buy bad pictures: though I have scarce money left. But I am really at last going to settle in some spooney quarters in the country, and would fain carry down some better forms and colours to put about me. I cannot get the second or third best: but I can get the imitations of the best: and that is enough for me.

What is become of Alfred? He never writes—nor is heard of.

Your letter found me poring over Harrington's *Oceana*: a long-shelved book—its doctrine of Government I am no judge of: but what English those fellows wrote! I cannot read the modern mechanique after them. 'This free-born Nation lives not upon the dole or Bounty of One Man, but distributing her Annual Magistracies and Honours with her own hand is herself King People.' Harrington must be a better writer than Milton. One finds books of this kind in these country houses: and it is pleasant to look them over at midnight in the kitchen, where I retire to smoke. . . .

Farewell till I see you one of these days.

*To S. Laurence.*

DUBLIN, *July 11/43.*

MY DEAR LAURENCE,

We got here this morning; most of us sick, but not I: not evidently sick, I mean. Here the sun shines,

and people go about in their cars or stand idle, just the same as ever. 'Repeal' is faintly chalked on a wall here and there. I have been to see a desperate collection of pictures by the Royal Academy: among them old unsaleables by Maclise and Uwins.

What I write for however is to say that the first volume of Titmarsh's Ireland is at 39 Portland Place; and that I wish you would ask for it there and get it. Keep the two volumes for a time. It is all true. I ordered a bath here when I got in: the waiter said it was heated to 90°, but it was scalding: he next locked me up in the room instead of my locking him out.

Keep an eye on the little Titian, and I shall really make the venture of borrowing £30 to invest in it. Tell Rochard you must have it. I may never be able to get a bit of Titian in my life again: and I shall doubtless learn to admire it properly in time.

*To F. Tennyson.*

HALVERSTOWN, KILCULLEN, IRELAND.

[? July 1843.]

DEAR FREDERIC . . .

. . . You would rave at this climate which is wetter far than that of England. There are the Wicklow hills (mountains we call them) in the offing—quite high enough. In spite of my prejudice for a level, I find myself every day unconsciously verging

towards any eminence that gives me the freest view of their blue ranges. One's thoughts take wing to the distance. I fancy that moderately high hills (like these) are the ticket—not to be domineered over by Mont Blancs, etc. But this may be only a passing prejudice.

We hear much less of Repeal here than in London : and people seem amused at the troops and waggons of gunpowder that are to be met now and then upon the roads. . . .

*To Bernard Barton.*

BALLYSAX,<sup>1</sup> KILCULLEN,  
August, 17/43.

MY DEAR BARTON,

. . . That old Suffolk comes over here sometimes, as I say ; and greets one's eyes with old familiar names : Sales at Yoxford, Aldeburgh, etc., regattas at Lowestoft, and at Woodbridge. I see Major Moor<sup>2</sup> turning the road by the old Duke of York ; the Deben winding away in full tide to the sea ; and numberless little pictures of this kind.

I am going the day after to-morrow to Edgeworth's, for a week, it may be a fortnight before I set sail for England. Where shall I pitch my tent ? that is the question. Whither shall those treasures of ancient art descend, and be repositied there for ever ?

<sup>1</sup> Where his brother Peter FitzGerald lived.

<sup>2</sup> See Letter to Barton of 2 Sept. 1841.

I have been looking over the old London Magazine. Lamb's papers come in delightfully: read over the Old China the night you get this, and sympathize with me. The account of the dish of green pease, etc., is the true history of lawful luxury. Not Johnson nor Adam Smith told so much. It is founded not on statistics but on good humanity.

We have at last delightful weather, and we enjoy it. Yesterday we went to Pool-a-Phooka, the Leap of the Goblin Horse. What is that, do you suppose? Why, a cleft in the mountains down and through which the river Liffey (not very long born from the earth) comes leaping and roaring. Cold veal pies, champagne, etc., make up the enchantment. We dabbled in the water, splashed each other, forded the river, climbed the rocks, laughed, sang, eat, drank, and were roasted, and returned home, the sun sinking red.

*(A pen and ink sketch.)*

This is not like Pool-a-Phooka.

*To F. Tennyson.*

IRELAND, August 31/43.

DEAR FREDERIC,

. . . I set sail from Dublin to-morrow night, bearing the heartfelt regrets of all the people of Ireland with me.

Where is my dear old Alfred? Sometimes I

intend to send him a quotation from a book : but do not perform the same. Are you packing up for Italy? I had a pleasant week with Edgeworth. He farms, and is a justice : and goes to sleep on the sofa of evenings. At odd moments he looks into Spinoza and Petrarch. People respect him very much in those parts. Old Miss Edgeworth is wearing away : she has a capital bright soul which even now shines quite youthfully through her faded carcass. . . . I had the weakest dream the other night that ever was dreamt. I thought I saw Thomas Froggnall Dibdin—and that was all. Tell this to Alfred. Carlyle talks of coming to see Naseby : but I leave him to suit the weather to his taste.

BOULGE HALL, WOODBRIDGE,

*Sunday, Dec. 10/1843.*

DEAR FREDERIC,

Either you wrote me word yourself, or some one told me, that you meant to winter at Florence. So I shall direct to the *Poste Restante* there. You see I am not settled at the Florence of Suffolk, called Ipswich, yet : but I am perhaps as badly off ; being in this most dull country house quite alone ; a grey mist, that seems teeming with half formed snow, all over the landscape before my windows. It is also Sunday morning : ten of the clock by the chime now sounding from the stables. I have fed on bread and milk (a dreadfully opaque diet) and I await the

morning Church in humble hope. It will begin in half an hour. We keep early hours in the country. So you will be able exactly to measure my aptitude and fullness for letter writing by the quantity written now, before I bolt off for hat, gloves, and prayerbook. I always put on my thickest great coat to go to our Church in : as fungi grow in great numbers about the communion table. And now, to turn away from Boulge, I must tell you that I went up to London a month ago to see old Thackeray, who had come there to have his eyes doctored. I stayed with him ten days and we were as usual together. Alfred came up 'in transitu' from Boxley to Cheltenham ; he looked, and said he was, ill : I have never seen him so hopeless : and I am really anxious to know how he is. . . . I remember the days of the summer when you and I were together, quarrelling and laughing—these I remember with pleasure. Our trip to Gravesend has left a perfume with me. I can get up with you on that everlastingly stopping coach on which we tried to travel from Gravesend to Maidstone that Sunday morning : worn out with it, we got down at an inn, and then got up on another coach—and an old smiling fellow passed us holding out his hat—and you said, 'That old fellow must go about as Homer did'—and numberless other turns of road and humour, which sometimes pass before me as I lie in bed. . . . Now before I turn over, I will go and see about Church, as I hear no bell, pack myself up as warmly as I can, and be off. So good-bye till twelve o'clock.

—'Tis five minutes past twelve by the stable clock : so I saw as I returned from Church through the garden. Parson and Clerk got through the service see saw like two men in a sawpit. In the garden I see the heads of the snowdrops and crocuses just out of the earth. Another year with its same flowers and topics to open upon us. Shenstone somewhere sings,<sup>1</sup>

Tedious again to mark the drizzling day,  
 Again to trace the same sad tracts of snow :  
 Or, lull'd by vernal airs, again survey  
 The selfsame hawthorn bud, and cowslips blow.

I rely on you and all your family sympathizing in this. So do I sometimes : anyhow, people complimenting each other on the approach of Spring and such like felicitations are very tiresome. Our very year is of a paltry diameter. But this is not proper language for Mark Tapley, whose greatest bore just now is having a bad pen ; but the letter is ended. So he is jolly and yours as ever.

*To S. Laurence.*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE,  
*Decr. 21/43.*

MY DEAR LAURENCE,

I hope you got safe and sound to London : as I did to this place yesterday. Those good Tetter people ! I have got an attachment to them somehow. I left Jane<sup>2</sup> in a turmoil as to which picture of

<sup>1</sup> Elegy xi.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Wilkinson, his sister.



W[ilkinson] she was to take. I advised her to take a dose of Time, which always operates so gently.

I have been down to Woodbridge to-day and had a long chat with Churchyard, whom I wish you had seen, as also his Gainsborough sketches. He is quite clear as to Gainsborough's general method, which was (he says) to lay all in (except the sky, of course) with pure colour, quite unmixed with white. The sketch he has is certainly so; but whether it ever could have been wrought up into a deep finish, I don't know. C. says yes it could: that Gainsborough began nearly all his pictures so. He has tried it over and over again (he says) and produced exactly the same effect with pure colour, laid on very thin over a light brown ground: asphaltum and blue producing just such a green as many of the trees in this sketch are of. The sky put in afterwards.

He thinks this the great secret of landscape painting. He shewed me the passage quoted by Burnet<sup>1</sup> from Rubens' maxims (where and what are they?) 'Begin by painting in your shadows lightly, taking care that *no white be suffered to glide into them—it is the poison of a picture except in the lights.* If ever your shadows are corrupted by the introduction of this baneful colour, your tones will no longer be warm and transparent, but heavy and leaden. It is not the same in the lights: they may be loaded with colour as much as you think proper.'

<sup>1</sup> Practical Hints on Light and Shade in Painting, by John Burnet, 1326, pp. 25, 26.

Here is a technical letter, you see, from a man who is no artist, and very ignorant, as you think, I dare say. Try a head in this way. You have tried a dozen, you say. Very well then.

I will send up your cloak, which is barely bigger than a fig leaf, when I can. On Saturday I give supper to B. Barton and Churchyard. I wish you could be with us. We are the chief wits of Woodbridge. And one man has said that he envies our conversations! So we flatter each other in the country.

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Of FitzGerald's way of life at this time I have the following notes which were given me by the late Rev. George Crabbe, Rector of Merton, the grandson of the poet, at whose house he died.

'FitzGerald was living at Boulge Cottage when I first knew him: a thatched cottage of one storey just outside his Father's Park. No one was, I think, resident at the Hall. His mother would sometimes be there a short time, and would drive about in a coach and four black horses. This would be in 1844, when he was 36. He used to walk by himself, slowly, with a Skye terrier. I was rather afraid of him. He seemed a proud and very punctilious man. I think he was at this time going often of an evening to Bernard Barton's. He did not come to us, except occasionally, till 1846. He seemed to me when I first saw him much as he was when he died, only not stooping: always like a grave middle-aged man:

never seemed very happy or light-hearted, though his conversation was most amusing sometimes. His cottage was a mile from Bredfield. He was very fond, I think, of my Father; though they had several coolnesses which I believe were all my Father's fault, who took fancies that people disliked him or were bored by him. E. F. G. had in his cottage an old woman to wait on him, Mrs. Faiers; a very old-fashioned Suffolk woman. He was just as careful not to make her do anything as he was afterwards with Mrs. Howe.<sup>1</sup> He would never ring the bell, if there was one, of which I am not sure. Sometimes he would give a little dinner—my Father, Brooke, B. Barton, Churchyard—everything most hospitable, but not comfortable.

‘In 1846 and 1847 he does not seem to have come much to Bredfield. Perhaps he was away a good deal. He was often away, visiting his mother, or W. Browne, or in London, or at the Kerriches’. In 1848, 1849, and 1850 he was a great deal at Bredfield, generally dropping in about seven o'clock, singing glees with us, and then joining my Father over his cigar, and staying late and often sleeping. He very often arranged concerted pieces for us to sing, in four parts, he being tenor. He sang very accurately but had not a good voice.

‘While E. F. G. was at Boulge, he always got up early, eat his small breakfast, stood at his desk reading or writing all the morning, eat his dinner of vegetables

<sup>1</sup> His housekeeper at Little Grange.

and pudding, walked with his Skye terrier, and then often finished the day by spending the evening with us or the Bartons. He did not visit with the neighbouring gentlefolks, as he hated a set dinner party.'

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*To F. Tennyson.*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE, *February 24/44.*

MY DEAR FREDERIC,

I got your letter all right. But you did not tell me where to direct to you again ; so I must send to the Poste Restante at Florence. I have also heard from Morton, to whom I despatched a letter yesterday : and now set about one to you. As you live in two different cities, one may write about the same things to both. You told me of the Arno being frozen, and even Italian noses being cold : he tells me the Spring is coming. I tell you that we have had the mildest winter known ; but as good weather, when it does come in England, is always unseasonable, and as an old proverb says that a green Yule makes a fat kirkyard, so it has been with us : the extraordinary fine season has killed heaps of people with influenza, debilitated others for their lives long, worried everybody with colds, etc. I have had three influenzas : but this is no wonder : for I live in a hut with walls as thin as a sixpence : windows that don't shut : a clay soil safe beneath my feet : a thatch perforated by lascivious sparrows over my head. Here I sit, read,

smoke, and become very wise, and am already quite beyond earthly things. I must say to you, as Basil Montagu once said, in perfect charity, to his friends: 'You see, my dear fellows, I like you very much, but I continue to advance, and you remain where you are (you see), and so I shall be obliged to leave you behind me. It is no fault of mine.' You must begin to read Seneca, whose letters I have been reading: else, when you come back to England, you will be no companion to a man who despises wealth, death, etc. What are pictures but paintings—what are auctions but sales! All is vanity. *Erige animum tuum, mî Lucili*, etc. I wonder whether old Seneca was indeed such a humbug as people now say he was: he is really a fine writer. About three hundred years ago, or less, our divines and writers called him the divine Seneca; and old Bacon is full of him. One sees in him the upshot of all the Greek philosophy, how it stood in Nero's time, when the Gods had worn out a good deal. I don't think old Seneca believed he should live again. Death is his great resource. Think of the *rocococity* of a gentleman studying Seneca in the middle of February 1844 in a remarkably damp cottage.

I have heard from Alfred also, who hates his water life—*βίος ἄβίος* he calls it—but hopes to be cured in March. Poor fellow, I trust he may. He is not in a happy plight, I doubt. I wish I lived in a pleasant country where he might like to come and stay with me—but this is one of the ugliest places in

England—one of the dullest—it has not the merit of being bleak on a grand scale—pollard trees over a flat clay, with regular hedges. I saw a stanza in an old book which seemed to describe my condition rather—

Far from thy kyn cast thee :  
Wrath not thy neighbour next thee,  
In a good corn country rest thee,  
And sit down, Robin, and rest thee.<sup>1</sup>

Funny advice, isn't it? I am glad to hear Septimus is so much improved. I beg you will felicitate him from me: I have a tacit regard of the true sort for him, as I think I must have for all of the Tennyson build. I see so many little natures about that I must draw to the large, even if their faults be on the same scale as their virtues. You and I shall I suppose quarrel as often as we meet: but I can quarrel and never be the worse with you. How we pulled against each other at Gravesend! You would stay—I wouldn't—then I would—then we did. Do you remember the face of that girl at the Bazaar, who kept talking to us and looking all round the room for fresh customers—a way women have—that is, a way of doing rather gracefully? Then the gentleman who sang Ivy green; a very extraordinary accentuation, it seemed to me: but I believe you admired it very much. Really, if these little excursions in the company of one's friends leave such a pleasant taste behind in the memory, one should court them oftener.

<sup>1</sup> Reliquiæ Antiquæ, i. 233.

And yet then perhaps the relish would grow less : it is the infrequency that gives them room to expand. I shall never get to Italy, that seems clear. My great travel this year will be to Carlisle. *Quid prosit ista tua longa peregrinatio, etc.* Travelling, you know, is a vanity. The *soul* remains the same. An amorem possis fugare, an libidinis exsicari, an timorem mortis depellere? What then will you say to Pollock's being married! I hear he is to be. Ad matrimonium fugis? Miser! Scævola noster dicere solebat, etc. Excuse my overflowing with philosophy. I am going this evening to eat toasted cheese with that celebrated poet Bernard Barton. And I must soon stir, and look about for my great coat, brush myself, etc. It blows a harrico, as Theodore Hook used to say, and will rain before I get to Woodbridge. Those poor mistaken lilac buds there out of the window! and an old Robin, ruffled up to his thickest, sitting mournfully under them, quite disheartened. For you must know the mild winter is just giving way to a remarkably severe spring. . . . I wish you were here to smoke a pipe with me. I play of evenings some of Handel's great choruses which are the bravest music after all. I am getting to the true John Bull style of music. I delight in Handel's Allegro and Penseroso. Do you know the fine pompous joyous chorus of 'These pleasures, Mirth, if thou canst give, etc.'? Handel certainly does in music what old Bacon desires in his Essay on Masques, 'Let the songs be loud and cheerful, not puling, etc.' One

might think the Water music was written from this text.

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About this time FitzGerald was engaged in collecting information for Carlyle on the subject of Cromwell's Lincolnshire campaign, and it is to this he refers in the following fragment of a letter to Mrs. Charlesworth and the letters which follow.

But as Carlyle is like to make good use of what we can find him, and make a good English Hero of Oliver—something of a Johnsonian figure—I hope you will try and pester these Lincoln ladies and gentlemen. I wrote to Livesey: who once, he says, had a butler named Oliver Cromwell. That is the nearest approach to history I make through him.

My brother John, after being expected every day this week, wrote positively to say he could not come to day: and accordingly was seen to drive up to the Hall two hours ago.\*

Believe me, dear Mrs. Charlesworth, yours thank-  
fully, E. FITZGERALD.

\* N.B. I am not at the Hall: but in the Cottage.  
Pray give my compliments to all your party.

*March* /44.

BOULGE [1841].

DEAR MRS. CHARLESWORTH,

Contributions from the fens or anywhere else will be good. We must get out all from the Allenbys.



I think I remember in Carlyle's notes that *the hill* in Winsby (where the farm house is) was the scene of a daring attack of Cromwell's: but my memory is bad. Your correspondent says that bones, spurs, and *urns* have been found there: the latter look rather as if the hill were of *Roman note*. I should like it to be clearly told, *exactly where* the relics were dug up: whether on the hill or on the level said to extend from the hill to the west. Mrs. Allenby's first letter says *that* was probably the field of battle: her son says the hill itself was. Also, *exactly what the relics were*. These two points are the chief I can see to need thorough sifting. I sent Carlyle the letter: he is now I dare say groaning over it. I have threatened to turn the correspondence entirely into his hands: so Miss Charlesworth may expect that. I go to town (I hope for a very short time) next week. John is yet here: we all like his wife much.

Farewell. Yours ever thankfully,

E. FITZGERALD.

Poor old Mrs. Chaplin<sup>1</sup> is dead! I have found an old lady here to replace her.

BOULGE, Friday [1844].

DEAR MRS. CHARLESWORTH,

I am sorry for the trouble you have. But I must hope that all that is to be got from such good

<sup>1</sup> An old woman at Wherstead in whom FitzGerald took great interest. She died early in March 1844, at the age of 84.

authority as the Allenbys will be got, as to Winsby. *Slash Lane* promises very well. From the Allenbys let us be content to reap Winsby field *only*: as it seems they once farmed it, and let us get as good an account as possible of the look of the field, *Slash Lane*, the records and traditions of the place, and what remains were dug up, and *exactly where*; for that generally shows where the stress of the battle was. It is best to keep people to one point: else they wander off into generalities: as for instance what the Lady tells of War Scythes hung up in Horncastle Church: which, cruel as Oliver was, we must refer back to an earlier warfare than his, I doubt. Pray thank Miss Charlesworth: and believe me yours ever,

E. FITZGERALD.

Boulge, *March 5/44.*

DEAR MRS. CHARLESWORTH,

I have heard again from Carlyle who has sent me a letter from Dr. Cookson, which I am to burn or send, as I think best. Before I do so, I should be glad to speak to Miss Charlesworth on the matter again: and as my brother is going off on one of his comet excursions to-morrow (at least so he purposed an hour ago) I shall go with him to Ipswich, unless it snows, etc., and shall walk to Bramford. My humble request therefore is nothing more than that you will be so good as to lock up Miss C. till I have come and consulted as to what is best to be done:

and how best to address this Doctor : whom I conclude she knows.

However, I only mean that if the day is pretty fair I may hope to find some of you at home : and Mr. Charlesworth well again.

Yours very truly,

E. FITZGERALD.

[19 CHARLOTTE STREET,  
RATHBONE PLACE,]  
LONDON, *April 11/44.*

DEAR MRS. CHARLESWORTH,

I last night smoked a pipe with Carlyle. He has had two large packets from Dr. Cookson, who shows alacrity enough to do what is asked, and may turn up something. But he has chiefly spoken of Winsby : and your Allenbys had so well cleared all that matter up with their map, etc., that the Doctor was going over needless ground. I hope we may be as successful with some other field : or rather that Cookson will anticipate us and save us all trouble.

London is very hateful to me. I long to spread wing and fly into the kind clean air of the country. I see nobody in the streets half so handsome as Mr. Reynolds<sup>1</sup> of our parish : all clever, composed, satirical, selfish, well dressed. Here we see what the World is. I am sure a great City is a deadly Plague : worse than the illness so called that came to ravage it. I tried

<sup>1</sup> The Rector of Boulge.

to persuade Carlyle to leave his filthy Chelsea, but he says his wife likes London. I get radishes to eat for breakfast of a morning: with them comes a savour of earth that brings all the delicious gardens of the world back into one's soul, and almost draws tears from one's eyes.

With renewed thanks believe me ever yours,

E. FITZGERALD.

*To Bernard Barton.*

19 CHARLOTTE ST., April 11/44.

DEAR BARTON,

I am still indignant at this nasty place London. Thackeray, whom I came up to see, went off to Brighton the night after I arrived, and has not re-appeared: but I must wait some time longer for him. Thank Miss Barton much for the *kit*; if it is but a kit: my old woman is a great lover of cats, and hers has just *kitted*, and a wretched little blind puling tabby lizard of a thing was to be saved from the pail for me: but if Miss Barton's is *a kit*, I will gladly have it: and my old lady's shall be disposed of—not to the pail. Oh rus, quando te aspiciam? Construe that, Mr. Barton.—I am going to send down my pictures to Boulge, if I can secure them: they are not quite secure at present. If they vanish, I snap my fingers at them, Magi and all—there is a world (alas!) elsewhere beyond pictures—Oh, oh, oh, oh—

I smoked a pipe with Carlyle yesterday. We ascended from his dining room carrying pipes and tobacco up through two stories of his house, and got into a little dressing room near the roof: there we sat down: the window was open and looked out on nursery gardens, their almond trees in blossom, and beyond, bare walls of houses, and over these, roofs and chimneys, and roofs and chimneys, and here and there a steeple, and whole London crowned with darkness gathering behind like the illimitable resources of a dream. I tried to persuade him to leave the accursed den, and he wished—but—but—perhaps he *didn't* wish on the whole.

When I get back to Boulge I shall recover my quietude which is now all in a ripple. But it is a shame to talk of such things. So Churchyard has caught another Constable. Did he get off our Debach boy that set the shed on fire? Ask him that. Can'st thou not minister to a mind diseased, etc.

A cloud comes over Charlotte Street and seems as if it were sailing softly on the April wind to fall in a blessed shower upon the lilac buds and thirsty anemones somewhere in Essex; or, who knows?, perhaps at Boulge. Out will run Mrs. Faiers, and with red arms and face of woe haul in the struggling windows of the cottage, and make all tight. Beauty Bob<sup>1</sup> will cast a bird's eye out at the shower, and bless the useful wet. Mr. Loder will observe to the farmer for whom he is doing up a dozen of Queen's

<sup>1</sup> His parrot.

Heads, that it will be of great use : and the farmer will agree that his young barleys wanted it much. The German Ocean will dimple with innumerable pin points, and porpoises rolling near the surface sneeze with unusual pellets of fresh water—

Can such things be,  
And overcome us like a summer cloud,  
Without our special wonder ?

Oh this wonderful wonderful world, and we who stand in the middle of it are all in a maze, except poor Matthews of Bedford, who fixes his eyes upon a wooden Cross and has no misgiving whatsoever. When I was at his chapel on Good Friday, he called at the end of his grand sermon on some of the people to say merely this, that they believed Christ had redeemed them : and first one got up and in sobs declared she believed it : and then another, and then another—I was quite overset :—all poor people : how much richer than all who fill the London Churches. Theirs is the kingdom of Heaven !

This is a sad farrago. Farewell.

*To Mrs. Charlesworth.*

[27 April, 1844?]

DEAR MRS. CHARLESWORTH,

Thank you over and over again for your letter. The last packet with sketches, etc., came all safe yesterday : and Carlyle is much pleased. We may say that Winsby Field is exhausted now. I should

like however to have some sketch of the *relics*: the shape of the stone jugs: their size specified. The *helmet* could be identified with the military fashion of some reign, as represented in prints, pictures, etc. But on the whole, the Allenbys have done capitally: and so have you: and so have I: and so I hope will Carlyle one day. He begs seriously to thank you and the Allenbys.

He was much distressed at Dr. Cookson's death:<sup>1</sup> and said how he should feel it when he came to think of it alone. Such is the man: he will call all the wits in London dilettanti, etc., but let a poor fellow die, and the Scotch heart flows forth in tears.

If any one can be found to do half as much for Gainsborough (which was an important battle) as has been done for Winsby, why, the Lincolnshire campaign will be handsomely reported. At Grantham there is no such great interest, it appears.

I hope to get out of London to my poor old Boulge next week. I have seen all my friends so as to satisfy them that I am a duller country fellow than I was, and so we shall part without heart-breaking on either side. It is partly one's fault not to be up to the London mark: but as there is a million of persons in the land fully up to it, one has the less call to repent in that respect. I confess that Mr. Reynolds is a better sight to me than old rouged Lady Morgan and all such.

<sup>1</sup> W. Cookson, M.D., of Lincoln died 12 April 1844.

I hope it will not be long before I visit you at Bramford. In the mean while believe me with best regards to all your family, yours ever very truly,

EDWARD FITZGERALD.

19 CHARLOTTE ST., ETC.

*Saturday.*

DEAR MRS. CHARLESWORTH,

I received your last packet just as I was setting off for Suffolk. I sent part of it to Carlyle. I enclose you what answer he makes me this morning. If Miss Charlesworth will take the pains to read his dispatch of Gainsboro' Fight, and can possibly rake out some information on the doubtful points, we shall help to lay that unquiet spirit of history which now disturbs Chelsea and its vicinity. Please to keep the paper safe : for it must have been a nuisance to write it.

I lament your renewed misfortune : but I cannot wonder at it. These things are not got rid of in a year. Isabella is in England with her husband, at Hastings.

Believe me yours ever thankfully,

E. FITZGERALD.

BOULGE, *May 7/44.*



*To F. Tennyson.*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE,  
*May 24/44.*

MY DEAR FREDERIC,

I think you mean never to write to me again. But you should, for I enjoy your letters much for years after I have got them. They tell me all I shall know of Italy, beside many other good things. I received one letter from you from Florence, and as you gave me no particular direction, I wrote to you at the Poste Restante there. I am now inditing this letter on the same venture. As my location is much more permanent, I command you to respond to me the very day you get this, warmed into such faint inspiration as my turnip radiance can kindle. You have seen a turnip lantern perhaps. Well, here I continue to exist: having broken my rural vegetation by one month in London, where I saw all the old faces—some only in passing, however—saw as few sights as possible, leaving London two days before the Exhibition opened. This is not out of moroseness or love of singularity: but I really supposed there could be nothing new: and therefore the best way would [be] to come new to it oneself after three or four years absence. I see in *Punch* a humorous catalogue of supposed pictures; Prince Albert's favourite spaniel and boot-jack, the Queen's Macaw with a Muffin, etc., by Landseer, etc., in which I recognize Thackeray's

fancy. He is in full vigour play and pay in London, writing in a dozen reviews, and a score of newspapers : and while health lasts he sails before the wind. I have not heard of Alfred since March. . . . Spedding devotes his days to Lord Bacon in the British Museum : his nights to the usual profligacy. . . . My dear Frederic, you must select some of your poems and publish them : we want some bits of strong genuine imagination to help put to flight these——etc. Publish a book of fragments, if nothing else but single lines, or else the whole poems. When will you come to England and do it? I dare say I should have stayed longer in London had you been there : but the wits were too much for me. Not Spedding, mind : who is a dear fellow. But one finds few in London *serious* men : I mean *serious* even in fun : with a true purpose and character whatsoever it may be. London melts away all individuality into a common lump of cleverness. I am amazed at the humour and worth and noble feeling in the country, however much railroads have mixed us up with metropolitan civilization. I can still find the heart of England beating healthily down here, though no one will believe it.

You know my way of life so well that I need not describe it to you, as it has undergone no change since I saw you. I read of mornings ; the same old books over and over again, having no command of new ones : walk with my great black

dog of an afternoon, and at evening sit with open windows, up to which China roses climb, with my pipe, while the blackbirds and thrushes begin to rustle bedwards in the garden, and the nightingale to have the neighbourhood to herself. We have had such a spring (bating the last ten days) as would have satisfied even you with warmth. And such verdure! white clouds moving over the new fledged tops of oak trees, and acres of grass striving with buttercups. How old to tell of, how new to see! I believe that Leslie's *Life of Constable* (a very charming book) has given me a fresh love of Spring. Constable loved it above all seasons: he hated Autumn. When Sir G. Beaumont who was of the old classical taste asked him if he did not find it difficult to place *his brown tree* in his pictures, 'Not at all,' said C., 'I never put one in at all.' And when Sir George was crying up the tone of the old masters' landscapes, and quoting an *old violin* as the proper tone of colour for a picture, Constable got up, took an old Cremona, and laid it down on the sunshiny grass. You would like the book. In defiance of all this, I have hung my room with pictures, like very old fiddles indeed: but I agree with Sir George and Constable both. I like pictures that are not like nature. I can have nature better than any picture by looking out of my window. Yet I respect the man who tries to paint up to the freshness of earth and sky. Constable did not wholly achieve what he tried

at : and perhaps the old masters chose a soberer scale of things as more within the compass of lead paint. To paint dew with lead !

I also plunge away at my old Handel of nights, and delight in the Allegro and Penseroso, full of pomp and fancy. What a pity Handel could not have written music to some great Masque, such as Ben Jonson or Milton would have written, if they had known of such a musician to write for.

*To S. Laurence.*

*May, 1844.*

DEAR LAURENCE,

I hope your business is settled by this time. I have seen praise of your picture in the Athenæum, which quoted also the Chronicle's good opinion. I am very glad of all this and I hope you will now set to work, and paint away with ease and confidence, forgetting that there is such a hue as bottle-green<sup>1</sup> in the universe (it was tastefully omitted from the rainbow, you see) ; and, in spite of what Moore says, paint English people in English atmospheres. Your Coningham was rather orange, wasn't he ? But he was very good, I thought. Dress your ladies in cheerful dresses, not quite so vulgar as Chalon's.

<sup>1</sup> *Note by E. F. G.*—Also, bottle-brown : in general all bottled things are not so fresh coloured as before they were put in. A gherkin loses considerably in freshness. The great triumph of a housekeeper is when her guests say, 'Why, are these *really* bottled gooseberries ! They look like fresh, etc.'

. . . I heard from my sister that you had finished Wilkinson to the perfect content of all: I had charged her particularly not to allow Mrs. W. to intercede for any smirk or alteration whatever.

My Venetian pictures look very grand on my walls, which previously had been papered with a still green (not bottled) on purpose to receive them. On my table is a long necked bottle with three flowers just now in it . . . a tuft of rhododendron, a tuft of scarlet geranium, and a tuft of white gilliflower. Do you see these in your mind's eye? I wish you could come down here and refresh your sodden eyes with pure daylight, budding oak trees, and all the changes of sky and cloud. To live to make sonnets about these things, and doat upon them, is worse Cockneyism than rejoicing in the sound of Bow Bells for ever so long: but here one has them whether one will or no: and they are better than Lady Morgan and — at a rout in Harley Street. Maclise is a handsome and fine fellow, I think: and Landseer is very good natured. I long for my old Alfred portrait here sometimes: but you had better keep it for the present. W. Browne and Spedding are with me, good representatives one of the *Vita Contemplativa*, the other of the *Vita Attiva*. Spedding, if you tell him this, will not allow that he has not the elements of Action in him: nor has he not: nor has not the other those of contemplation: but each inclines a different way notwithstanding. I wish you and

Spedding could come down here : though there is little to see, and to eat. When you write you must put *Woodbridge* after Boulge. This letter of yours went to Bury St. Edmunds, for want of that. I hear Alfred Tennyson is in very good looks : mind and paint him *quickly* when he comes to town ; looking full at you.

*To Bernard Barton.*

19 CHARLOTTE ST.,  
RATHBONE PLACE.  
[1844.]

DEAR BARTON,

I got here but yesterday, from Bedford, where I left W. Browne in train to be married to a rich woman. When I heard that they could not have less than five hundred a year, I gave up all further interest in the matter : for I could not wish a reasonable couple more. W. B. may be spoilt if he grows rich : that is the only thing could spoil him. This time ten years I first went to ride and fish with him about the river Ouse—he was then 18—quick to love and quick to fight—full of confidence, generosity, and the glorious spirit of Youth. . . . I shall go to Church and hope he mayn't be defiled with the filthy pitch. Oh ! if we could be brought to open our eyes. I repent in ashes for reviling the Daddy who wrote that Sonnet against damned Riches.

I heard a man preach at Bedford in a way that shook my soul. He described the crucifixion in a way that put the scene before his people—no fine words, and metaphors: but first one nail struck into one hand, and then into another, and one through both feet—the cross lifted up with God in man's image distended upon it. And the sneers of the priests below—‘Look at that fellow there—look at him—he talked of saving others, etc.’ And then the sun veiled his face in Blood, etc. I certainly have heard oratory now—of the Lord Chatham kind, only Matthews has more faith in Christ than Pitt in his majority. I was almost as much taken aback as the poor folks all about me who sobbed: and I hate this beastly London more and more. It stinks all through of churchyards and fish shops. As to pictures—well, never mind them. Farewell!

In the chapel opposite this house preaches Robert Montgomery!

19 CHARLOTTE ST., RATHBONE PLACE.

[13 *June* 1844.]

Oh, Barton man! but I am grilled here. Oh for to sit upon the banks of the dear old Deben, with the worthy collier sloop going forth into the wide world as the sun sinks! I went all over Westminster Abbey yesterday with a party of country folks, to see the tombs. I did this to vindicate my way of life. Then we had a smoke with Carlyle and he

very gloomy about the look of affairs, as usual. I am as tired this morning as if I'd walked fifty miles. Morton, fresh from Italy, agrees that London is not fit to live in. I can't write, nor can you read perhaps. So farewell. Early next week (unless I go round by Bedford) I expect to see good Woodbridge.

*To S. Laurence.*

BOULGE, *July 4/44.*

DEAR LAURENCE,

I have but lately returned from Holbrook, where I saw your last portrait of Wilkinson. It is very capital, and gives my sister and all her neighbours great satisfaction. Jane indeed can talk of nothing else. I will say this however, with my usual ignorance and presumption, that I think the last day's sitting made it a little heavier than when I left it unfinished. Was it that the final glazing was somewhat too thick? I only mention this as a very slight defect, which I should not have observed had I not seen its penultimate state, and were I not a crotchety stickler for lightness and ease. But I hope and trust you will now do all your future sketches in oil in the same way in which this is done: the long brush, the wholesome distance between canvas, painter, and sitter, and the few sittings. For myself, I have always been sure of this: but I can assert it to you with more confidence now, seeing that every one else seems to



agree with me, if I may judge by the general approval of this specimen of the long brush. Besides, such a method must shorten your labour, preserve the freshness of your eye and spirit, and also ensure the similitude of the sitter to himself by the very speediness of the operation.

Mills was very much delighted at W.'s portrait. What will you say of me when I tell you that I did not encourage him to have his wife painted by you, as he seemed to purpose! You will pray heaven to deliver you from your friends. But notwithstanding this, I am sure this last portrait will bring you sitters from this part of the country. Perhaps you will not find it easy to forgive me this. I must tell you that Mrs. Mills, who sets up to be no judge of pictures, but who never is wrong about anything, instantly pitched on your portrait of Coningham as the best in the Exhibition, without seeing who it was by: and when she referred to the Catalogue, called out to her husband 'Why this is by E. F. G.'s friend Mr. Laurence.'

July 18. You see that all up to this was written a fortnight ago. I did not finish, for I did not know where to direct. And now I shall finish this portrait of my mind, you see, in a different aspect perhaps to that with which I set out. On looking over what I wrote however, I stick to all I said about the painting: as to Mrs. Mills, whose case seems to require some extenuation on my part, I fancied she was one of those persons' faces you would not take to: and so

not succeed in. It is rather a pretty face, without meaning, it seems to me : and yet she has meaning in her. Mills has already had one portrait of her, which discontents all, and therefore it was I would not advise any painter who did not understand the art of *Millinery* well : for if the face does not wholly content, there is the dress to fall back on. I fancy Chalon would do the business.

I hear you have been doing some brother or brother in law of Mrs. Lumsden. Mind what I have told you. I may not be a good judge of painting, but I can judge of what people in general like. . . .

*To John Allen.*

(About July 16, 1844 J. A.)

MY DEAR GOOD ALLEN,

Let me hear from you, if even but a line, before you leave London on your summer excursion, whithersoever that is to be. I conclude you go somewhere ; to Hampshire, or to Tenby. . . .

I have nothing to tell you of myself. Here I exist, and read scraps of books, garden a little, and am on good terms with my neighbours. The Times paper is stirring up our farming society to the root, and some good will come of it, I dare say, and some ill. Do you know of any good books on Education ? not for the poor or Charity schools, but on modern Gentlemen's grammar schools, etc. Did not Combe

write a book? But he is the driest Scotch Snuff. I beg leave to say that this letter is written with a pen of my own making: the first I have made these twenty years. I doubt after all it is no proof of a very intelligent pen-Creator, but only of a lucky slit. The next effort shall decide. Farewell, my dear Fellow. Don't forget unworthy me. We shall soon have known each other twenty years, and soon thirty, and forty, if we live a little while.

*To Bernard Barton.*

GELDESTONE, 22 August 1844.

MY DEAR BARTON,

You will think I have forgot you. I spent four pleasant days with Donne: who looks pale and thin, and in whose face the grey is creeping up from those once flourishing whiskers to the skull. It is doing so with me. We are neither of us in what may be called the first dawn of boyhood. Donne maintains his shape better than I do, but sorrow I doubt has done that: and so we see why the house of mourning is better than the stalled ox. For it is a grievous thing to grow poddy: the age of Chivalry is gone then. An old proverb says that 'a full belly neither fights nor flies well.'

I also saw Geldart at Norwich. He paints, and is deep in religious thoughts also: he has besides the finest English good sense about him: and altogether

he is a man one goes to that one may learn from him. I walked much about Norwich and was pleased with the old place.

Here I see my old friend Mrs. Schutz, and play with the children. Having shown the little girl the prints of Boz's Curiosity Shop, I have made a short abstract of Little Nelly's wanderings which interests her much, leaving out the Swivellers, etc. For children do not understand how merriment should intrude in a serious matter. This might make a nice child's book, cutting out Boz's sham pathos, as well as the real fun; and it forms a kind of Nelly-ad,<sup>1</sup> or Homeric narration of the child's wandering fortunes till she reaches at last a haven more desirable than any in stony Ithaca.

Lusia is to be married<sup>2</sup> on the 2nd, I hear; and I shall set out for Leamington where the event takes place in the middle of next week. Whether I shall touch in my flight at Boulge is yet uncertain: so don't order any fireworks just at present. I hear from Mr. Crabbe he is delighted with D'Israeli's Coningsby, which I advised him to read. Have you read it? The children still wonder what Miss Charlesworth meant when she said that she didn't mean what she said. I tell them it is a new way of thinking of young England. I have exercised the children's minds greatly on the doctrine of Puseyitical reticence (that is not the word) but I find that children, who are great in the kingdom of Heaven,

<sup>1</sup> The MS. of this has been preserved.

<sup>2</sup> To the Rev. Francis de Soyres.

are all for blurting out what they mean. Farewell for the present. Ever yours, E. F. G.

If war breaks out with France, I will take up arms as a volunteer under Major Pytches. Pytches and Westminster Abbey!

LEAMINGTON, *Sept.* 28/44.

MY DEAR BARTON,

. . . I expect to be here about a week, and I mean to give a day to looking over the field of Edgehill, on the top of which, I have ascertained, there is a very delightful pot-house, commanding a very extensive view. Don't you wish to sit at ease in such a high tower, with a pint of porter at your side, and to see beneath you the ground that was galloped over by Rupert and Cromwell two hundred years ago, in one of the richest districts of England, and on one of the finest days in October, for such my day is to be?

In the meanwhile I cast regretful glances of memory back to my garden at Boulge, which I want to see dug up and replanted. I have bought anemone roots which in the Spring shall blow Tyrian dyes, and Irises of a newer and more brilliant prism than Noah saw in the clouds. I have bought a picture of my poor quarrelsome friend Moore, just to help him; for I don't know what to do with his picture.

*To F. Tennyson.*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE, Oct. 10/44.

MY DEAR FREDERIC,

You will think I have wholly cut you. But I wrote half a letter to you three months ago; and mislaid it; spent some time in looking for it, always hoping; and then some more time despairing; and we all know how time goes when [we] have got a thing to do which we are rather lazy about doing. As for instance, getting up in a morning. Not that writing a letter to you is so bad as getting up; but it is not easy for mortal man who has heard, seen, done, and thought, nothing since he last wrote, to fill one of these big foreign sheets full as a foreign letter ought to be. I am now returned to my dull home here after my usual pottering about in the midland counties of England. A little Bedfordshire—a little Northamptonshire—a little more folding of the hands—the same faces—the same fields—the same thoughts occurring at the same turns of road—this is all I have to tell of; nothing at all added—but the summer gone. My garden is covered with yellow and brown leaves; and a man is digging up the garden beds before my window, and will plant some roots and bulbs for next year. My parsons come and smoke with me, etc. ‘The round of life from hour to hour’—alluding doubtless to a mill-horse. Alfred is reported to be still at Park House, where he has been sojourning

for two months, I think ; but he never writes me a word. Hydropathy has done its worst ; he writes the names of his friends in water. . . . I spent two days in London with old Morton about five weeks ago ; and pleasant days they were. The rogue bewitches me with his wit and honest speech. He also staid some while at Park House, while Alfred was there, and managed of course to frighten the party occasionally with some of his sallies. He often writes to me ; and very good his letters are all of them.

When do you mean to write me another ? Morton told me in his last that he had heard from Brotherton you were gone, or going, to Naples. I dare say this sheet of mine will never get to your hands. But if it does, let me hear from you. Is Italy becoming stale to you ? Are you going to Cairo for fresh sensations ? Thackeray went off in a steamboat about the time the French were before Mogadore ; he was to see those coasts and to visit Jerusalem ! Titmarsh at Jerusalem will certainly be an era in Christianity. But I suppose he will soon be back now. Spedding is yet in his highlands, I believe, considering Grouse and Bacon.

I expect to run up to London some time during the winter just to tell over old friends' faces and get a sup of music and painting. I have bought very few more pictures lately ; and [heard] no music but Mendelssohn's *M. Night's Dream*. The overture, which was published long ago, is the best part ; but there is a very noble triumphal march also.

Now I feel just in the same fix as I did in that sheet of paper whose fate is uncertain. But if I don't put in a word more, yet this shall go, I am determined. Only consider how it is a matter of necessity that I should have nothing to say. If you could see this place of Boulge! You who sit and survey marble palaces rising out of cypress and olive. There is a dreadful vulgar ballad, composed by Mr. Balfe, and sung with the most unbounded applause by Miss Rainforth,

‘I dreamt that I dwelt in marble Halls,’

which is sung and organed at every corner in London. I think you may imagine what kind of flowing  $\frac{6}{8}$  time of the last degree of imbecility it is. The words are written by Mr. Bunn! Arcades ambo.

I say we shall see you over in England before long: for I rather think you want an Englishman to quarrel with sometimes. I mean quarrel in the sense of a good strenuous difference of opinion, supported on either side by occasional outbursts of spleen. Come and let us try. You used to irritate my vegetable blood sometimes.

*To Bernard Barton.*

[GELDESTONE, *Nov.* 27, 1844.]

DEAR BARTON,

My return to Boulge is delayed for another week, because we expect my Father here just now. But for this, I should have been on the Union Coach this



day. The children here are most delightful ; the best company in all the world, to my mind. If you could see the little girl dance the Polka with her sisters ! Not set up like an Infant Terpsichore, but seriously inclined, with perfect steps in perfect time.

We see a fine white frost over the grass this morning ; and I suppose you have rubbed your hands and cried ‘ Oh Lauk, how cold it is ! ’ twenty times before I write this. Now one’s pictures become doubly delightful to one. I certainly love winter better than summer. Could one but know, as one sits within the tropic latitude of one’s fireside, that there was not increased want, cold, and misery, beyond it !

My Spectator tells me that Leigh Hunt has published a good volume of Poem-selections ; not his own poems, but of others. And Miss Martineau has been cured of an illness of five years standing by Mesmerism ! By the help of a few passes of the hand following an earnest Will, she, who had not set foot out of her room, for the chief part of those five years, now can tread the grass again, and walk five miles ! Her account of the business in the Athenæum is extremely interesting. She is the only one I have read of who describes the sensations of *the trance*, which, seeming a painful one to the wide-awake looker on, is in fact a state of tranquil glorification to the patient. It cheers but not inebriates ! She felt her disease oozing away out at her feet, and as it were streams of warm fresh vitality coming in its place. And when she woke, lo, this was no dream !

*To F. Tennyson.*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE, Decr. 8/44.

MY DEAR FREDERIC,

What is a poor devil to do? You tell me quite truly that my letters have not two ideas in them, and yet you tell me to write my two ideas as soon as I can. So indeed it is so far easy to write down one's two ideas, if they are not very abstruse ones; but then what the devil encouragement is it to a poor fellow to expose his nakedness so? All I can say is, to say again that if you lived in this place, you would not write so long a letter as you have done, full of capital description and all good things; though without any compliment I am sure you would write a better than I shall. But you see the original fault in me is that I choose to be in such a place as this at all; that argues certainly a talent for dullness which no situation nor intercourse of men could much improve. It is true; I really do like to sit in this doleful place with a good fire, a cat and dog on the rug, and an old woman in the kitchen. This is all my live stock. The house is yet damp as last year; and the great event of this winter is my putting up a trough round the eaves to carry off the wet. There was discussion whether the trough should be of iron or of zinc: iron dear and lasting; zinc the reverse. It was decided for iron; and accordingly iron is put up.

Why should I not live in London and see the world? you say. Why then *I* say as before, I don't

like it. I think the dullness of country people is better than the impudence of Londoners; and the fresh cold and wet of our clay fields better than a fog that stinks *per se*; and this room of mine, clean at all events, better than a dirty room in Charlotte St. If you, Morton, and Alfred, were more in London, I should be there more; but now there is but Spedding and Allen whom I care a straw about. I have written two notes to Alfred to ask him just to notify his existence to me; but you know he is obstinate on that point. I heard from Carlyle that he (Alfred) had passed an evening at Chelsea much to C.'s delight; who has opened the gates of his Valhalla to let Alfred in.<sup>1</sup> Thackeray is at Malta, where I am told he means to winter. . . .

As I have no people to tell you of, so have I very few books, and know nothing of what is stirring in the literary world. I have read the Life of Arnold of

<sup>1</sup> On the 26th of October, Carlyle wrote to FitzGerald:

'One day we had Alfred Tennyson here; an unforgettable day. He staid with us till late; forgot his stick: we dismissed him with Macpherson's Farewell. Macpherson (see Burns) was a Highland robber; he played that Tune, of his own composition, on his way to the gallows; asked, "If in all that crowd the Macpherson had any clansman?" holding up the fiddle that he might bequeath it to some one. "Any kinsman, any soul that wished him well?" Nothing answered, nothing durst answer. He crushed the fiddle under his foot, and sprang off. The Tune is rough as hemp, but strong as a lion. I never hear it without something of emotion,—poor Macpherson; tho' the Artist hates to play it. Alfred's dark face grew darker, and I saw his lip slightly quivering!'

Rugby, who was a noble fellow ; and the letters of Burke, which do not add to, or detract from, what I knew and liked in him before. I am meditating to begin Thucydides one day ; perhaps this winter. . . .

Old Seneca, I have no doubt, was a great humbug in deed, and his books have plenty of it in word ; but he had got together a vast deal of what was not humbug from others ; and, as far as I see, the old philosophers are available now as much as two thousand years back. Perhaps you will think that is not saying much. Don't suppose I think it good philosophy in myself to keep here out of the world, and sport a gentle Epicurism ; I do not ; I only follow something of a natural inclination, and know not if I could do better under a more complex system. It is very smooth sailing hitherto down here. No velvet waistcoat and ever-lustrous pumps to be considered ; no bon mots got up ; no information necessary. There is a pipe for the parsons to smoke, and quite as much bon mots, literature, and philosophy as they care for without any trouble at all. If we could but feed our poor ! It is now the 8th of December ; it has blown a most desperate East wind, all razors ; a wind like one of those knives one sees at shops in London, with 365 blades all drawn and pointed ; the wheat is all sown ; the fallows cannot be ploughed. What are all the poor folks to do during the winter ? And they persist in having the same enormous families they used to do ; a woman came to me two days ago who had seventeen children !

What farmers are to employ all these? What Landlord can find room for them? The law of Generation must be repealed. The London press does nothing but rail at us poor country folks for our cruelty. I am glad they do so; for there is much to be set right. But I want to know if the Editor of the Times is more attentive to his devils, their wives and families, than our squires and squiresses and parsons are to their fellow parishioners. Punch also assumes a tone of virtuous satire, from the mouth of Mr. Douglas Jerrold! It is easy to sit in arm chairs at a club in Pall Mall and rail on the stupidity and brutality of those in High Suffolk.

Come, I have got more than two ideas into this sheet; but I don't know if you won't dislike them worse than mere nothing. But I was determined to fill my letter. Yes, you are to know that I slept at Woodbridge last night, went to church there this morning, where every one sat with a purple nose, and heard a dismal well-meant sermon; and the organ blew us out with one grand idea at all events, one of old Handel's Coronation Anthems; that I dined early, also in Woodbridge; and walked up here with a tremendous East wind blowing sleet in my face from over the German Sea, that I found your letter when I entered my room; and reading it through, determined to spin you off a sheet incontinently, and lo! here it is! Now or never! I shall now have my tea in, and read over your letter again while at it. You are quite right in saying that Gravesend

excursions with you do me good. When did I doubt it? I remember them with great pleasure; few of my travels so much so. I like a short journey in good company; and I like you all the better for your Englishman's humours. One doesn't find such things in London; something more like it here in the country, where every one, with whatever natural stock of intellect endowed, at least grows up his own way, and flings his branches about him, not stretched on the espalier of London dinner-table company.

P.S. Next morning. Snow over the ground. We have our wonders of inundation in Suffolk also, I can tell you. For three weeks ago such floods came, that an old woman was carried off as she was retiring from a beer house about 9 p.m., and drowned. She was probably half seas over before she left the beer house.

And three nights ago I looked out at about ten o'clock at night, before going to bed. It seemed perfectly still; frosty, and the stars shining bright. I heard a continuous moaning sound, which I knew to be, not that of an infant exposed, or female ravished, but of the sea, more than ten miles off! What little wind there was carried to us the murmurs of the waves circulating round these coasts so far over a flat country. But people here think that this sound so heard is not from the waves that break, but a kind of prophetic voice from the body of the sea itself announcing great gales. Sure enough we have got

them, however heralded. Now I say that all this shows that we in this Suffolk are not so completely given over to prose and turnips as some would have us. I always said that being near the sea, and being able to catch a glimpse of it from the tops of hills, and of houses, redeemed Suffolk from dullness; and at all events that our turnip fields, dull in themselves, were at least set all round with an undeniably poetic element. And so I see Arnold says; he enumerates five inland counties as the only parts of England for which nothing could be said in praise. Not that I agree with him there neither; I cannot allow the valley of the Ouse about which some of my pleasantest recollections hang to be without its great charm. W. Browne, whom you despised, is married, and I shall see but little of him for the future. I have laid by my rod and line by the willows of the Ouse for ever. 'He is married and cannot come.' This change is the true meaning of those verses,<sup>1</sup>

Friend after friend departs;  
Who has not lost a friend?

and so on. If I were conscious of being steadfast and good humoured enough, I would marry to-morrow. But a humourist is best by himself.

<sup>1</sup> By James Montgomery: 'Friends' in his *Miscellaneous Poems* (Works, ii. 298, ed. 1836).

*To Bernard Barton.*

19 CHARLOTTE ST., RATHBONE PLACE,

*Jany. 4/45.*

DEAR BARTON,

Clawed hold of by a bad cold am I—a London cold—where the atmosphere clings to you, like a wet blanket. You have often received a letter from me on a Sunday, haven't you? I think I used to write you an account of the picture purchases of the week, that you might have something to reflect upon in your silent meeting. (N.B. This is very wrong, and I don't mean it.) Well, now I have bought no pictures, and sha'n't; but one I *had* bought is sent to be lined. A Bassano of course; which nobody will like but myself. It is a grave picture; an Italian Lord dictating to a Secretary with upturned face. Good company, I think.

You did not tell me how you and Miss Barton got on with the *Vestiges*. I found people talking about it here; and one laudatory critique in the *Examiner* sold an edition in a few days. I long to finish it. I am going in state to the London Library—*my* Library—to review the store of books it contains, and carry down a box full for winter consumption. Do you want anything? eh, Mr. Barton?

I went to see Sophocles' tragedy of *Antigone* done into English two nights ago. And yesterday I dined with my dear old John Allen who remains whole and intact of the world in the heart of London. He



dined some while ago at Lambeth, and the Lady next him asked the Archbishop if he read Punch. Allen thought this was a misplaced question: but I think the Archbishop ought to see Punch: though not to read it regularly perhaps. I then asked Allen about the Vestiges—he had heard of it—laughed at the idea of its being atheistical. ‘No enquiry,’ said he, ‘can be atheistical.’ I doubt if the Archbishop of Canterbury could say that. What do you think of Exeter? Isn’t he a pretty lad?

*To W. B. Donne.*

BOULGE, *Jan. 29/45.*

MY DEAR DONNE,

. . . A. T. has near a volume of poems—elegiac—in memory of Arthur Hallam. Don’t you think the world wants other notes than elegiac now? Lycidas is the utmost length an elegiac should reach. But Spedding praises: and I suppose the elegiacs will see daylight, public daylight, one day. Carlyle goes on growling with his Cromwell: whom he finds more and more faultless every day. So that *his* paragon also will one day see the light also, an elegiac of a different kind from Tennyson’s; as far apart indeed as Cromwell and Hallam.

Barton comes and sups with me to-morrow, and George Crabbe, son of the poet, a capital fellow.

*To F. Tennyson.*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE, *Feby.* 6, 1845.

MY DEAR FREDERIC,

. . . You like to hear of men and manners. Have I not been to London for a whole fortnight, seen Alfred, Spedding, all the lawyers and all the painters, gone to Panoramas of Naples by Volcanolight (Vesuvius in a blaze illuminating the whole bay, which Morton says is not a bit better than Plymouth Sound, if you could put a furnace in the belly of Mount Edgcombe)—gone to see the Antigone of Messrs. Sophocles and Mendelssohn at Covent Garden—gone to see the Infant Thalia—now as little of an Infant as a Thalia—at the Adelaide Gallery. So! you see things go on as when you were with us. Only the Thalia has waxed in stature: and perhaps in wisdom also: but that is not in her favour. The Antigone is, as you are aware, a neatly constructed drama, on the French model; the music very fine, *I* thought—but you would turn up your nose at it, I dare say. It was horribly ill sung, by a chorus in shabby togas, who looked much more like dirty bakers than Theban (were they?) respectable old gentlemen. Mr. Vandenhoff sat on a marble camp-stool in the middle, and looked like one of Flaxman's Homeric Kings—very well. And Miss Vandenhoff did Antigone. I forget the name of the lady who did Ismene;<sup>1</sup> perhaps you

<sup>1</sup> Miss Cooke.

would have thought her very handsome: but I did not, nor was she considered at all remarkable, as far as I could make out. I saw no pantomimes: and all the other theatres were filled with Balfe, whom perhaps you admire very much. So I won't say anything about him till you have told me what you think on his score. . . .

Well and have you read 'Eothen' which all the world talks of? And do you know who it is written by? . . . Then Eliot Warburton has written an Oriental Book! Ye Gods! In Shakespeare's day the nuisance was the Monsieur Travellers who had 'swum in a gundello'; but now the bores are those who have smoked *tshibouques* with a *Peshaw*! Deuce take it: I say 'tis better to stick to muddy Suffolk.

*To Bernard Barton.*

GELDESTONE, April 3/45.

MY DEAR BARTON,

. . . I have been loitering out in the garden here this golden day of Spring. The woodpigeons coo in the covert; the frogs croak in the pond; the bees hum about some thyme, and some of my smaller nieces have been busy gathering primroses, 'all to make posies suitable to this present month.' I cannot but think with a sort of horror of being in London now: but I doubt I must be ere long. . . . I have abjured

all Authorship, contented at present with the divine Poem which Great Nature is now composing about us. These primroses seem more wonderful and delicious Annuals than Ackerman ever put forth. I suppose no man ever grew so old as not to feel younger in Spring. Yet, poor old Mrs. Bodham<sup>1</sup> lifted up her eyes to the windows, and asked if it were a clear or a dull day!

39 NORTON ST., FITZROY SQR.

[? *May* 1845.]

DEAR BARTON,

You see my address. I only got into it yesterday, though I reached London on Friday, and hung loose upon it for all that interval. I spent four days at Cambridge pleasantly enough; and one at Bedford where I heard my friend Matthews preach.

Last night I appeared at the Opera, and shall do so twice a week till further notice. Friends I have seen but few; for I have not yet found time to do anything. Alfred Tennyson was here; but went off yesterday to consider the sea from the top of Beachy Head. Carlyle gets on with his book which will be in two big volumes. He has entirely misstated all about Naseby, after all my trouble. . . .

Did Churchyard see in London a picture at the address I enclose? The man's card, you see, proclaims 'Silversmith,' but he is 'Pawnbroker.' A

<sup>1</sup> Great aunt of W. B. Donne.

picture hangs up at the door which he calls by 'Williams,' but I think is a rather inferior Crome; though the figure in it is not like Crome's figures. The picture is about three feet high by two broad; good in the distance; very natural in the branching of the trees; heavy in the foliage; all common to Crome. And it seems painted in that fat substance he painted in. If C. come to London let him look at this picture, as well as come and see me.

I have cold, head-ache, and London disgust. Oh that I could look on my Anemones! and hear the sighing of my Scotch firs. The Exhibition is full of bad things: there is a grand Turner, however; quite unlike anything that was ever seen in Heaven above, or in Earth beneath, or in the waters under the Earth.

The reign of primroses and cowslips is over, and the oak now begins to take up the empire of the year and wear a budding garland about his brows. Over all this settles down the white cloud in the West, and the Morning and Evening draw toward Summer.

[? *May* 1845.]

MY DEAR BARTON,

Had not your second note arrived this morning, I should surely have written to you; that you might have a little letter for your Sunday's breakfast. Do not accuse me of growing enamoured of London; I would have been in the country long ago if I could.

. . . Nor do I think I shall get away till the end of this month ; and then I *will* go. I am not so bad as Tennyson, who has been for six weeks intending to start every day for Switzerland or Cornwall, he doesn't quite know which. However, his stay has been so much gain to me ; for he and John Allen are the two men that give me pleasure here.

Tell Churchyard he must come up once again. . . . I saw a most lovely Sir Joshua at Christie's a week ago ; it went far far above my means. There is an old hunting picture in Regent St. which I want him to look at. I think it is Morland ; whom I don't care twopence for ; the horses ill drawn ; some good colour ; the people English ; good old England ! I was at a party of modern wits last night that made me creep into myself, and wish myself away talking to any Suffolk old woman in her cottage, while the trees murmured without. The wickedness of London appals me ; and yet I am no paragon.

*To F. Tennyson.*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE. *June, 12/45.*

DEAR FREDERIC,

Though I write from Boulge you are not to suppose I have been here ever since I last wrote to you. On the contrary, I am but just returned from London, where I spent a month, and saw all the sights and all the people I cared to see. But what

am I to tell you of them? Spedding, you know, does not change : he is now the same that he was fourteen years old when I first knew him at school more than twenty years ago ; wise, calm, bald, combining the best qualities of Youth and Age. And then as to things seen ; you know that one Exhibition tells another, and one Panorama certifieth another, etc. If you want to know something of the Exhibition however, read Fraser's Magazine for this month ; there Thackeray has a paper on the matter, full of fun. I met Stone in the street the other day ; he took me by the button, and told me in perfect sincerity, and with increasing warmth, how, though he loved old Thackeray, yet these yearly out-speakings of his sorely tried him ; not on account of himself (Stone), but on account of some of his friends, Charles Landseer, Maclise, etc. Stone worked himself up to such a pitch under the pressure of forced calmness that he at last said Thackeray would get himself horse-whipped one day by one of these infuriated Apelleses. At this I, who had partly agreed with Stone that ridicule, though true, needs not always to be spoken, began to laugh : and told him two could play at that game. These painters cling together, and bolster each other up, to such a degree, that they really have persuaded themselves that any one who ventures to laugh at one of their drawings, exhibited publicly for the express purpose of criticism, insults the whole corps. In the mean while old Thackeray laughs at all this ; and goes on in his own way ; writing hard for half a

dozen Reviews and Newspapers all the morning; dining, drinking, and talking of a night; managing to preserve a fresh colour and perpetual flow of spirits under a wear-and-tear of thinking and feeding that would have knocked up any other man I know two years ago, at least. . . .

Alfred was in London the first week of my stay there. He was looking well, and in good spirits; and had got two hundred lines of a new poem in a butcher's book. He went down to Eastbourne in Sussex; where I believe he now is. He and I made a plan to go to the coast of Cornwall or Wales this summer; but I suppose we shall manage never to do it. I find I must go to Ireland; which I had not intended to do this year.

I have nothing new to tell you of Music. The Operas were the same old affair; Linda di Chamouni, the Pirata, etc. Grisi coarse, . . . only Lablache great. There is one singer also, Brambelli, who, with a few husky notes, carries one back to the days of Pasta. I did not hear 'Le Désert'; but I fancy the English came to a fair judgment about it. That is, they did not want to hear it more than once. It was played many times, for new batches of people; but I doubt if any one went twice. So it is with nearly all French things; there is a clever showy surface; but no Holy of Holies far withdrawn; conceived in the depth of a mind, and only to be received into the depth of ours after much attention. Poussin must spend his life in Italy before he could paint as he



did; and what other Great Man, out of the exact Sciences, have they to show? This you will call impudence. Now Beethoven, you see by your own experience, has a depth not to be reached all at once. I admit with you that he is too bizarre, and, I think, morbid; but he is original, majestic, and profound. Such music *thinks*; so it is with Gluck; and with Mendelssohn. As to Mozart, he was, as a musical Genius, more wonderful than all. I was astonished at the Don Giovanni lately. It is certainly the Greatest Opera in the world. I went to no concert, and am now sorry I did not.

Now I have told you all my London news. You will not hear of my Cottage and Garden; so now I will shut up shop and have done. We have had a dismal wet May; but now June is recompensing us for all, and Dr. Blow may be said to be leading the great Garden Band in full chorus. This is a pun, which, profound in itself, you must not expect to enjoy at first reading. I am not sure that I am myself conscious of the full meaning of it. I know it is very hot weather; the distant woods steaming blue under the noonday sun. I suppose you are living without clothes in wells, where you are. Remember me to your brothers; write soon; and believe me ever yours,

E. FITZGERALD.

As to going to Italy, alas! I have less call to do that than ever: I never shall go. You must come over here about your Railroad land.

*To John Allen.*

BEDFORD, *August 27/45.*

DEAR GOOD ALLEN,

. . . I came here a week ago, and am paying my usual visits at the Brownes' and at Airy's.<sup>1</sup> I also purpose going to Naseby for two days very soon; and after that I shall retire slowly homeward; not to move, I suppose (except it be for some days to London) till next summer comes again!

I am just now staying with W. B. and his wife. . . . The Father and Mother of Mrs. W. Browne bought old Mrs. Piozzi's house at Streatham thirty-five years ago; all the Sir Joshua portraits therein, which they sold directly afterward for a song; and all the furniture, of which some yet helps to fill the house I now stay in. In the bedroom I write in is Dr. Johnson's own bookcase and secretaire; with looking glass in the panels which often reflected his uncouth shape. His own bed is also in the house; but I do not sleep in it.

I am reading Selwyn's Correspondence, a remarkable book, as all such records of the mind of a whole generation must be. Carlyle writes me word his Cromwell papers will be out in October; and that then we are all to be convinced that Richard had no hump to his back. I am strong in favour of the hump; I do not think the common sense of two centuries is apt to be deceived in such a matter.

<sup>1</sup> At Keysoe Vicarage.

Now if your time is not wholly filled up, pray do give me one line to say you have not wholly given me up as a turncoat. I would rather have sat with you on the cliffs of St. David's than done anything I have done for the last six months. Believe that, please. And now good bye, my dear fellow. The harvest promises very well here about; but I expect to find less prosperity at Naseby.

*To Bernard Barton.*

BEDFORD, *Sept.* 8/45.

DEAR BARTON,

On Thursday I move towards Norwich; where I see Donne, hear some music, and go to Geldestone. But before this month is over, I hope to be at my Cottage again, where I have my garden to drain, and other important matters.

Do you know I have been greatly tempted to move my quarters from Boulge to this country; so exact a place have I found to suit me. But we will wait.

My noble Preacher Matthews<sup>1</sup> is dead! He had a long cold, which he promoted in all ways of baptizing, watching late and early, travelling in rain, etc., he got worse; but would send for no Doctor, the Lord would raise him up if it were good for him, etc. Last Monday this cold broke out into Typhus fever;

<sup>1</sup> See letter to Allen, August 1842.

and on Thursday he died ! I had been out to Naseby for three days, and as I returned on Friday at dusk I saw a coffin carrying down the street : I knew whose it must be. I would have given a great deal to save his life ; which might certainly have been saved with common precaution. He died in perfect peace, approving all the principles of his life to be genuine. I am going this afternoon to attend his Funeral. . . .

Cromwell is to be out in October ; and Laurence has been sent to Archdeacon Berners's to make a copy of Oliver's miniature.

*To W. B. Donne.*

GELDESTONE, *Sept<sup>r</sup>. 23/45.*

DEAR DONNE,

I left one volume of your Swift with good Mrs. Johnson at Norwich ; and the other with your Mother at Worship's house in Yarmouth. So I trust you are in a fair way to get them again.

I sat through one Concert and one Oratorio ;<sup>1</sup> and on Thursday went to Yarmouth, which I took a great fancy to. The sands were very good, I assure you ; and then when one is weary of the sea, there is the good old town to fall back on. There is Mr. Gooch the Bookseller too ; he and his books a great acquisition. I called on Dawson Turner, and in an incredibly short space of time saw several books of coats of Arms, Churches, Refectories, pyxes, cerements, etc.

<sup>1</sup> At the Norwich Festival.

Manage to read De Quincey's Article on Wordsworth in the last number of Tait's Magazine. It is very incomplete, like all De Quincey's things, but has grand things in it; grand sounds of sense if nothing else. I am glad to see he sets up Daddy's early Ballads against the Excursion and other Sermons.

I intend to leave this place the end of this week; and go, I suppose, to Boulge; though I have yet a hankering to get a week by the sea, either at Yarmouth or Southwold. . . . Don't you think £3 very cheap for a fine copy of Rushworth's Collections, eight volumes folio? I was tempted to buy it if only for the bargain; for I only want to look through it once.

*To F. Tennyson.*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE.

[After *Sept.* 1845.]

MY DEAR FREDERIC,

I do beg and desire that when you next begin a letter to me you will not tear it up (as you say you have done some) because of its exhibiting a joviality insulting to any dumps of mine. What was I complaining of so? I forget all about it. It seems to me to be two years since I heard from you. If you had said that my answers to your letters were so barren as to dishearten you from deserving any more I should understand that very well. But if you really did accomplish any letters and not send them, I say, a fico for thy friendship! Do so no more. . . .

The finale of C minor is very noble. I heard it twice at Jullien's. On the whole I like to hear Mozart better; Beethoven is gloomy. Besides incontestably Mozart is the purest *musician*; Beethoven would have been Poet or Painter as well, for he had a great deep Soul and Imagination. I do not think it is reported that he showed any very early predilection for Music; Mozart, we know, did. They say Holmes has published a very good life of M. Only think of the poor fellow not being able to sell his music latterly, getting out of fashion, so taking to drink . . . and enact Harlequin at Masquerades! When I heard Handel's Alexander's Feast at Norwich this Autumn I wondered; but when directly afterward they played Mozart's G minor Symphony, it seemed as if I had passed out of a land of savages into sweet civilized Life.

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE.

[? *March* 1846.]

DEAR FREDERIC, \*

I have been wondering some time if you were gone abroad again or not. I go to London toward the end of April: can't you manage to wait in England? I suppose you will only be a day or two in London before you put foot in rail, coach, or on steamer for the Continent; and I excuse my own dastardly inactivity in not going up to meet you and shake hands with you before you start, by my old excuse; that had you but let me know of your coming to

England, I should have seen you. This is no excuse ; but don't put me out of your books as a frog-hearted wretch. I believe that I, as men usually do, grow more callous and indifferent daily : but I am sure I would as soon travel to see your face, and my dear old Alfred's, as any one's. 'But beside my inactivity, I have a sort of horror of plunging into London ; which, except for a shilling concert, and a peep at the pictures, is desperate to me. This is my fault, not London's : I know it is a lassitude and weakness of soul that no more loves the ceaseless collision of *Beaux Esprits*, than my obese ill-jointed carcase loves bundling about in coaches and steamers. And, as you say, the dirt, both of earth and atmosphere, in London, is a real bore. But enough of that. It is sufficient that it is more pleasant to me to sit in a clean room, with a clear air outside, and hedges just coming into leaf, rather than in the Tavistock or an upper floor of Charlotte Street. And how much better one's books read in country stillness, than amid the noise of wheels, crowds, etc., or after hearing them eternally discussed by no less active tongues ! In the mean time, we of Woodbridge are not without our luxuries ; I enclose you a play-bill just received ; *I* being one of the distinguished Members who have bespoken the play. We sha'n't all sit together in a Box, but go dispersed about the house with our wives and daughters.

White<sup>1</sup> I remember very well. His Tragedy I have

<sup>1</sup> James White, author of *The Earl of Gowrie*, etc.

seen advertised. He used to write good humorous things in Blackwood: among them, Hints to Authors, which are worth looking at when you get hold of an odd volume of Blackwood. I have got Thackeray's last book,<sup>1</sup> but have not yet been able to read it. Has any one heard of old Morton, and of his arrival at Stamboul, as he called it? . . .

Now it is a fact that as I lay in bed this morning, before I got your letter, I thought to myself I would write to Alfred. For he sent me a very kind letter two months ago; and I should have written to him before, but that I have looked in vain for a paper I wanted to send him. But, find it or not (and it is of no consequence) I will write to him very shortly. You do not mention if he be with you at Cheltenham. He spoke to me of being ill. . . . I think you should publish some of your poems. They must be admired and liked; and you would gain a place to which you are entitled, and which it offends no man to hold. I should like much to see them again. The whole *subjective* scheme (damn the word!) of the poems I did not like; but that is quite a genuine mould of your soul; and there are heaps of single lines, couplets, and stanzas, which would consume all the —, —, and —, like stubble. N.B. An acute man would ask how I should like *you*, if I do not like your own genuine reflex of *you*? But a less acute, and an acuter, man, will feel or see the difference.

So here is a good sheet full; and at all events, if

<sup>1</sup> A Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo.



I am too lazy to travel to you, I am not too lazy to write such a letter as few of one's contemporaries will now take the pains to write to one. I beg you to remember me to all your noble family, and believe me yours ever,

EDW. FITZGERALD.

*To W. B. Donne.*

BOULGE, Sunday, *March 8/46.*

MY DEAR DONNE,

I was very sorry you did not come to us at Geldestone. I have been home now near a fortnight; else I would gladly have gone to Mattishall with you yesterday. This very Sunday, on which I now hear the Grundisburgh bells as I write, I might have been filled with the bread of Life from Padden's hands.

Our friend Barton is certainly one of the most remarkable men of the Age. After writing to Peel two separate Sonnets, begging him to retire to Tamworth and not alter the Corn Laws, he finally sends him another letter to ask if he will be present at Lord Northampton's soirée next Saturday; Barton himself being about to go to that soirée, and wishing to see the Premier. On which Peel writes him a most good humoured note asking him to dine at Whitehall Gardens on that same Saturday! And the good Barton is going up for that purpose.<sup>1</sup> All this is great simplicity in Barton: and really announces an

<sup>1</sup> See the Memoir of Bernard Barton by E. F. G. prefixed to the posthumous volume of selections from his Poems and Letters, p. xxvi.

internal Faith that is creditable to this Age, and almost unexpected in it. I had advised him not to send Peel many more Sonnets till the Corn Law was passed ; the Indian war arranged ; and Oregon settled : but Barton sees no dragon in the way.

We have actors now at Woodbridge. A Mr. Gill who was low comedian in the Norwich now manages a troop of his own here. His wife was a Miss Vining ; she is a pretty woman, and a lively pleasant actress, not vulgar. I have been to see some of the old comedies with great pleasure ; and last night I sat in a pigeon-hole with David Fisher and 'revolved many memories' of old days and old plays. I don't think he drinks so much now : but he looks all ready to blossom out into carbuncles.

We all liked your Athenæum address much ;<sup>1</sup> which I believe I told you before. I have heard nothing of books or friends. I shall hope to see you some time this spring.

*To E. B. Cowell.*<sup>2</sup>

[1846]

DEAR COWELL,

I am glad you have bought Spinoza. I am in no sort of hurry for him : you may keep him a year if you like. I shall perhaps never read him now I have him. Thank you for the trouble you took. . . .

<sup>1</sup> Address to the members of the Norwich Athenæum, October 17th, 1845.

<sup>2</sup> Now Professor of Sanskrit at Cambridge.

Your Hafiz is fine : and his tavern world is a sad and just idea. I did not send that vine leaf<sup>1</sup> to A. T. but I have not forgotten it. It sticks in my mind.

“ In Time’s fleeting river  
The image of that little vine-leaf lay,  
Immovably unquiet—and for ever  
It trembles—but it cannot pass away.”<sup>2</sup>

I have read nothing you would care for since I saw you. It would be a good work to give us some of the good things of Hafiz and the Persians ; of bulbuls and ghuls we have had enough.

Come and bring over Spinoza ; or I must go and bring him.

*From T. Carlyle.*

CHELSEA, 8 April, 1846.

DEAR FITZGERALD,

I have now put the little sketch of Naseby Fight,<sup>3</sup> rough and ready, into its place in the Appendix : it really does pretty well, when it is fairly written out ; had I had time for that, it might almost have gone

<sup>1</sup> Professor Cowell explains to me that this refers to a passage of Ausonius in his poem on the Moselle. It occurs in the description of the bank scenery as reflected in the river (194, 5) :

Tota natant crispis juga motibus et tremit absens  
Pampinus, et vitreis vindemia turget in undis.

FitzGerald used to admire the break in the line after *absens*.

<sup>2</sup> A reminiscence of Shelley’s Evening, as this was of a line in Wordsworth’s Elegiac Stanzas suggested by a picture of Peele Castle in a storm.

<sup>3</sup> The short *pasticcio* of the battle referred to in the letter to Barton, 22 Sept. 1842.

into the Text,—and perhaps shall, if ever I live to see another edition. Naseby Field will then have its due honour;—only you should actually raise a stone over that Grave that you opened (I will give you the *shin-bone* back and keep the *teeth*): you really should,—with a simple Inscription saying merely in business English: ‘Here, as proved by strict and not too impious examination, lie the slain of the Battle of Naseby. Dig no farther. E. FitzGerald, —— 1843.’ By the bye, *was* it 1843 or 2, when we did those Naseby feats? tell me, for I want to mark that in the Book. And so here is your Paper again, since at any rate you wish to keep that. I am serious about the stone!

*To W. B. Donne.*

BOULGE HALL, WOODBRIDGE.

[1846.]

MY DEAR DONNE,

I don't know which of us is most to blame for this long gulph of silence. Probably I; who have least to do. I have been for two months to London; where (had I thought it of any use) I should have written to try and get you up for a few days; as I had a convenient lodging, and many beside myself would have been glad to see you.

I came back a week ago; and on looking in at Barton's last evening he showed me your letter with such pleasure as he is wont to receive your letters with. And there I read all the surprising story of

your moving to old Bury. When I passed through Cambridge two months ago, Thompson said (I think) that he had seen you; and that you had given up thoughts of Bury. But now you are going. As you say, you will then be nearer to us than you now are at Mattishall; especially when our Railroad shall be completed. In my journeys to and from Bedfordshire, I shall hope to stay a night at the good old Angel, and so have a chat with you.

I saw very little of Spedding in London; for he was out all day at State paper offices and Museums; and I out by night at Operas, etc., with my Mother. He is however well and immutable. A. Tennyson was in London; for two months striving to spread his wings to Italy or Switzerland. It has ended in his flying to the Isle of Wight till Autumn, when Moxon promises to convoy him over; and then God knows what will become of him and whether we shall ever see his august old body over here again. He was in a ricketty state of body; brought on wholly by neglect, etc., but in fair spirits; and one had the comfort of seeing the Great Man. Carlyle goes on fretting and maddening as usual. Have you read his Cromwell? Are you converted, or did you ever need conversion? I believe I remain pretty much where I was. I think Milton, who is the best evidence Cromwell has in his favour, warns him somewhat prophetically at the end of his Second Defence against taking on him

Kingship, etc., and in the tract on the State of England in 1660 (just before it was determined to bring back Charles the Second) he says *nothing at all* of Cromwell, no panegyric; but glances at the evil ambitious men in the Army have done; and, now that all is open to choose, prays for a pure Republic! So I herd with the flunkies and lackies, I doubt; but am yours notwithstanding, E. F. G.

*To E. B. Cowell.*

BEDFORD, *Sept.* 15/46.

DEAR COWELL,

Here I am at last, after making a stay at Lowestoft, where I sailed in boats, bathed, and in all ways enjoyed the sea air. I wished for you upon a heathy promontory there, good museum for conversation on old poets, etc. What have you been reading, and what tastes of rare Authors have you to send me? I have read (as usual with me) but very little, what with looking at the sea with its crossing and recrossing ships, and dawdling with my nieces of an evening. Besides a book is to me what Locke says that watching the hour hand of a clock is to all; other thoughts (and those of the idlest and seemingly most irrelevant) will intrude between my vision and the written words: and then I have to read over again; often again and again till all is crossed and muddled. If Life were to be very much longer than is the usual lot of men,

one would try very hard to reform this lax habit, and clear away such a system of gossamer association: even as it is, I try to turn all wandering fancy out of doors, and listen attentively to Whately's Logic, and old Spinoza still! I find some of Spinoza's Letters very good, and so far useful as that they try to clear up some of his abstrusities at the earnest request of friends as dull as myself. I think I perceive as well as ever how the quality of his mind forbids much salutary instinct which widens the system of things to more ordinary men, and yet helps to keep them from wandering in it. I am now reading his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, which is very delightful to me because of its clearness and acuteness. It is fine what he says of Christ — '*nempe*,' that God revealed himself in bits to other prophets, but he *was* the mind of Christ. I suppose not new in thought or expression.

Let me hear from you, whether you have bits of revelations from old poets to send, or not. If I had the *Mostellaria* here, I would read it; or a *Rabelais*, I would do as Morgan Rattler advised you.

*To Bernard Barton.*

[CAMBRIDGE, Oct. 18, 1846.]

MY DEAR BARTON,

Though my letter bears such frontispiece as the above,<sup>1</sup> I am no longer in Bedford, but come to

<sup>1</sup> Trinity Church, Bedford.

Cambridge. And here I sit in the same rooms<sup>1</sup> in which I sat as a smooth-chinned Freshman twenty years ago. The same prints hang on the walls: my old hostess<sup>2</sup> does not look older than she did then. My present purpose is to be about a week here: then to go for a day or two to Bury, to see Donne; and then to move homewards. It is now getting very cold, and the time for wandering is over.

Why do you not send me your new Poem? Or is it too big to send as a letter? Or shall I buy it? which I shall be glad to do. . . .

All the preceding was written four days ago: cut short by the sudden entrance of Moore, whom I have been lionizing ever since. He goes away to London to-day. . . .

Moore is delighted with a Titian and Giorgione at the Fitzwilliam. I have just left him to feed upon them at his ease there, while I indite a letter to you.

*To W. B. Donne.*

[31 Oct. 1846.]

MY DEAR DONNE,

. . . I only got home to-day: and found one letter on my table from Ireland. I did not notice it had a black edge and seal: saw it was from Edgeworthstown: written in the hand of Edgeworth's wife, who often wrote down from his dicta-

<sup>1</sup> On King's Parade.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Perry.



tion since his eyes became bad. But she tells me that he is dead after twelve days illness! I do not yet feel half so sorry as I shall feel: I shall constantly miss him.<sup>1</sup>

*To E. B. Cowell.*

[End of 1846.]

DEAR COWELL,

The weather is so ungenial, and likely to be so, that I put off my journey to Ipswich till next week. I do not dislike the weather for my part: but one is best at home in such: and as I am to stay two days with the Hockleys, I would fain have tolerably fair days, and fair ways, for it: that one may get about and so on. One does not mind being cooped up in one's own room all day. I think of going on Monday. Shall you be at home next week?

I have read Longus and like him much. Is it the light easy Greek that pleases one? Or is it the story, the scenery, etc.? Would the book please one if written in English as good as the Greek?

The lines from Nonnus are very beautiful. It is always a pleasure to me to get from you such stray leaves from gardens I shall never enter.

I have been doing some of the dialogue,<sup>2</sup> which seems the easiest thing in the world to do but is

<sup>1</sup> F. B. Edgeworth died 12th Oct. 1846.

<sup>2</sup> Euphranor.

not. It is not easy to keep to good dialectic, and yet keep up the disjuncted sway of natural conversation. I talk, you see, as if I were to do some good thing: but I don't mean that. But any such trials of one's own show one the art of such dialogues as Plato's, where the process is so logical and conversational at once: and the result so plain, and seemingly so easy. They remain the miracles of that Art to this day: and will do for many a day: for I don't believe they will ever be surpassed; certainly not by Landor.

Yours ever, E. F. G.

[Postmark WOODBRIDGE, *Jan.* 13, 1847.]

DEAR COWELL,

I am always delighted to see you whenever you can come, and Friday will do perfectly well for me. But do not feel bound to come if it snow, etc. In other respects I have small compunction, for I think it must do you good to go out, even to such a desert as this.

I have not got Phidippus into any presentible shape: and indeed have not meddled with him lately: as the spirit of light dialogue evaporated from me under an influenza, and I have not courted it back yet. Luckily I and the world can very well afford to wait for its return. I began Thucydides two days ago! and read (after your example) a very little every day, *i.e.* have done so for two days. Your

Sanscrit sentences are very fine. It is good for you to go on with that. We hear Mr. Nottidge<sup>1</sup> is dying : who can be sorry for him !

Yours, E. F. G.

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Early in 1847 Carlyle received a communication from an unknown correspondent, who professed to have in his possession a number of letters written by Cromwell and other documents, which if genuine were certainly of importance. As I published in the *Historical Review* for April 1886 all the evidence which exists on the subject, I shall not further dwell upon it here, except to say that I am not in the least convinced by the arguments which have been put forward that the thirty-five letters of Cromwell which Carlyle printed in *Fraser's Magazine* for 1847 were forged by his imperfectly educated correspondent William Squire. Squire was living at Yarmouth at this time, and as FitzGerald was frequently in his neighbourhood Carlyle asked him to endeavour to see him and examine the papers which he professed to have. In reply to Carlyle's letter he wrote as follows in February 1847.

DEAR CARLYLE,

When I go into Norfolk, which will be some time this Spring, I will go to Yarmouth and see for Mr. Squire, if you like. But if he is so rusty as you say,

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. J. T. Nottidge of Ipswich died 21 Jan. 1847.

and as I also fancy, I doubt if he will open his treasures to any but to you who have already set him creaking. But we shall see. Some of his MS. extracts are curious and amusing. He writes himself something like Antony Wood, or some such ancient book-worm. It is also curious to hear of the old proud angry people about Peterboro', who won't show their records.

I have not seen the lives of the Saints you spoke of in a former letter. But when I go to London I must look out for a volume. I have begun to read Thucydides, which I never read before, and which does very well to hammer at for an hour in a day: though I can't say I care much for the Greeks and their peddling quarrels; one must go to Rome for wars.

Don't you think Thackeray's Mrs. Perkins's Ball very good? I think the empty faces of the dance room were never better done. It seems to me wonderful that people can endure to look on such things: but I am forty, and got out of the habit now, and certainly shall not try to get it back ever again.

I am glad you and Mrs. Carlyle happen to be in a milder part of England during this changeable and cold season. Yet, for my own sake, I shall be sorry to see the winter go: with its decided and reasonable balance of daylight and candlelight. I don't know when I shall go to London, perhaps in April. Please to remember me to Mrs. Carlyle.

*To S. Laurence.*

GELDESTONE HALL, BECCLES.

[*June 20, 1847.*]

MY DEAR LAURENCE,

I have had another letter from the Bartons asking about your advent. In fact Barton's daughter is anxious for her Father's to be done, and done this year. He is now sixty-three; and it won't do, you know, for grand-climacterical people to procrastinate—nay, to *proannuate*—which is a new, and, for all I see, a very bad word. But, be this as it may, do you come down to Woodbridge this summer if you can; and that you can, I doubt not; since it is no great things out of your way to or from Norwich.

The means to get to Ipswich are—A steamboat will bring you for five shillings (a very pretty sail) from the Custom House to Ipswich, the Orwell steamer; going twice a week, and heard of directly in the fishy latitudes of London Bridge. Or, a railroad brings you for the same sum; if you will travel third class, which I sometimes do in fine weather. I should recommend *that*; the time being so short, so certain: and no eating and drinking by the way, as must be in a steamer. At Ipswich, I pick you up with the washerwoman's pony and take you to Woodbridge. There Barton sits with the tea already laid out; and Miss about to manage the urn; plain, agreeable people. At

Woodbridge too is my little friend Churchyard, with whom we shall sup off toasted cheese and porter. Then, last and not least, the sweet retirement of Boulge : where the Graces and Muses, etc.

I write thus much because my friends seem anxious ; my friend, I mean, Miss Barton : for Barton pretends he dreads having his portrait done ; which is 'my eye.' So come and do it. He is a generous, worthy, simple-hearted, fellow : worth ten thousand better wits. Then you shall see all the faded tapestry of country town life : London jokes worn threadbare ; third rate accomplishments infinitely prized ; scandal removed from Dukes and Duchesses to the Parson, the Banker, the Commissioner of Excise, and the Attorney.

Let me hear from you soon that you are coming. I shall return to Boulge the end of this week.

P.S. Come if you can the latter part of the week ; when the Quaker is most at leisure. There is a daily coach from Woodbridge to Norwich.

*To T. Carlyle.*

Boulge. *June 29/47.*

DEAR CARLYLE,

Last week I went over to Yarmouth and saw Squire. I was prepared, and I think you were, to find a quaint old gentleman of the last century. Alas for guesses at History ! I found a whole-

some, well-grown, florid, clear-eyed, open-browed, man of about my own age! There was no difficulty at all in coming to the subject at once, and tackling it. Squire is, I think, a straight-forward, choleric, ingenuous fellow—a little mad—cracks away at his family affairs. ‘One brother is a rascal—another a spend-thrift—his father was of an amazing size—a prodigious eater, etc.—the family all gone to *smithers*,’ etc. I liked Squire well: and told him he must go to you; I am sure you will like him better than the London penny-a-liners. He is rather a study: and besides he can tell you bits of his Ancestor’s journal; which will indeed make you tear your hair for what is burned—Between two and three hundred folio pages of MSS. by a fellow who served under Oliver; been sent on secret service by him; dreaded him: but could not help serving him—Squire told me a few circumstances which he had picked up in running over the Journal before he burnt it; and which you ought to hear from himself before long. Dreadful stories of Oliver’s severity; soldiers cut down by sabre on parade for ‘violence to women’—a son shot on the spot just before his Father’s house for having tampered with Royalists—no quarter to spies—noses and ears of Royalists slit in retaliation of a like injury done to Round-heads;—many deeds which that ancient Squire witnessed, or knew for certain, and which he and his successor thought severe and *cruel*:—but I

could make out nothing unjust—I am very sure *you* would not. The Journalist told a story of Peterboro' Cathedral like yours in your book about Ely:—Oliver marching in as the bells were ringing to service: bundling out canons, prebendaries, choristers, with the flat of the sword; and then standing up to preach himself in his armour! A grand picture. Afterwards they broke the painted windows which I should count injudicious;—but that I sometimes feel a desire that some boys would go and do likewise to the Pusey *votive* windows; if you know that branch of art.

Ancestor Squire got angry with Oliver toward the end of the Journal; on some such account as this—Cromwell had promised him a sum of money; but the ancestor got taken prisoner by pirate or privateer before he went to claim the money; had to be redeemed by Oliver; and the redemption money was subtracted from the whole sum promised by Oliver when payment-time came. This proceeding seemed to both Squires, living and dead, shabby; but one not belonging to the family may be permitted to think it all fair.

On the whole, I suspect you would have used Ancestor Squire as you have used many others who have helped you to materials of his kind; like a sucked orange: you would have tossed him into the dirt carelessly, I doubt; and then what would Squire minor have said? Yet he himself did not like all his Ancestor had done; the *secret* service, which our



Squire called '*spy-age*'; going to Holland with messages and despatches which he was to deliver to some one who was to meet him on the quay, and show him a gold ring; the man with the gold ring supposed to be the Stadtholder! I tried to persuade our friend there was no great shame in being an agent of this sort; but he said with a light rap on the table that *he* wouldn't do such a thing.

I have now told you something of what remains in my head after our conference; but you must see the man. What gave us the idea of his being old was his old-fashioned notions; he and his family have lived in Peterboro' and such retired places these three hundred years; and amazing as it may seem to us that any people should be ashamed that their ancestors fought for Low Church, yet two hundred years are but as a day in a Cathedral Close. Nothing gives one more the idea of the Sleeping Palace than that. *Esto perpetua!* I mean, as long as I live at least. When I expressed wonder to Squire that his wife's friends, or his Peterboro' friends, should be so solicitous about the world's ever knowing that their ancestors had received letters from Cromwell, he very earnestly assured me that he knew some cases in which persons' advancement in public life had been suddenly stopt by the Queen or her ministers, when it got wind that they were related in any way to Cromwell! I thought this a piece of dotage, as I do now; but I have heard elsewhere of some one not being allowed to take the name of Cromwell; I mean

not very many years back ; but more likely under a George than under a Victoria.

I think Squire must be a little crazy on this score ; that is, the old dotage of a Cathedral town superstition worked up into activity by a choleric disposition. He seems, as I told you, of the sanguine temperament ; and he mentioned a long illness during which he was not allowed to read a book, etc., which looks like some touch of the head. Perhaps brain fever. Perhaps no such thing, but all my fancy. He was very civil ; ordered in a bottle of Sherry and biscuits : asked me to dine, which I could not do. And so ends my long story. But you must see him.

Yours, E. F. G.

He spoke of a portrait of Oliver that had been in his family since Oliver's time — till sold for a few shillings to some one in Norwich by some rascal relation. The portrait unlike all he has seen in painting or engraving : very pale, very thoughtful, very commanding, he says. If he ever recovers it, he will present you with it ; he says if it should cost him £10—for he admires you.<sup>1</sup>

*To Bernard Barton.*

EXETER, August 16/47.

MY DEAR BARTON,

. . . Here I am at Exeter : a place I never was in before. It is a fine country round about ; and last

<sup>1</sup> [The last two words are crossed out.—W. A. W.]

evening I saw landscape that would have made Churchyard crazy. The Cathedral is not worth seeing to an ordinary observer, though I dare say Archæologists find it has its own private merits. . . .

Tell Churchyard we were wrong about Poussin's Orion. I found this out on my second visit to it. What disappointed me, and perhaps him, at first sight, was a certain stiffness in Orion's own figure; I expected to see him stalk through the landscape forcibly, as a giant usually does; but I forgot at the moment that Orion was *blind*, and must walk as a blind man. Therefore this stiffness in his figure was just the right thing. I think however the picture is faulty in one respect, that the atmosphere of the landscape is not that of *dawn*; which it should be most visibly, since Morning is so principal an actor in the drama. All this seems to be more addressed to Churchyard, who has seen the picture, than to you who have not.

I saw also in London panoramas of Athens and the Himalaya mountains. In the latter, you see the Ganges glittering a hundred and fifty miles off; and far away the snowy peak of the mountain it rises from; that mountain 25,000 feet high. What's the use of coming to Exeter, when you can see all this for a shilling in London? . . . And now I am going to the Cathedral, where the Bishop has a cover to his seat sixty feet high. So now goodbye for the present.

GLOUCESTER, *Augst.* 29/47.

MY DEAR BARTON,

. . . After I wrote to you at Exeter, I went for three days to the Devonshire coast; and then to Lusia's home in Somersetshire. I never saw her look better or happier. De Soyres pretty well; their little girl grown a pretty and strong child; their baby said to be very thriving. They live in a fine, fruitful, and picturesque country: green pastures, good arable, clothed with trees, bounded with hills that almost reach mountain dignity, and in sight of the Bristol Channel which is there all but Sea. I fancy the climate is moist, and I should think the trees are too many for health: but I was there too little time to quarrel with it on that score. After being there, I went to see a parson friend in Dorsetshire;<sup>1</sup> a quaint, humorous man. Him I found in a most out-of-the-way parish in a fine open country; not so much wooded; chalk hills. This man used to wander about the fields at Cambridge with me when we both wore caps and gowns, and then we proposed and discussed many ambitious schemes and subjects. He is now a quiet, saturnine, parson with five children, taking a pipe to soothe him when they bother him with their noise or their misbehaviour: and I!—as the Bishop of London said, 'By the grace of God I am what I am.' In Dorsetshire I found the churches much occupied by Puseyite Parsons;

<sup>1</sup> Francis Duncan, rector of West Chelborough.

new chancels built with altars, and painted windows that officiously displayed the Virgin Mary, etc. The people in those parts call that party 'Pugicides,' and receive their doctrine and doings peacefully. I am vext at these silly men who are dishing themselves and their church as fast as they can.

*To F. Tennyson.*

[LEAMINGTON, 4 *Sept.* 1847.]

MY DEAR FREDERIC,

I believe I must attribute your letter to your having skipped to Leghorn, and so got animated by the sight of a new place. *I* also am an Arcadian: have been to Exeter—the coast of Devonshire—the Bristol Channel—and to visit a Parson in Dorsetshire. He wore cap and gown when I did at Cambridge—together did we roam the fields about Granchester, discuss all things, thought ourselves fine fellows, and that one day we should make a noise in the world. He is now a poor Rector in one of the most out-of-the-way villages in England—has five children—fats and kills his pig—smokes his pipe—loves his home and cares not ever to be seen or heard of out of it. I was amused with his company; he much pleased to see me: we had not met face to face for fifteen years—and now both of us such very sedate unambitious people! Now I am verging homeward; taking Leamington and Bedford in my way.

You persist in not giving me your clear direction at Florence. It is only by chance that you give the name 'Villa Gondi' of the house you describe so temptingly to me. I should much like to visit you there; but I doubt shall never get up the steam for such an expedition. And now know that, since the last sentence was written, I have been to Cheltenham, and called at your Mother's; and seen her, and Matilda, and Horatio: all well: Alfred is with the Lushingtons and is reported to be all the better for the water-cure. Cheltenham seemed to me a woeful place: I had never seen it before. I now write from Leamington; where I am come to visit my Mother for a few days. . . .

All the world has been, as I suppose you have read, crazy about Jenny Lind: and they are now giving her £400 to sing at a Concert. What a frightful waste of money! I did not go to hear her: partly out of contradiction perhaps; and partly because I could not make out that she was a great singer, like my old Pasta. Now I will go and listen to any pretty singer whom I can get to hear easily and unexpensively: but I will not pay and squeeze much for any canary in the world. Perhaps Lind is a nightingale: but I want something more than that. Spedding's cool blood was moved to hire stalls several times at an advanced rate: the Lushingtons (your sister told me) were enraptured: and certainly people rushed up madly from Suffolk to hear her but once and then die. I rather doubted the value of this

general appreciation. But one cause of my not hearing her was that I was not in London for more than a fortnight all the Spring: and she came out but at the close of my fortnight. . . .

. . . You are wrong, as usual, about Moore and Eastlake: all the world say that Moore had much the best of the controversy, and Eastlake only remains cock of the walk because he is held up by authority. I do not pretend to judge which of the two is right in art: but I am sure that Moore argues most logically, and sets out upon finer principles; and if two shoemakers quarrelled about the making of a shoe, I should be disposed to side with him who argued best on the matter, though my eyes and other senses could not help me to a verdict. Moore takes his stand on high ground, and appeals to Titian, Michel Angelo, and Reynolds. Eastlake is always shifting about, and appealing to Sir Robert Peel, Etty, and the Picture-dealers.<sup>1</sup> Now farewell. Write when you can to Boulge.

*To S. Laurence.*

DEAR LAURENCE,

[1847.]

. . . I assure you I am deeply obliged to you for the great trouble you have taken, and the kindness you have shewn about the portrait. In spite of all our objections (yours amongst the number) it is very like,

<sup>1</sup> Morris Moore's letters on the Abuses of the National Gallery were addressed to *The Times* at the end of 1846 and the beginning of 1847 with the signature 'Verax.' They were collected and published in a pamphlet by Pickering in 1847.

and perhaps only misses of being quite like by that much more than hairbreadth difference, which one would be foolish to expect to see adequated. Perhaps those painters are right who set out with rather idealising the likeness of those we love; for we do so ourselves probably when we look at them. And as art must miss the last delicacy of nature, it may be well to lean toward a better than our eyes can affirm.

This is all wrong. Truth is the ticket; but those who like strongly, in this as in other cases, love to be a little blind, or to see too much. One fancies that no face can be too delicate and handsome to be the depository of a noble spirit: and if we are not as good physiognomists as we are metaphysicians (that is, intimate with any one particular mind) our outward eyes will very likely be at variance with our inward, or rather be influenced by them. Very instructive all this!

I wish you would come to me to-night for an hour at ten: I don't know if any one else will be here.

*To T. Carlyle.*

ALDERMAN BROWNE'S, BEDFORD.

[20 *Sept.* 1847.]

DEAR CARLYLE,

I was very glad of your letter: especially as regards that part in it about the Derbyshire villages. In many other parts of England (not to mention my own Suffolk) you would find the same substantial goodness



among the people, resulting (as you say) from the funded virtues of many good humble men gone by. I hope you will continue to teach us all, as you have done, to make some use and profit of all this: at least, not to let what good remains to die away under penury and neglect. I also hope you will have some mercy now, and in future, on the 'Hebrew rags' which are grown offensive to you; considering that it was these rags that really did bind together those virtues which have transmitted down to us all the good you noticed in Derbyshire. If the old creed was so commendably effective in the Generals and Counsellors of two hundred years ago, I think we may be well content to let it work still among the ploughmen and weavers of to-day; and even to suffer some absurdities in the Form, if the Spirit does well upon the whole. Even poor Exeter Hall ought, I think, to be borne with; it is at least better than the wretched Oxford business. When I was in Dorsetshire some weeks ago, and saw chancels done up in sky-blue and gold, with niches, candles, an *Altar*, rails to keep off the profane laity, and the parson (like your Reverend Mr. Hitch<sup>1</sup>) *intoning* with his back to the people, I thought the Exeter Hall war-cry of 'The Bible—the whole Bible—and nothing but the Bible' a good cry: I wanted Oliver and his dragoons to march in and put an end to it all. Yet our Established Parsons (when quiet and in their senses) make good country gentlemen, and magistrates; and

<sup>1</sup> See Carlyle's *Cromwell* (ed. 1), i. 193.

I am glad to secure one man of means and education in each parish of England: the people can always resort to Wesley, Bunyan, and Baxter, if they want stronger food than the old Liturgy, and the orthodox Discourse. I think you will not read what I have written: or be very bored with it. But it *is* written now.

I am going to-day into the neighbourhood of Kimbolton: but shall be back here by the end of the week: and shall not leave Bedford till next Monday certainly. I may then go to Naseby for three days: but this depends. I would go and hunt up some of the Peterboro' churchmen for you; but that my enquiries would either be useless, or precipitate the burning of other records. I hope your excursion will do you good. Thank you for your account of Spedding: I had written however to himself, and from himself ascertained that he was out of the worst. But Spedding's life is a very ticklish one.

*To E. B. Cowell.*

[1847]

DEAR COWELL,

. . . I am only got half way in the third book of Thucydides: but I go on with pleasure; with as much pleasure as I used to read a novel. I have also again taken up my Homer. That is a noble and affecting passage where Diomed and Glaucus, being about to fight, recognize each other as old family friends,

exchange arms, and vow to avoid each other henceforth in the fray. (N.B. and this in the tenth year of the war!) After this comes, you know, the meeting of Hector and Andromache, which we read together; altogether a truly Epic canto indeed.

Yet, as I often think, it is not the poetical imagination, but bare Science that every day more and more unrolls a greater Epic than the Iliad; the history of the World, the infinitudes of Space and Time! I never take up a book of Geology or Astronomy but this strikes me. And when we think that Man must go on to discover in the same plodding way, one fancies that the Poet of to-day may as well fold his hands, or turn them to dig and delve, considering how soon the march of discovery will distance all his imaginations, [and] dissolve the language in which they are uttered. Martial, as you say, lives now, after two thousand years; a space that seems long to us whose lives are so brief; but a moment, the twinkling of an eye, if compared (not to Eternity alone) but to the ages which it is now known the world must have existed, and (unless for some external violence) must continue to exist. Lyell in his book about America, says that the falls of Niagara, if (as seems certain) they have worked their way back southwards for seven miles, must have taken over 35,000 years to do so, at the rate of something over a foot a year! Sometimes they fall back on a stratum that crumbles away from behind them more easily: but then again

they have to roll over rock that yields to them scarcely more perceptibly than the anvil to the serpent. And those very soft strata which the Cataract now erodes contain evidences of a race of animals, and of the action of seas washing over them, long before Niagara came to have a distinct current; and the rocks were compounded ages and ages before those strata! So that, as Lyell says, the Geologist looking at Niagara forgets even the roar of its waters in the contemplation of the awful processes of time that it suggests. It is not only that this vision of Time must wither the Poet's hope of immortality; but it is in itself more wonderful than all the conceptions of Dante and Milton.

As to your friend Pliny, I don't think that Time can use his usual irony on that saying about Martial.<sup>1</sup> Pliny evidently only suggests that 'at non erunt æterna quæ scripsit' as a question of his correspondent; to which he himself replies 'Non erunt *fortasse*.' Your Greek quotations are very graceful. I should like to read Busbequius.<sup>2</sup> Do *you* think Tacitus *affected* in style, as people now say he is?

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In the Notes to his edition of Selden's Table Talk, published in 1847, Mr. Singer says, 'Part of the following Illustrations were kindly communicated to the

<sup>1</sup> Pliny, Ep. III. 21.

<sup>2</sup> In a subsequent letter, written when this was supposed to be lost, he says, 'I liked all your quotations, and wish to read Busbequius; whose name would become an owl.'

Editor by a gentleman to whom his best thanks are due, and whom it would have afforded him great pleasure to be allowed to name.' It might have been said with truth that the 'greater part' of the illustrations were contributed by the same anonymous benefactor, who was, I have very little doubt, Fitzgerald himself. I have in my possession a copy of the Table Talk which he gave me about 1871 or 1872, with annotations in his own handwriting, and these are almost literally reproduced in the Notes to Singer's Edition. Of this copy Fitzgerald wrote to me, 'What notes I have appended are worth nothing, I suspect; though I remember that the advice of the present Chancellor<sup>1</sup> was asked in some cases.'

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*To E. B. Cowell.*

GELDESTONE, Jan. 13/48.

MY DEAR COWELL,

. . . I suppose you have seen Carlyle's thirty-five Cromwell letters in Fraser. I see the Athenæum is picking holes with them too: and I certainly had a misgiving that Squire of Yarmouth must have pieced out the *erosions* of 'the vermin' by one or two hot-headed guesses of his own. But I am sure, both from the general matter of the letters, and from Squire's own bodily presence, that he did not forge them. Carlyle has made a bungle of the whole busi-

<sup>1</sup> Lord Hatherley.

ness ; and is fairly twitted by the Athenæum for talking so loud about his veneration for Cromwell, etc., and yet not stirring himself to travel a hundred miles to see and save such memorials as he talks of.

BOULGE, *Wednesday.*

[*Jan. 25, 1848.*]

MY DEAR COWELL,

I liked your paper on the Mesnavi<sup>1</sup> very much ; both your criticism and your Mosaic legend. That I may not seem to give you careless and undistinguishing praise, I will tell you that I could not quite hook on the latter part of Moses to the former ; did you leave out any necessary link of the chain in the hiatus you made ? or is the inconsequence only in my brains ? So much for the legend : and I must reprehend you for one tiny bit of Cockney about Memory's rosary at the end of your article, which, but for that, I liked so much.

So judges Fitz-Dennis ; who, you must know by this time, has the judgment of Molière's old woman, and the captiousness of Dennis. Ten years ago I might have been vexed to see you striding along in Sanscrit and Persian so fast ; reading so much ; remembering all ; writing about it so well. But now I am glad to see any man do any thing well ; and I know that it is my vocation to stand and wait, and know within myself whether it *is* done well.

<sup>1</sup> In the *People's Journal*, ed. Saunders, iv. 355-358.

I have just finished, all but the last three chapters, the fourth Book of Thucydides, and it is now no task to me to go on. This fourth book is the most interesting I have read; containing all that blockade of Pylos; that first great thumping of the Athenians at Oropus, after which they for ever dreaded the Theban troops. And it came upon me 'come stella in ciel,' when, in the account of the taking of Amphipolis,<sup>1</sup> Thucydides, ὅς ταῦτα ξυνέγραψεν, comes with seven ships to the rescue! Fancy old Hallam sticking to his gun at a Martello tower! This was the way to write well; and this was the way to make literature respectable. Oh, Alfred Tennyson, could you but have the luck to be put to such employment! No man would do it better; a more heroic figure to head the defenders of his country could not be.

*To S. Laurence.*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE,  
[30 Jan. 1848.]

MY DEAR LAURENCE,

How are you—how are you getting on? A voice from the tombs thus addresses you; respect the dead, and answer. Barton is well; that is, I left him well on Friday; but he was just going off to attend a Quaker's funeral in the snow: whether he has survived that, I don't know. To-morrow is his Birth-day: and I am going (if he be alive) to help him to

<sup>1</sup> iv. 104.

celebrate it. His portrait has been hung (under my directions) over the mantel-piece in his sitting room, with a broad margin of some red stuff behind it, to set it off. You may turn up your nose at all this; but let me tell you it is considered one of the happiest contrivances ever adopted in Woodbridge. Nineteen people out of twenty like the portrait much; the twentieth, you may be sure, is a man of no taste at all.

I hear you were for a long time in Cumberland. Did you paint a waterfall—or old Wordsworth—or Skiddaw, or any of the beauties? Did you see anything so inviting to the pencil as the river Deben? When are you coming to see us again? Churchyard relies on your coming; but then he is a very sanguine man, and, though a lawyer, wonderfully confident in the promises of men. How are all your family? You see I have asked you some questions; so you must answer them; and believe me yours truly,

E. FITZGERALD.

*To John Allen.*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE,  
*March 2/48.*

MY DEAR ALLEN,

. . . Every year I have less and less desire to go to London: and now you are not there I have one reason the less for going there. I want to settle myself in some town—for good—for life! A pleasant



country town, a cathedral town perhaps! What sort of a place is Lichfield?

I say nothing about French Revolutions, which are too big for a little letter. I think we shall all be in a war before the year; I know not how else the French can keep peace at home but by quarrelling abroad. But 'come what come may.'

My old friend Major Moor died rather suddenly last Saturday:<sup>1</sup> and this next Saturday is to be buried in the Church to which he used to take me when I was a boy. He has not left a better man behind him.

BOULGE, *Friday.*

MY DEAR ALLEN,

. . . I suppose by a '*Minster Pool*' in Lichfield you mean a select coterie of Prebends, Canons, etc. These would never trouble me. I should much prefer the society of the Doctor, the Lawyer (if tolerably honest) and the singing men. I love a small Cathedral town; and the dignified respectability of the Church potentates is a part of the pleasure. I sometimes think of Salisbury: and have altogether long had an idea of *settling* at forty years old. Perhaps it will be at Woodbridge, after all!

<sup>1</sup> 26 Feb. 1848.

*To F. Tennyson.*

BOULGE, *May 4, 1848.*

MY DEAR FREDERIC,

When you talk of two idle men not taking the trouble to keep up a little intercourse by letters, you do not, in conscience, reflect upon me; who, you know, am very active in answering almost by return of post. It is some six months since you must have got my last letter, full of most instructive advice concerning my namesake; of whom, and of which, you say nothing. How much has he borrowed of you? Is he now living on the top of your hospitable roof? Do you think him the most ill-used of men? I see great advertisements in the papers about your great Grimsby Railway. . . . Does it pay? does it pay all but you? who live only on the fine promises of the lawyers and directors engaged in it? You know England has had a famous winter of it for commercial troubles: my family has not escaped the agitation: I even now doubt if I must not give up my daily two-pennyworth of cream and take to milk: and give up my *Spectator* and *Athenæum*. I don't trouble myself much about all this: for, unless the kingdom goes to pieces by national bankruptcy, I shall probably have enough to live on: and, luckily, every year I want less. What do you think of my not going up to London this year; to see exhibitions, to hear operas, and so on? Indeed I do not think I shall go: and I

have no great desire to go. I hear of nothing new in any way worth going up for. I have never yet heard the famous Jenny Lind, whom all the world raves about. Spedding is especially mad about her, I understand: and, after that, is it not best for weaker vessels to keep out of her way? Night after night is that bald head seen in one particular position in the Opera house, in a stall; the miserable man has forgot Bacon and philosophy, and goes after strange women. There is no doubt this lady is a wonderful singer; but I will not go into hot crowds till another Pasta comes; I have heard no one since her worth being crushed for. And to perform in one's head one of Handel's choruses is better than most of the Exeter Hall performances. I went to hear Mendelssohn's Elijah last spring: and found it wasn't at all worth the trouble. Though very good music it is not original: Haydn much better. I think the day of Oratorios is gone, like the day for painting Holy Families, etc. But we cannot get tired of what has been done in Oratorios more than we can get tired of Raffaele. Mendelssohn is really original and beautiful in *romantic* music: witness his *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Fingal's Cave*.

I had a note from Alfred three months ago. He was then in London: but is now in Ireland, I think, adding to his new poem, the *Princess*. Have you seen it? I am considered a great heretic for abusing it; it seems to me a wretched waste of power at a time of life when a man ought to be doing his best;

and I almost feel hopeless about Alfred now. I mean, about his doing what he was born to do. . . . On the other hand, Thackeray is progressing greatly in his line : he publishes a Novel in numbers—Vanity Fair—which began dull, I thought : but gets better every number, and has some very fine things indeed in it. He is become a great man I am told : goes to Holland House, and Devonshire House : and for some reason or other, will not write a word to me. But I am sure this is not because he is asked to Holland House. Dickens has fallen off in his last novel,<sup>1</sup> just completed ; but there are wonderful things in it too. Do you ever get a glimpse of any of these things ?

As to public affairs, they are so wonderful that one does not know where to begin. If England maintains her own this year, she must have the elements of long lasting in her. I think People begin to wish we had no more to do with Ireland : but the Whigs will never listen to a doctrine which was never heard of in Holland House. I am glad Italy is free : and surely there is nothing for her now but a Republic. It is well to stand by old kings who have done well by us : but it is too late in the day to *begin* Royalty.

If anything could tempt me so far as Italy, it would certainly be your presence in Florence. But I boggle about going twenty miles, and *cui bono?* deadens me more and more.

<sup>1</sup> Dombey and Son.

July 2. All that precedes was written six weeks ago, when I was obliged to go up to London on business. . . . I saw Alfred, and the rest of the sçavans. Thackeray is a great man : goes to Devonshire House, etc. : and *his* book (which is capital) is read by the Great : and will, I hope, do them good. I heard but little music : the glorious Acis and Galatea ; and the redoubtable Jenny Lind, for the first time. I was disappointed in her : but am told this is all my fault. As to naming her in the same Olympiad with great old Pasta, I am sure that is ridiculous. The Exhibition is like most others you have seen ; worse perhaps. There is an 'Aaron' and a 'John the Baptist' by Etty far worse than the Saracen's Head on Ludgate Hill. Moore is turned Picture dealer : and that high Roman virtue in which he indulged is likely to suffer a Picture-dealer's change, I think. Carlyle writes in the Examiner about Ireland : raves and foams, but has nothing to propose. Spedding prospers with Bacon. Alfred seemed to me in fair plight : much dining out : and his last Poem is well liked I believe. Morton is still at Lisbon, I believe also : but I have not written to him, nor heard from him. And now, my dear Frederic, I must shut up. Do not neglect to write to me sometimes. Alfred said you ought to be in England about your Grimsby Land.

*To E. B. Cowell.*

[? 1848.]

MY DEAR COWELL,

. . . I do not know that I praised Xenophon's imagination in recording such things as Alcibiades at Lampsacus;<sup>1</sup> all I meant to say was that the history was not dull which does record such facts, if it be for the imagination of others to quicken them. . . . As to Sophocles, I will not give up my old Titan. Is there not an infusion of Xenophon in Sophocles, as compared to Æschylus,—a dilution? Sophocles is doubtless the better artist, the more complete; but are we to expect anything but glimpses and ruins of the divinest? Sophocles is a pure Greek temple; but Æschylus is a rugged mountain, lashed by seas, and riven by thunderbolts: and which is the most wonderful, and appalling? Or if one will have Æschylus too a work of man, I say he is like a Gothic Cathedral, which the Germans say did arise from the genius of man aspiring up to the immeasurable, and reaching after the infinite in complexity and gloom, according as Christianity elevated and widened men's minds. A dozen lines of Æschylus have a more Almighty power on me than all Sophocles' plays; though I would perhaps rather save Sophocles, as the consummation of Greek art, than Æschylus' twelve lines, if it came to a choice which must be lost.

<sup>1</sup> Hellenica, II. i. 25.

Besides these Æschyluses *trouble* us with their grandeur and gloom; but Sophocles is always soothing, complete, and satisfactory.

*To W. B. Donne.*

BOULGE, *Decr.* 27, [1848.]

MY DEAR DONNE,

You have sent me two or three kind messages through Barton. I hear you come into Suffolk the middle of January. My movements are as yet uncertain; the lawyers may call me back to London very suddenly: but should I be here at the time of your advent, you must really contrive to come here, to this Cottage, for a day or two. I have yet beds, tables, and chairs for two: I think Gurdon is also looking out for you.

I only returned home a few days ago, to spend Christmas with Barton: whose turkey I accordingly partook of. He seems only pretty well: is altered during the last year: less spirits, less strength; but quite amiable still.

I saw many of my friends in London, Carlyle and Tennyson among them; but most and best of all, Spedding. I have stolen his noble book<sup>1</sup> away from him; noble, in spite (I believe, but am not sure) of some *adikology* in the second volume: some special pleadings for his idol: amica Veritas, sed magis, etc.

<sup>1</sup> Evenings with a Reviewer.

But I suppose you will think this the intolerance of a weak stomach.

I also went to plays and concerts which I could scarce afford : but I thought I would have a Carnival before entering on a year of reductions. I have been trying to hurry on, and bully, Lawyers : have done a very little good with much trouble ; and cannot manage to fret much though I am told there is great cause for fretting.

Farewell for the present : come and see me if we be near Woodbridge at the same time : remember me to all who do remember me : and believe me yours as ever, E. F. G.

*To S. Laurence.*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE,

*Febr : 9/49.*

MY DEAR LAURENCE,

Roe promised me six copies of his Tennyson.<sup>1</sup> Do you know anything of them? Why I ask is, that, in case they should be at your house, I may have an opportunity of having them brought down here one day. And I have promised them nearly all to people hereabout.

Barton is out of health ; some affection of the heart, I think, that will never leave him, never let him be what he was when you saw him. He is forced to be very abstemious . . . but he bears his

<sup>1</sup> A lithograph of the portrait by Laurence.



illness quite as a man; and looks very demurely to the necessary end of all life.<sup>1</sup> Churchyard is pretty well; has had a bad cough for three months. I suppose we are all growing older: though I have been well this winter, and was unwell all last. I forget if you saw Crabbe (I mean the Father) when you were down here.

You may tell Mr. Hullah, if you like, that in spite of his contempt for my music, I was very much pleased with a duett of his I chanced to see—‘O that we two were maying’—and which I bought and have forced two ladies here to take pains to learn. They would sing nicely if they had voices and were taught.

*Fragment of Letter to J. Allen.*

I see a good deal of Alfred, who lives not far off me: and he is still the same noble and droll fellow he used to be. A lithograph has been made from Laurence’s portrait of him; *my* portrait: and six copies are given to me. I reserve one for you; how can I send it to you?

Laurence has for months been studying the Venetian secret of colour in company with Geldart; and at last they have discovered it, they say. I have seen some of Laurence’s portraits done on his new system; they seem to be really much better up to a certain point of progress: but I think he is apt, by a bad choice of colours, to spoil the effect which an improved

<sup>1</sup> Bernard Barton died 19 Feb. 1849.

system of laying on the colours should ensure. But he has only lately begun on his new system, of which he is quite confident; and perhaps all will come right by and by.

I have seen Thackeray three or four times. He is just the same. All the world admires *Vanity Fair*; and the Author is courted by Dukes and Duchesses, and wits of both sexes. I like *Pendennis* much; and Alfred said he thought 'it was quite delicious: it seemed to him so *mature*,' he said. You can imagine Alfred saying this over one's fire, spreading his great hand out.

*To F. Tennyson.*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE, *June 19, 1849.*

MY DEAR OLD FREDERIC,

I often think of you: often wish to write to you—often intend to do so—determine to do so—but perhaps should not do so for a long time, but that this sheet of thin paper happens to come under my fingers this 19th of June 1849. You must not believe however that it is only chance that puts me up to this exertion; I really should have written before but that the reports we read of Italian and Florentine troubles put me in doubt first whether you are still at Florence to receive my letter: and secondly whether, if you be there, it would ever reach your hands. But I will brace myself up even to that great act of Friendship, to write a long letter with all probability of its mis-

carrying. Only look here ; if it ever does reach you, you must really write to me directly : to let me know how you and yours are, for I am sincerely anxious to know this. I saw great reports in the paper too some months back of Prince Albert going to open Great Grimsby Docks. Were not such Docks to be made on your land? and were you not to be a rich man if they were made? And have you easily consented to forego being paid in money, and to accept in lieu thereof a certain quantity of wholly valueless shares in said Docks, which will lead you into expense, instead of enriching you? This is what I suppose will be the case. For though you have a microscopic eye for human character, you are to be diddled by any knave, or set of knaves, as you well know.

Of my own affairs I have nothing agreeable to tell. . . . When I met you in London, I was raising money for myself on my reversionary property : and so I am still : and of course the lawyers continue to do so in the most expensive way ; a slow torture of the purse. But do not suppose I want money : I get it, at a good price : nor do I fret myself about the price : there will be quite enough (if public securities hold) for my life under any dispensation the lawyers can inflict. As I grow older I want less. I have not bought a book or a picture this year : have not been to a concert, opera, or play : and, what is more, I don't care to go. Not but if I meet you in London again I shall break out into shilling concerts, etc., and shall be glad of the opportunity.

After you left London, I remained there nearly to the end of December ; saw a good deal of Alfred, etc. Since then I have been down here except a fortnight's stay in London, from which I have just returned. I heard Alfred had been seen flying through town to the Lushingtons : but I did not see him. He is said to be still busy about that accursed Princess. By the by, beg, borrow, steal, or buy Keats' Letters and Poems ; most wonderful bits of Poems, written off hand at a sitting, most of them : I only wonder that they do not make a noise in the world. By the by again, it is quite necessary *your* poems should be printed ; which Moxon, I am sure, would do gladly. Except this book of Keats, we have had *no* poetry lately, I believe ; luckily, the —, —, —, etc., are getting older and past the age of conceiving—*wind*. Send your poems over to Alfred to sort and arrange for you : he will do it : and you and he are the only men alive whose poems I want to see in print. By the by, thirdly and lastly, and in total contradiction to the last sentence, I am now helping to edit some letters and poems of—Bernard Barton ! Yes : the poor fellow died suddenly of heart disease ; leaving his daughter, a noble woman, almost unprovided for : and we are getting up this volume by subscription. If you were in England *you* must subscribe : but as you are not, you need only give us a share in the Great Grimsby Dock instead.

Now there are some more things I could tell you, but you see where my pen has honestly got to in the

paper. I remember you did not desire to hear about my garden, which is now gorgeous with large red poppies, and lilac irises—satisfactory colouring: and the trees murmur a continuous soft *chorus to the solo which my soul discourses within*. If that be not Poetry, I should like to know what is? and with it I may as well conclude. I think I shall send this letter to your family at Cheltenham to be forwarded to you:—they may possibly have later intelligence of you than I have. Pray write to me if you get this; indeed you *must*; and never come to England without letting me know of it.

*To George Crabbe.*<sup>1</sup>

TERRACE HOUSE, RICHMOND,

October 22/49.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Warren's analysis of my MS. is rather wonderful to me. Though not wholly correct (as I think, and as I will expound to you one day) it seems to me yet as exact as most of my friends who know me best could draw out from their personal knowledge. Some of his guesses (though partly right) hit upon traits of character I should conceive quite out of all possibility of solution from mere handwriting. I can understand that a man should guess at one's temperament, whether lively or slow; at one's habit of thought, whether

<sup>1</sup> Grandson of the poet, afterwards Rector of Merton, near Watton, Norfolk.

diffuse or logical ; at one's Will, whether strong and direct or feeble and timid. But whether one distrusts men, and yet trusts friends? Half of this is true, at all events. Then I cannot conceive how a man should see in handwriting such *an accident* as whether one knew much of Books or men ; and in this point it is very doubtful if Warren is right. But, take it all in all, his analysis puzzles me much. I have sent it to old Jem Spedding the Wise. You shall have it again.

If my Mother should remain at this place you must one day come and see her and it with me. She would be very glad to receive you. Richmond and all its environs are very beautiful, and very interesting ; haunted by the memory of Princes, Wits, and Beauties.

*To E. B. Cowell.*

BOULGE, *Saturday*, [1849].

MY DEAR COWELL,

How is it I have not heard from you these two months? Surely, I was the last who wrote. I was told you had influenza, or cold : but I suppose that is all over by this time. How goes on Sanscrit, Athenæus, etc. I am reading the sixth Book of Thucydides—the Sicilian expedition—very interesting—indeed I like the old historian more and more and shall be sorry when I have done with him. Do you remember the fine account of the great armament setting off from the Piræus for Sicily—B. 6, ch. 30, etc? If not, read it now.

One day I mean to go and pay you another visit, perhaps soon. I heard from Miss Barton you were reading, and even liking, the Princess—is this so? I believe it is greatly admired in London coteries. I remain in the same mind about [it]. I am told the Author means to republish it, with a character of each speaker between each canto; which will make the matter worse, I think; unless the speakers are all of the Tennyson family. For there is no indication of any change of speaker in the cantos themselves. What do you say to all this?

Can you tell me any passages in the Romans of the Augustan age, or rather before, telling of decline in the people's morals, hardihood, especially as regards the youth of the country?

Kind remembrances to Miladi, and I am yours  
ever,

E. FITZGERALD.

*To F. Tennyson.*

BEDFORD, Dec. 7/49.

MY DEAR OLD FREDERIC,

Your note came to me to-day. I ought to have written to you long ago: and indeed did half do a letter before the summer was half over: which letter I mislaid. I shall be delighted indeed to have your photograph: insufficient as a photograph is. You are one of the few men whose portrait I would give a penny to have: and one day when you are in England we must get it done by Laurence; half at your expense

and half at mine, I think. I wish you had sent over to me some of your poems which you told me you were printing at Florence : and often I wish I was at Florence to give you some of my self-satisfied advice on what you should select. For though I do not pretend to write Poetry you know I have a high notion of my judgment in it.

Well, I was at Boulogne all the summer : came up thence five weeks ago : stayed three weeks with my mother at Richmond ; a week in London : and now am come here to try and finish a money bargain with some lawyers which you heard me beginning a year ago. They utterly failed in any part of the transaction except bringing me in a large bill for service unperformed. However, we are now upon another tack. . . .

In a week I go to London, where I hope to see Alfred. Oddly enough, I had a note from him this very day on which I receive yours : he has, he tells me, taken chambers in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Moxon told me he was about to publish another edition of his Princess, with interludes added between the parts : and also that he was about to print, but (I think) not to publish, those Elegiacs on Hallam. I saw poor old Thackeray in London : getting very slowly better of a bilious fever that had almost killed him. Some one told me that he was gone or going to the Water Doctor at Malvern. People in general thought Pendennis got dull as it got on ; and I confess I thought so too : he would do well to take the oppor-



tunity of his illness to discontinue it altogether. He told me last June he himself was tired of it: must not his readers naturally tire too? Do you see Dickens' David Copperfield? It is very good, I think: more carefully written than his later works. But the melodramatic parts, as usual, bad. Carlyle says he is a showman whom one gives a shilling to once a month to see his raree-show, and then sends him about his business.

I have been obliged to turn Author on the very smallest scale. My old friend Bernard Barton chose to die in the early part of this year. . . . We have made a Book out of his Letters and Poems, and published it by subscription . . . and I have been obliged to contribute a little dapper<sup>1</sup> Memoir, as well as to select bits of Letters, bits of Poems, etc. All that was wanted is accomplished: many people subscribed. Some of B. B.'s letters are pleasant, I think, and when you come to England I will give you this little book of incredibly small value. I have heard no music but two concerts at Jullien's a fortnight ago; very dull, I thought: no beautiful new Waltzes and Polkas which I love. It is a strange thing to go to the Casinos and see the coarse whores and apprentices in bespattered morning dresses, pea-jackets, and bonnets, twirl round clumsily and indecently to the divine airs played in the Gallery; 'the music yearning like a God in pain' indeed. I should like to hear

<sup>1</sup> No one but FitzGerald in humorous self-depreciation would apply such an epithet to this delightful piece of biography.

some of your Florentine Concerts ; and I do wish you to believe that I do constantly wish myself with you : that, if I ever went anywhere, I would assuredly go to visit the Villa Gondi. I wish you to believe this, which I know to be true, though I am probably further than ever from accomplishing my desire. Farewell: I shall hope to find out your Consul and your portrait in London : though you do not give me very good directions where I am to find them. And I will let you know soon whether I have found the portrait, and how I like it.

*To John Allen.*

BEDFORD, Dec. 13/49.

MY DEAR OLD ALLEN,

. . . I am glad you like the Book.<sup>1</sup> You are partly right as to what I say about the Poems. For though I really do think some of the Poems very pretty, yet I think they belong to a class which the world no longer wants. Notwithstanding this, one is sure the world will not be the worse for them: they are a kind of elder Nursery rhymes; pleasing to younger people of good affections.<sup>2</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Selections from the Poems and Letters of Bernard Barton.

<sup>2</sup> Of course this is not intended to be taken quite seriously. It is to be remembered that FitzGerald also said of them, 'There are many verses whose melody will linger in the ear, and many images that will abide in the memory. Such surely are those of men's hearts brightening up at Christmas "like a fire new-stirred"—of the stream that leaps along over the pebbles "like happy hearts by holiday made light"—of the solitary tomb showing from afar "like a lamb in the meadow," etc.'

letters, some of them, I like very much : but I had some curiosity to know how others would like them.

*To W. B. Donne.*

19 CHARLOTTE ST., FITZROY SQUARE,  
LONDON.  
[18 Jan. 1850.]

DEAR DONNE,

. . . After I left Richmond, whence I last wrote to you, I went to Bedford, where I was for five weeks: then returned to spend Christmas at Richmond: and now dawdle here hoping to get some accursed lawyers to raise me some money on what remains of my reversion. This they *can* do, and *will* do, in time: but, as usual, find it their interest to delay as much as possible.

I found A. Tennyson in chambers at Lincoln's Inn: and recreated myself with a sight of his fine old mug, and got out of him all his dear old stories, and many new ones. He is re-publishing his Poems, the Princess with songs interposed. I cannot say I thought them like the old vintage of his earlier days, though perhaps better than other people's. But, even to you, such opinions appear blasphemies. A. T. is now gone on a visit into Leicestershire: and I miss him greatly. Carlyle I have not seen; but I read an excellent bit of his in the Examiner, about Ireland.

Thackeray is well again, except not quite strong yet. Spedding is not yet returned: and I doubt will not return before I have left London.

I have been but to one play; to see the Hypocrite, and Tom Taylor's burlesque<sup>1</sup> at the Strand Theatre. It was dreadfully cold in the pit: and I thought dull. Farren almost unintelligible: Mrs. Glover good in a disagreeable part.<sup>2</sup> Diogenes has very good Aristophanic hits in it, as perhaps you know: but its action was rather slow, I thought: and I was so cold I could not sit it half through.

*To F. Tennyson.*

[Written from Bramford? E. F. G. was staying at this time with the Cowells.]

Direct to BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE.

*March 7/50.*

MY DEAR OLD FREDERIC,

. . . I saw Alfred in London—pretty well, I thought. He has written songs to be stuck between the cantos of the Princess, none of them of the old champagne flavour, as I think. But I am in a minority about the Princess, I believe. If you print any poems, I especially desire you will transmit them to me. I wish I was with you to consider about these: for though I cannot write poems, you know I consider that I have the old woman's faculty of judging of them: yes, much better than much

<sup>1</sup> Diogenes and his Lantern.

<sup>2</sup> Old Lady Lambert.

cleverer and wiser men; I pretend to no Genius, but to Taste: which, according to my aphorism, is the feminine of Genius. . . .

. . . Please to answer me directly. I constantly think of you: and, as I have often sincerely told you, with a kind of love which I feel towards but two or three friends. Are you coming to England? How goes on Grimsby! Doesn't the state of Europe sicken you? Above all, let me have any poems you print: you are now the only man I expect verse from; such gloomy grand stuff as you write. Thackeray, to be sure, can write good ballads, half serious. His *Pendennis* is very stupid, I think: Dickens' *Copperfield* on the whole, very good. He always lights one up somehow. There is a new volume of posthumous poems by Ebenezer Elliott: with fine things in it. I don't find myself growing old about Poetry; on the contrary. I wish I could take twenty years off Alfred's shoulders, and set him up in his youthful glory: . . . He is the same magnanimous, kindly, delightful fellow as ever; uttering by far the finest prose sayings of any one.

*To John Allen.*

BOULGE: *March 9/50.*

MY DEAR ALLEN,

. . . I have now been home about three weeks, and, as you say, one sees indications of lovely spring

about. I have read but very little of late; indeed my eyes have not been in superfine order. I caught a glimpse of the second volume of Southey's Life and Letters; interesting enough. I have also bought Emerson's 'Representative Men,' a shilling book of Bohn's: with very good scattered thoughts in it: but scarcely leaving any large impression with one, or establishing a theory. So at least it has seemed to me: but I have not read very carefully. I have also bought a little posthumous volume of Ebenezer Elliott: which is sure to have fine things in it.

I believe I love poetry almost as much as ever: but then I have been suffered to doze all these years in the enjoyment of old childish habits and sympathies, without being called on to more active and serious duties of life. I have not put away childish things, though a man. But, at the same time, this visionary inactivity is better than the mischievous activity of so many I see about me; not better than the useful and virtuous activity of a few others: John Allen among the number.

*To F. Tennyson.*

PORTLAND COFFEE HOUSE, LONDON.

*April 17/50.*

MY DEAR FREDERIC,

You tell me to write soon: and this letter is begun, at least, on the day yours reaches me. This is partly owing to my having to wait an hour here in the Coffee

room of the Portland Hotel : whither your letter has been forwarded to me from Boulogne. I am come up for one week : once more to haggle with Lawyers ; once more to try and settle my own affairs as well as those of others for a time. . . .

I don't think of drowning myself yet : and what I wrote to you was a sort of safety escape for my poor flame . . . It is only idle and well-to-do people who kill themselves ; it is ennui that is hopeless : great pain of mind and body 'still, still, on hope relies' : the very old, the very wretched, the most incurably diseased never put themselves to rest. It really gives me pain to hear you or any one else call me a philosopher, or any good thing of the sort. I am none, never was ; and, if I pretended to be so, was a hypocrite. Some things, as wealth, rank, respectability, I don't care a straw about ; but no one can resent the toothache more, nor fifty other little ills beside that flesh is heir to. But let us leave all this.

I am come to London ; but I do not go to Operas or Plays : and have scarce time (and, it must be said, scarce inclination) to hunt up many friends. Dear old Alfred is out of town ; Spedding is my sheet-anchor, the truly wise and fine fellow : I am going to his rooms this very evening : and there I believe Thackeray, Venables, etc., are to be. I hope not a large assembly : for I get shyer and shyer even of those I knew. Thackeray is in such a great world that I am afraid of him ; he gets tired of me : and we are content to regard each other at a distance. You,

Alfred, Spedding, and Allen, are the only men I ever care to see again. If ever I leave this country I will go and see you at Florence or elsewhere; but my plans are at present unsettled. I have refused to be Godfather to all who have ever asked me; but I declare it will give me sincere pleasure to officiate for your Child. I got your photograph at last: it is a beastly thing: not a bit like: why did you not send your Poems, which are like you; and reflect your dear old face well? As you know I admire your poems, the only poems by a living writer I do admire, except Alfred's, you should not hesitate. I can have no doubt whatever they ought to be published in England: I believe Moxon would publish them: and I believe you would make some money by them. But don't send them to Alfred to revise or select: only for this reason, that you would both of you be a little annoyed by gossip about how much share each of you had in them. Your poems can want no other hand than your own to meddle with them, except in respect of the choice of them to make a volume which would please generally: a little of the vulgar faculty of popular tact is all that needs to be added to you, as I think. You will know I do not say this presumptuously: since I think the power of writing one fine line transcends all the 'Able-Editor' ability in the ably-edited Universe.

Do you see Carlyle's 'Latter Day Pamphlets'? They make the world laugh, and his friends rather sorry for him. But that is because people will still



look for practical measures from him: one must be content with him as a great satirist who can make us feel when we are wrong though he cannot set us right. There is a bottom of truth in Carlyle's wildest rhapsodies. I have no news to tell you of books or music, for I scarce see or hear any. And moreover I must be up, and leave the mahogany coffee-room table on which I write so badly: and be off to Lincoln's Inn. God bless you, my dear fellow. I ask a man of business here in the room about Grimsby: he says, 'Well, all these railways are troublesome; but the Grimsby one is one of the best: railway property must look up a little: and so will Grimsby.'

*To W. B. Donne.*

BOULGE: Friday [4 Oct. 1850].

MY DEAR DONNE,

I have been some while intending to send you a few lines, to report my continued existence, to thank you for the Papers, which I and my dear old Crabbe read and mark, and to tell you I was much pleased with Laurence's sketch of you, which he exhibited to me in a transitory way some weeks ago. Has he been to Bury again? To Sir H. Bunbury's?

I am packing up my mind by degrees to move away from here on a round of visits: and will give you a look at Bury if you like it. I am really frightened that it is a whole year since I have seen

you : and we but two hours asunder ! I know it is not want of will on my part : though you may wonder what other want detains me ; but you will believe me when I say it is not want of will. You are too busy to come here : where indeed is nothing to come for. I wished for Charles last Monday : for people came to shoot the three brace of pheasants inhabiting these woods : had I remembered the first of October, I would have let him know. Otherwise, I am afraid to invite the young, whom I cannot entertain.

H. Groome came over and dined with me on Wednesday : and Crabbe came to meet him ; but the latter had no hearty smoker to keep him in countenance, and was not quite comfortable. H. Groome improves : his poetical and etymological ambitions begin to pale away before years that bring the philosophic mind, and before a rising family.

I liked your Articles on Pepys much. How go on the Norfolk worthies ? I see by your review that you are now ripe to write them at your ease : which means (in a work of that kind) successfully.

*To F. Tennyson.*

[BOULGE]. Decr. 31/50.

MY DEAR OLD FREDERIC,

If you knew how glad I am to hear from you, you would write to me oftener. You see I make a quick return whenever I get an epistle from you. I should indeed have begun to indite before, but I had not a

scrap of serviceable paper in the house: and I am only this minute returned from a wet walk to Woodbridge bringing home the sheet on which I am now writing, along with the rest of a half-quire, which may be filled to you, if we both live. I now count the number of sheets: there are nine. I do not think we average more than three letters a year each. Shall both of us, or either, live three years more, beginning with the year that opens to-morrow? I somehow believe *not*: which I say not as a doleful thing (indeed you may look at it as a very ludicrous one). Well, we shall see. I am all for the short and merry life. Last night I began the sixth Book of Lucretius in bed. You laugh grimly again? I have not looked into it for more than a year, and I took it up by mistake for one of Swift's dirty volumes; and, having got into bed with it, did not care to get out to change it.

The delightful lady . . . is going to leave this neighbourhood and carry her young Husband<sup>1</sup> to Oxford, there to get him some Oriental Professorship one day. He is a delightful fellow, and, *I* say, will, if he live, be the best Scholar in England. Not that I think Oxford will be so helpful to his studies as his counting house at Ipswich was. However, being married he cannot at all events become Fellow, and, as so many do, dissolve all the promise of Scholarship in Sloth, Gluttony, and sham Dignity. I shall miss them both more than I can say, and must take to

<sup>1</sup> E. B. Cowell.

Lucretius ! to comfort me. I have entirely given up the *Genteel* Society here about ; and scarce ever go anywhere but to the neighbouring Parson,<sup>1</sup> with whom I discuss Paley's Theology, and the Gorham Question. I am going to him to-night, by the help of a Lantern, in order to light out the Old Year with a Cigar. For he is a great Smoker, and a very fine fellow in all ways.

I have not seen any one you know since I last wrote ; nor heard from any one : except dear old Spedding, who really came down and spent two days with us, me and that Scholar and his Wife in their Village,<sup>2</sup> in their delightful little house, in their pleasant fields by the River side. Old Spedding was delicious there ; always leaving a mark, I say, in all places one has been at with him, a sort of Platonic perfume. For has he not all the beauty of the Platonic Socrates, with some personal Beauty to boot ? He explained to us one day about the laws of reflection in water : and I said then one never could look at the willow whose branches furnished the text without thinking of him. How beastly this reads ! As if he gave us a lecture ! But you know the man, how quietly it all came out ; only because I petulantly denied his plain assertion. For I really often cross him only to draw him out ; and vain as I may be, he is one of those that I am well content to make shine at my own expense.

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. George Crabbe, son of the Poet, and Vicar of Bredfield.

<sup>2</sup> Bramford, near Ipswich.

Don't suppose that this or any other ideal day with him effaces my days with you. Indeed, my dear Frederic, you also mark many times and many places in which I have been with you. Gravesend and its ἀνήριθμοι shrimps cannot be forgotten. You say I shall never go to see you at Florence. I have said to you before and I now repeat it, that if ever I go abroad it shall be to see you and my Godchild. I really cannot say if I should not have gone this winter (as I hinted in my last) in case you had answered my letter. But I really did not know if you had not left Florence; and a fortnight ago I thought to myself I would write to Horatio at Cheltenham and ask him for news of you. As to Alfred, I have heard of his marriage, etc., from Spedding, who also saw and was much pleased with her indeed. But you know Alfred himself never writes, nor indeed cares a halfpenny about one, though he is very well satisfied to see one when one falls in his way. You will think I have a spite against him for some neglect, when I say this, and say besides that I cannot care for his In Memoriam. Not so, if I know myself: I always thought the same of him, and was just as well satisfied with it as now. His poem I never did greatly affect: nor can I learn to do so: it is full of finest things, but it is monotonous, and has that air of being evolved by a Poetical Machine of the highest order. So it seems to be with him now, at least to me, the Impetus, the Lyrical œstrus, is gone. . . . It is the cursed in-

activity (very pleasant to me who am no Hero) of this 19th century which has spoiled Alfred, I mean spoiled him for the great work he ought now to be entering upon; the lovely and noble things he has done must remain. It is dangerous work this prophesying about great Men. . . . I beg you very much to send me your poems, the very first opportunity; as I want them very much. Nobody doubts that you ought to make a volume for Moxon. Send your poems to Spedding to advise on. No doubt Alfred would be best adviser of all: but then people would be stupid, and say that he had done all that was good in the Book—(wait till I take my tea, which has been lying on the table these ten minutes)—Now, animated by some very inferior Souchong from the village shop, I continue my letter, having reflected during my repast that I have seen two College men you remember since I last wrote, Thompson and Merivale. The former is just recovering of the water cure, looking blue: the latter, Merivale, is just recovering from—Marriage!—which he undertook this Midsummer, with a light-haired daughter of George Frere's. Merivale lives just on the borders of Suffolk: and a week before his marriage he invited me to meet F. Pollock and his wife at the Rectory. There we spent two easy days, and I heard no more of Merivale till three weeks ago when he asked me to meet Thompson just before Christmas. . . . Have you seen Merivale's History of Rome, beginning with the Empire? Two portly volumes are out, and are

approved of by Scholars, I believe. I have not read them, not having money to buy, nor any friend to lend.

I hear little music but what I make myself, or help to make with my Parson's son and daughter. We, with not a voice among us, go through Handel's Coronation Anthems! Laughable it may seem; yet it is not quite so; the things are so well-defined, simple, and grand, that the faintest outline of them tells; my admiration of the old Giant grows and grows: his is the Music for a Great, Active, People. Sometimes too, I go over to a place elegantly called *Bungay*, where a Printer<sup>1</sup> lives who drills the young folks of a manufactory there to sing in Chorus once a week. . . . They sing some of the English Madrigals, some of Purcell, and some of Handel, in a way to satisfy me, who don't want perfection, and who believe that the *grandest* things do not depend on delicate finish. If you were here now, we would go over and hear the Harmonious Blacksmith sung in Chorus, with words, of course. It almost made me cry when I heard the divine Air rolled into vocal harmony from the four corners of a large Hall. One can scarce comprehend the Beauty of the English Madrigals till one hears them done (though coarsely) in this way and on a large scale: the play of the parts as they alternate from the different quarters of the room.

I have taken another half sheet to finish my letter upon: so as my calculation of how far this half-quire

<sup>1</sup> Charles Childs.

is to spread over Time is defeated. Let us write oftener, and longer, and we shall not tempt the Fates by inchoating too long a hope of letter-paper. I have written enough for to-night: I am now going to sit down and play one of Handel's Overtures as well as I can—Semele, perhaps, a very grand one—then, lighting my lantern, trudge through the mud to Parson Crabbe's. Before I take my pen again to finish this letter the New Year will have dawned—on some of us. 'Thou fool! this night thy soul may be required of thee!' Very well: while it is in this Body I will wish my dear old F. T. a happy New Year. And now to drum out the Old with Handel. Good Night.

New Year's Day, 1851. A happy new Year to you! I sat up with my Parson till the Old Year was past, drinking punch and smoking cigars, for which I endure some headache this morning. Not that we took much; but a very little punch disagrees with me. Only I would not disappoint my old friend's convivial expectations. He is one of those happy men who has the boy's heart throbbing and trembling under the snows of sixty-five.

*To G. Crabbe.*

[GELDESTONE, *Feb.* 11, 1851.]

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I send you an Euphranor, and (as you desire it) Spedding's Examiner.<sup>1</sup> I believe that I should be

<sup>1</sup> Containing an article by Spedding on Euphranor.



ashamed of his praise, if I did not desire to take any means to make my little book known for a good purpose. I think he over-praises it: but he cannot over-praise the design, and (as I believe) the tendency of it.

60 LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS,

[Feb. 27, 1851.]

MY DEAR GEORGE,

. . . My heart saddens to think of Bramford all desolate;<sup>1</sup> and I shall now almost turn my head away as any road, or railroad, brings me within sight of the little spire! I write once a week to abuse both of them for going. But they are quite happy at Oxford.

I felt a sort of horror when I read in your letter you had ordered the Book<sup>2</sup> into your Club, for fear some one might guess. But if *your* folks don't guess, no one else will. I have heard no more of it since I wrote to you last, except that its sale does not stand still. Pickering's foreman blundered in the Advertisements; quoting an extract about the use of the Book, when he should have quoted about its amusement, which is what the world is attracted by. But I left it to him. As it would be a real horror to me to be known as the writer, I do not think I can have much personal ambition in its success; but I should

<sup>1</sup> The Cowells had gone to live in Oxford.

<sup>2</sup> Euphranor.

sincerely wish it to be read for what little benefit it may do. . . .

I have seen scarce anybody here : Thackeray only once ; neither Tennyson nor Carlyle. Donne came up for a day to see as to the morality of the 'Prodigal Son'<sup>1</sup> at Drury Lane, which the Bishop of London complained of. Donne is deputy Licenser for Jack Kemble. I went to see it with him ; it was only stupid and gaudy.

BOULGE, Tuesday, *May* the something, 1851.

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I am ashamed you should have the trouble of asking me to Merton so often, and so in vain. I might give you a specious reason for not going now . . . but I will honestly confess I believe I should not have accompanied your Father in his Voyage to your house, had the sky been quite clear of engagement. Why, I cannot exactly say : my soul is not packed up for Merton yet, though one day it will be ; and I have no such idea of the preciousness of my company as to have any hesitation in letting my friends wait any length of time before I go to occupy their easy chairs. The day will come, if we live. I have had a very strong invitation to Cambridge this week ; to live with my old friends the Skrines in Sidney College. But why should we meet to see

<sup>1</sup> Azaël the Prodigal, adapted from Scribe and Auber's *L'Enfant Prodigue*.

each other grown old, etc.? (I don't mean this quite seriously.) Ah, I should like a drive over Newmarket Heath: the sun shining on the distant leads of Ely Cathedral.

*To F. Tennyson.*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE,

[25 August, 1851.]

MY DEAR OLD FREDERIC,

Why do you never write to me? I am sure I wrote last: I constantly am thinking of you, and constantly wishing to see you. Perhaps you are in England at this very hour, and do not let me know of it. *When* I wrote to you last I cannot remember; whether in Winter or Spring. I was in London during January and February last, but have been vegetating down here ever since. Have not been up even to see the Great Exh.—one is tired of writing, and seeing written, the word. All the world, as you know, goes in droves: you may be lounging in it this very hour, though I don't mean to say you are one of a drove. It is because there are so few F. Tennysons in the world that I do not like to be wholly out of hearing of the one I know. . . . My own affairs do not improve, and I have seen more and more of the pitiful in humanity . . . but luckily my wants decrease. I am quite content never to buy a picture or a Book; almost content not to see them. One could soon relapse into Barbarism. I do indeed

take a survey of old Handel's Choruses now and then; and am just now looking with great delight into Purcell's King Arthur, real noble *English* music, much of it; and assuredly the prototype of much of Handel. It is said Handel would not admire Purcell; but I am sure he adapted himself to English ears and sympathies by means of taking up Purcell's vein. I wish you were here to consider this with me; but you would grunt dissent, and smile bitterly at my theories. I am trying to teach the bumpkins of the united parishes of Boulge and Debach to sing a second to such melodies as the women sing by way of Hymns in our Church: and I have invented (as I think) a most simple and easy way of teaching them the little they need to learn. How would you like to see me, with a bit of chalk in my hand, before a black board, scoring up semibreves on a staff for half a dozen Rustics to vocalize? Laugh at me in Imagination. . . .

Almost the only man I hear from is dear old Spedding, who has lost his Father, and is now, I suppose, a rich man. This makes no apparent change in his way of life: he has only hired an additional Attic in Lincoln's Inn Fields, so as to be able to bed a friend upon occasion. I may have to fill it ere long. Merivale (you know, surely) is married, and has a son I hear. He lives some twenty miles from here. . . .

Now, my dear Frederic, this is a sadly dull letter. I could have made it duller and sadder by telling you

other things. But, instead of this, let me hear from you a good account of yourself and your family, and especially of my little Godson. Remember, I have a right to hear about him. Ever yours, dear old Grimsby,

E. F. G.

[19 CHARLOTTE ST., FITZROY SQUARE,  
*Dec.* 1851.]

MY DEAR OLD FREDERIC,

I have long been thinking I would answer a long and kind letter I had from you some weeks ago, in which you condoled with me about my finances, and offered me your house as a Refuge for the Destitute. I can never wonder at generosity in you: but I am sorry I should have seemed to complain so much as to provoke so much pity from you. I am not worse off than I have been these last three years; and so much better off than thousands who deserve more that I should deserve to be kicked if I whined over my decayed fortunes. If I go to Italy, it will be to see Florence and Fred. Tennyson: I do not despair of going one day: I believe my desire is gathering, and my indolence warming up with the exhilarating increase of Railroads.

But for the present here I am, at 19 Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, come up to have a fresh squabble with Lawyers, and to see to an old College friend who is gone mad, and threatens to drive his wife mad too, I think. Here are troubles, if you

like : I mean, these poor people's. Well, I have not had much time except to post about in Omnibus between Lincoln's Inn and Bayswater : but I have seen Alfred once ; Carlyle once ; Thackeray twice ; and Spedding many times. I did not see Mrs. A. : but am to go and dine there one day before I leave. Carlyle has been undergoing the Water System at Malvern, and says it has done him a very little good. He would be quite well, he says, if he threw his Books away, and walked about the mountains : but that would be 'propter vitam, etc.' Nature made him a Writer : so he must wear himself out writing Lives of Sterling, etc., for the Benefit of the World. Thackeray says he is getting tired of being witty, and of the great world : he is now gone to deliver his Lectures<sup>1</sup> at Edinburgh : having already given them at Oxford and Cambridge. Alfred, I thought looking pretty well. Spedding is immutably wise, good, and delightful : not so immutably well in Body, I think : though he does not complain. But I will deal in no more vaticinations of Evil. I can't think what was the oracle in my Letters you allude to, I mean about the three years' duration of our lives. I have long felt about England as you do, and even made up my mind to it, so as to sit comparatively, if ignobly, easy on that score. Sometimes I envy those who are so old that the curtain will probably fall on them before it does on their Country. If one could save the Race, what a Cause it would be ! not for

<sup>1</sup> On the English Humourists of the Eighteenth Century

one's own glory as a member of it, nor even for its glory as a Nation: but because it is the only spot in Europe where Freedom keeps her place. Had I Alfred's voice, I would not have mumbled for years over *In Memoriam* and the Princess, but sung such strains as would have revived the *Μαραθωνομάχους ἄνδρας* to guard the territory they had won. What can 'In Memoriam' do but make us all sentimental? . . .

My dear Frederic, I hope to see you one day: I really do look forward one day to go and see you in Italy, as well as to see you here in England. I know no one whom it would give me more pleasure to think of as one who might perhaps be near me as we both go down the hill together, whether in Italy or England. You, Spedding, Thackeray, and only one or two more. The rest have come like shadows and so departed.

*To G. Crabbe.*

[Feb. 27, 1852.]

MY DEAR GEORGE,

. . . I rejoice in your telling me what you think; or I should rejoice if these books were of importance enough to require honest advice. I think you may be very right about the length of the Preface;<sup>1</sup> that I do not think you right about the reasoning of it you may suppose by my ever printing it. It is to show

<sup>1</sup> To Polonius.

*why* Books of that kind are dull : what sort of writers ought to be quoted, etc. ; proverbial writers : and what constitutes proverbiality, etc. Well, enough of it all : I am glad you like it on the whole. As to Euphranor I do wish him not to die yet : and am gratified you think him worthy to survive a little longer. That is a good cause, let my treatment of it be as it will.

I and Drew sat up at your Father's till 3 (a.m.) last Tuesday : at the old affair of Calvinism, etc. It amuses them : else one would think it odd they did not see how they keep on fighting with Shadows, and slaying the slain.

I am really going next week from home, towards that famous expedition to Shropshire<sup>1</sup> which I mean to perform one day. I write after walking to Woodbridge : and hear that Mr. Cana has called in my absence to announce that 'the Hall' is let ; to a Mr. Cobbold, from Saxmundham, I think, who has a farm at Sutton. I met Tom (*young* Tom) Churchyard in Woodbridge, who tells me he is going to America on Monday ! He makes less fuss about it than I do about going to Shropshire.

HAM, *June 2/52.*

MY DEAR GEORGE,

. . . Order into your Book Club 'Trench on the Study of Words' ; a delightful, good, book, not at all dry (unless to fools) ; one I am sure you will like.

<sup>1</sup> To visit his friend John Allen.



Price but three and sixpence and well worth a guinea at least.

In spite of my anti-London prejudices, I find this Limb of London (for such it is) very beautiful: the Thames with its Swans upon it, and its wooded sides garnished with the Villas of Poets, Wits, and Courtiers, of a Time which (I am sorry to say) has more charms to me than the Middle Ages, or the Heroic.

I have seen scarce any of the living London Wits; Spedding and Donne most: Thackeray but twice for a few minutes. He finished his Novel<sup>1</sup> last Saturday and is gone, I believe, to the Continent.

*To F. Tennyson.*

GOLDINGTON, BEDFORD,

*June 8/52.*

MY DEAR FREDERIC,

It gave me, as always, the greatest pleasure to hear from you. Your letter found me at my Mother's house, at Ham, close to Richmond; a really lovely place, and neighbourhood, though I say it who am all prejudiced against London and 'all the purtenances thereof.' But the copious woods, green meadows, the Thames and its swans gliding between, and so many villas and cheerful houses and terraced gardens with all their associations of Wits and Courtiers on either

<sup>1</sup> Esmond.

side, all this is very delightful. I am not heroic enough for Castles, Battlefields, etc. Strawberry Hill for me! I looked all over it: you know all the pictures, jewels, curiosities, were sold some ten years ago; only bare walls remain: the walls indeed here and there stuck with Gothic woodwork, and the ceilings with Gothic gilding, sometimes painted Gothic to imitate woodwork; much of it therefore in less good taste: all a Toy, but yet the Toy of a very clever man. The rain is coming through the Roofs, and gradually disengaging the confectionary Battlements and Cornices. Do you like Walpole? did you ever read him? Then close by is Hampton Court: with its stately gardens, and fine portraits inside; all very much to my liking. I am quite sure gardens should be formal, and unlike general Nature. I much prefer the old French and Dutch gardens to what are called the English.

I saw scarce any of our friends during the three weeks I passed at Ham. Though I had to run to London several times, I generally ran back as fast as I could; much preferring the fresh air and the fields to the smoke and 'the wilderness of monkeys' in London. Thackeray I saw for ten minutes: he was just in the agony of finishing a Novel: which has arisen out of the Reading necessary for his Lectures, and relates to those Times—of Queen Anne, I mean. He will get £1000 for his Novel. He was wanting to finish it, and rush off to the Continent, I think, to shake off the fumes of it. Old Spedding, that aged

and most subtle Serpent, was in his old haunt in Lincoln's Inn Fields, up to any mischief. It was supposed that Alfred was somewhere near Malvern: Carlyle I did not go to see, for I really have nothing to tell him, and I have got tired of hearing him growl: though I do not cease to admire him as much as ever. I also went once to the pit of the Covent Garden Italian Opera, to hear Meyerbeer's Huguenots, of which I had only heard bits on the Pianoforte. But the first Act was so noisy, and ugly, that I came away, unable to wait for the better part, that, I am told, follows. Meyerbeer is a man of Genius: and works up *dramatic* Music: but he has scarce any melody, and is rather grotesque and noisy than really powerful. I think this is the fault of modern music; people cannot believe that Mozart is *powerful* because he is so Beautiful: in the same way as it requires a very practised eye (more than I possess) to recognize the consummate power predominating in the tranquil Beauty of Greek Sculpture. I think Beethoven is rather spasmodically, than sustainedly, grand.


Well, I must take to my third side after all, which I meant to have spared you, partly because of this transparent paper, and my more than usually bad writing. I came down here four days ago: and have this morning sketched for you the enclosed, the common that lies before my Bedroom window, as I pulled up my blind, and opened my shutter upon it, early this morning. I never draw now, never drew

well ; but this may serve to give a hint of poor old dewy England to you who are, I suppose, beginning to be dried up in the South. W. Browne, my host, tells me that your Grimsby Rail is looking up greatly, and certainly will pay well, sooner or later : which I devoutly hope it may.

I do not think I told you my Father was dead ; like poor old Sedley in Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, all his Coal schemes at an end. He died in March, after an illness of three weeks, saying 'that engine works well' (meaning one of his Colliery steam engines) as he lay in the stupor of Death. I was in Shropshire at the time, with my old friend Allen ; but I went home to Suffolk just to help to lay him in the Grave.

Pray do send me your Poems, one and all : I should like very much to talk them over with you, however much you might resent me, who am no Poet, presuming to advise you who as certainly are one. That you ought to publish some of these Poems (as I think, somewhat condensed, or, at least, curtailed) I am more and more sure, having seen the very great pleasure, and deep interest, some of them have caused when read to persons of very different talents and tastes.

And now, my dear Frederic, farewell for the present. Remember, you cannot write to me too often, as far as I am concerned.

 Don't write Politics — I agree with you beforehand.

*To W. B. Donne.*

BOULGE, *August 10/52.*

MY DEAR DONNE,

It is very good of you to write to me, so much as you have to do. I am much obliged to you also for taking the trouble to go and see my Mother. You may rely on it she feels as pleased with your company as she says she is: I do not know any one who has the power of being so agreeable to her as yourself.

And dear old Thackeray is really going to America! I must fire him a letter of farewell.

The Cowells are at Ipswich, and I get over to see them, etc. They talk of coming here too. I have begun again to read Calderon with Cowell: the *Magico* we have just read, a very grand thing. I suppose Calderon was over-praised some twenty years ago: for the last twenty it has been the fashion to underpraise him, I am sure. His Drama may not be the finest in the world: one sees how often too he wrote in the fashion of his time and country: but he is a wonderful fellow: one of the Great Men of the world.

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In October 1852 Thackeray sailed for America and before leaving wrote to FitzGerald the letter which he copied for Archdeacon Allen. I shall I trust be pardoned for thinking that others will be the better for reading the words of 'noble kindness' in which Thackeray took leave of his friend.

[BOULGE, 22 Nov. 1852.]

MY DEAR ALLEN,

I won't send you Thackeray's own letter because it is his own delegation of a little trust I would not hazard. But on the other side of the page I write a copy: for your eyes only: for I would not wish to show even its noble kindness to any but one who has known him as closely as myself.

*From W. M. Thackeray to E. F. G.*

*October 27, 1852.*

MY DEAREST OLD FRIEND,

I mustn't go away without shaking your hand, and saying Farewell and God Bless you. If anything happens to me, you by these presents must get ready the Book of Ballads which you like, and which I had not time to prepare before embarking on this voyage. And I should like my daughters to remember that you are the best and oldest friend their Father ever had, and that you would act as such: as my literary executor and so forth. My Books would yield a something as copyrights: and, should anything occur, I have commissioned friends in good place to get a Pension for my poor little wife. . . . Does not this sound gloomily? Well: who knows what Fate is in store: and I feel not at all downcast, but very grave and solemn just at the brink of a great voyage.

I shall send you a copy of *Esmond* to-morrow or so which you shall yawn over when you are inclined. But the great comfort I have in thinking about my dear old boy is that recollection of our youth when we loved each other as I do now while I write Farewell.

Laurence has done a capital head of me ordered by Smith the Publisher: and I have ordered a copy and Lord Ashburton another. If Smith gives me this one, I shall send the copy to you. I care for you as you know, and always like to think that I am fondly and affectionately yours

W. M. T.

I sail from Liverpool on Saturday Morning by the *Canada* for Boston.

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That the feelings here expressed were fully reciprocated by FitzGerald is clear from the following words of a letter written by him to Thackeray to tell him of a provision he had made in his will.

‘You see you can owe me no thanks for giving what I can no longer use “when I go down to the pit,” and it would be some satisfaction to me, and some diminution of the shame I felt on reading your letter, if “after many days” your generous and constant friendship bore some sort of fruit, if not to yourself to those you are naturally anxious about.’

I have not been able to ascertain the exact time at which FitzGerald began his Spanish studies; but it must have been long before this, for in 1853 the first-fruits of them appeared in the ‘Six Dramas from

Calderon freely translated by Edward FitzGerald,' the only book to which he ever put his name. It was probably in 1853 that he took up Persian, in which, as in Spanish, his friend Cowell was his guide.

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*To G. Crabbe.*

BOULGE, *July 22/53.*

MY DEAR GEORGE,

Your account of the Doctor's warnings to your Cousin in your first note delighted me greatly : as it did your Father to whom I read it last night. For, on coming home from Aldbro' (where I had been for a day) I found to my great surprise your Father smoking in my room, with a bottle of Port (which he had brought with him !). The mystery was then solved ; that, after his own dinner, Mr. ———— was announced, and your Father dreading lest he should stay all the Evening declared he had most important business, first at Woodbridge, then, on second thoughts, with me ; and so decamped.

Now as to your second letter which I found also on my return : I am very glad you like the plays<sup>1</sup> and am encouraged to hope that other persons who are not biassed by pedantic prejudices or spites might like them too. But I fully expect that (as I told you, I think) the London press, etc., will either sink them, or condemn them as on too

<sup>1</sup> Six Dramas from Calderon.



free a principle : and all the more if they have not read the originals. For these are safe courses to adopt. All this while I am assuming the plays are well done in their way, which of course I do. On the other hand, they really may not be as well done as I think ; on their own principle : and that would really be a fair ground of condemnation.

*To W. F. Pollock.*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE,

*July 25/53.*

MY DEAR POLLOCK,

Thank you for your letter. Though I believed the Calderon to be on the whole well done and entertaining, I began to wish to be told it was so by others, for fear I had made a total mistake : which would have been a bore. And the very free and easy translation lies open to such easy condemnation, unless it be successful.

Your account of Sherborne rouses all the Dowager within me. I shall have to leave this cottage, I believe, and have not yet found a place sufficiently dull to migrate to. Meanwhile to-morrow I am going to one of my great treats : viz. the Assizes at Ipswich : where I shall see little Voltaire Jervis,<sup>1</sup> and old Parke,<sup>2</sup> who I trust will have the gout, he bears it so Christianly.

<sup>1</sup> Chief Justice.

<sup>2</sup> Baron Parke, afterwards Lord Wensleydale.

*To G. Crabbe.*

BOULGE, WOODBRIDGE,

*Sept. 12/53.*

MY DEAR GEORGE,

I enclose you a scrap from 'The Leader' as you like to see criticisms on my Calderon. I suppose your sisters will send you the Athenæum in which you will see a more determined spit at me. I foresaw (as I think I told you) how likely this was to be the case: and so am not surprized. One must take these chances if one will play at so doubtful a game. I believe those who read the Book, without troubling themselves about whether it is a free Translation or not, like it: but Critics must be supposed to know all, and it is safe to condemn. On the other hand, the Translation may not be good on any ground: and then the Critics are all right.

*To E. B. Cowell.*

3 PARK VILLAS WEST, RICHMOND, SURREY,

*October 25/53.*

MY DEAR COWELL,

. . . I think I forgot to tell you that Mr. MacCarthy (my literal Rival in Calderon) mentions in his Preface a masterly Critique on Calderon in the Westminster 1851, which I take to be yours.<sup>1</sup> He

<sup>1</sup> This conjecture was correct. See p. 307.

says it, and the included translations, are the best Commentary he has seen on the subject.

I have ordered Eastwick's Gulistan: for I believe I shall potter out so much Persian. The weak Apologue<sup>1</sup> goes on (for I have not had time for much here) and I find it difficult enough even with Jones's Translation.

I am now going to see the last of the Tennysons at Twickenham.

*To F. Tennyson.*

BREDFIELD RECTORY,<sup>2</sup> WOODBRIDGE.

*December 27/53.*

MY DEAR FREDERIC,

I am too late to wish you a Happy Christmas; so must wish you a happy New Year. Write to me here, and tell me (in however few words) how you prospered in your journey to Italy: how you all are there: and how your Book progresses. I saw Harvest Home advertised in Fraser: and I have heard from Mrs. Alfred it is so admired that Parker is to print two thousand copies of the Volume. I am glad of this: and I think, little ambitious or vain as you really are, you will insensibly be pleased at gaining your proper Station in public Celebrity. Had I not known what an invidious office it is to meddle with such Poems, and how assuredly people would

<sup>1</sup> The Gardener and the Nightingale in Sir W. Jones's Persian Grammar.

<sup>2</sup> Vicarage.

have said that one had helped to clip away the Best Poems, and the best part of them, I should have liked to advise you in the selection: a matter in which I feel confidence. But you would not have agreed with me any more than others: though on different grounds: and so in all ways it was, and is, and will be, best to say nothing more on the subject. I am very sure that, of whatever your Volume is composed, you will make public almost the only Volume of Verse, except Alfred's, worthy of the name.

I hear from Mrs. Alfred they are got to their new abode in the Isle of Wight. I have been into Norfolk: and am now come to spend Christmas in this place, where, as you have been here, you can fancy me. Old Crabbe is as brave and hearty as ever: drawing designs of Churches: and we are all now reading Moore's Memoirs with considerable entertainment: I cannot say the result of it in one's mind is to prove Moore a Great Man: though it certainly does not leave him altogether 'The Poor Creature' that Mr. Allingham reduced him to. I also amuse myself with poking out some Persian which E. Cowell would inaugurate me with: I go on with it because it is a point in common with him, and enables us to study a little together. He and his wife are at Oxford: and his Pracrit Grammar is to be out in a few days.

I have settled upon no new Abode: but have packed up all my few goods in a neighbouring Farm

House<sup>1</sup> (that one near Woodbridge I took you to), and will now float about for a year and visit some friends. Perhaps I shall get down to the Isle of Wight one day: also to Shropshire, to see Allen: to Bath to a Sister. But you can always direct hither, since old Crabbe is only too glad to have some letters to pay for, and forward to me. . . . We have one of the old fashioned winters, snow and frost: not fulfilling the word of those who were quite sure the seasons were altered. Farewell, my dear Frederic. E. F. G.

BATH, *May 7/54.*

MY DEAR FREDERIC, You see to what fashionable places I am reduced in my old Age. The truth is however I am come here by way of Visit to a sister<sup>2</sup> I have scarce seen these six years; my visit consisting in this that I live alone in a lodging of my own by day, and spend two or three hours with her in the Evening. This has been my way of Life for three weeks, and will be so for some ten days more: after which I talk of flying back to more native counties. I was to have gone on to see Alfred in his 'Island Home' from here: but it appears he goes to London about the same time I quit this place: so I must and shall defer my Visit to him. Perhaps I shall catch a sight of him in London; as also of old Thackeray who, Donne

<sup>1</sup> Farlingay Hall, sometimes called Farthing Cake Hall.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. De Soyres.

writes me word, came suddenly on him in Pall Mall the other day: while all the while people supposed the Newcomes were being indited at Rome or Naples.

If ever you live in England you must live here at Bath. It really is a splendid City in a lovely, even a noble, Country. Did you ever see it? One beautiful feature in the place is the quantity of Garden and Orchard it is all through embroidered with. Then the Streets, when you go into them, are as handsome and gay as London, gayer and handsomer because cleaner and in a clearer Atmosphere; and if you want the Country you get into it (and a very fine Country) on all sides and directly. Then there is such Choice of Houses, Cheap as well as Dear, of all sizes, with good Markets, Railways, etc. I am not sure I shall not come here for part of the Winter. It is a place you would like, I am sure: though I do not say but you are better in Florence. Then on the top of the hill is old Vathek's Tower, which he used to sit and read in daily, and from which he could see his own Fonthill, while it stood. Old Landor quoted to me 'Nullus in orbe locus, etc.,' apropos of Bath: he, you may know, has lived here for years, and I should think would die here, though not yet. He seems so strong that he may rival old Rogers; of whom indeed one Newspaper gave what is called an 'Alarming Report of Mr. Rogers' Health' the other day, but another contradicted it directly and in-

dignantly, and declared the Venerable Poet never was better. Landor has some hundred and fifty Pictures ; each of which he thinks the finest specimen of the finest Master, and has a long story about, how he got it, when, etc. I dare say some are very good : but also some very bad. He appeared to me to judge of them as he does of Books and Men ; with a most uncompromising perversity which the Phrenologists must explain to us after his Death.

By the bye, about your Book, which of course you wish me to say something about. Parker sent me down a copy 'from the Author' for which I hereby thank you. If you believe my word, you already know my Estimation of so much that is in it : you have already guessed that I should have made a different selection from the great Volume which is now in Tatters. As I differ in Taste from the world, however, quite as much as from you, I do not know but you have done very much better in choosing as you have ; the few people I have seen are very much pleased with it, the Cowells at Oxford delighted. A Bookseller there sold all his Copies the first day they came down : and even in Bath a Bookseller (and not one of the Principal) told me a fortnight ago he had sold some twenty Copies. I have not been in Town since it came out : and have now so little correspondence with literati I can't tell you about them. There was a very unfair Review in the Athenæum ; which is the only Literary Paper I see :

but I am told there are laudatory ones in Examiner and Spectator.

I was five weeks at Oxford, visiting the Cowells in just the same way that I am visiting my Sister here. I also liked Oxford greatly: but not so well I think as Bath: which is so large and busy that one is drowned in it as much as in London. There are often concerts, etc., for those who like them; I only go to a shilling affair that comes off every Saturday at what they call the Pump Room. On these occasions there is sometimes some Good Music if not excellently played. Last Saturday I heard a fine Trio of Beethoven. Mendelssohn's things are mostly tiresome to me. I have brought my old Handel Book here and recreate myself now and then with pounding one of the old Giant's Overtures on my sister's Piano, as I used to do on that Spinnet at my Cottage. As to Operas, and Exeter Halls, I have almost done with them: they give me no pleasure, I scarce know why.

I suppose there is no chance of your being over in England this year, and perhaps as little Chance of my being in Italy. All I can say is, the latter is not impossible, which I suppose I may equally say of the former. But pray write to me. You can always direct to me at Donne's, 12 St. James' Square, or at Rev. G. Crabbe's, Bredfield, Woodbridge. Either way the letter will soon reach me. Write soon, Frederic, and let me hear how you and yours are: and don't wait, as you usually do, for some inundation



of the Arno to set your pen agoing. Write ever so shortly and whatever-about-ly. I have no news to tell you of Friends. I saw old Spedding in London; only doubly calm after the death of a Niece he dearly loved and whose death-bed at Hastings he had just been waiting upon. Harry<sup>1</sup> Lushington wrote a martial Ode on seeing the Guards march over Waterloo Bridge towards the East: I did not see it, but it was much admired and handed about, I believe. And now my paper is out: and I am going through the rain (it is said to rain very much here) to my Sister's. So Good Bye, and write to me, as I beg you, in reply to this long if not very interesting letter.

*To John Allen.*

MARKET HILL, WOODBRIDGE.

*October 8/54.*

MY DEAR ALLEN,

'What cheer?' This is what we nautical Men shout to one another as we pass in our Ships. The Answer is generally only an Echo; but you will have to tell me something more. I find it rather disgusting to set you an example by telling of my Doings; for it is always the same thing over and over again. I doubt this will put an End to even Letters at last: I mean, on my part. You have others beside yourself to tell of; you go abroad, too; deliver charges, etc.

<sup>1</sup> Not Harry, but Franklin Lushington in Points of War.

Well, however, I had better say that I have been for the last four months going about in my little Ship as in former years, and now am about to lay up her, and myself, for the Winter. The only Friend I hear from is Donne, who volunteers a Letter unprovoked sometimes. Old Spedding gives an unwilling Reply about thrice in two years. You speak when spoken to ; so does Thompson, in general : I shall soon ask of him what he has been doing this Summer.

I have been reading in my Boat—Virgil, Juvenal, and Wesley's Journal. Do you know the last? one of the most interesting Books, I think, in the Language. It is curious to think of his Diary extending over nearly the same time as Walpole's Letters, which, you know, are a sort of Diary. What two different Lives, Pursuits, and Topics ! The other day I was sitting in a Garden at Lowestoft in which Wesley had preached his first Sermon there : the Wall he set his Back against yet standing. About 1790<sup>1</sup> Crabbe, the Poet, went to hear him ; he was helped into the Pulpit by two Deacons, and quoted—

‘ By the Women oft I'm told,  
Poor Anacreon, thou grow'st old, etc.’<sup>2</sup>

So I have heard *my* George Crabbe tell : who has told it also in his very capital Memoir of his Father.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> It was in the autumn of 1791.

<sup>2</sup> From Cowley's translation of Anacreon.

<sup>3</sup> P. 148.

Sheet full. Kind Regards to Madame and Young  
Folks. Ever yours, E. F. G.

*To T. Carlyle.*

RECTORY, BREDFIELD, WOODBRIDGE.

DEAR CARLYLE,

I should sometimes write to you if I had anything worth telling, or worth putting you to the trouble of answering me. About twice in a year however I do not mind asking you one thing which is easily answered, how you and Mrs. Carlyle are? And yet perhaps it is not so easy for you to tell me so much about yourself: for your 'well-being' comprises a good deal! That you are not carried off by the Cholera I take for granted: since else I should have seen in the papers some controversy with Doctor Wordsworth as to whether you were to be buried in Westminster Abbey, by the side of Wilberforce perhaps! Besides, a short note from Thackeray a few weeks ago told me you had been to see him. I conclude also from this that you have not been a summer excursion of any distance.

I address from the Rectory (*Vicarage* it ought to be) of Crabbe, the 'Radiator,' whose mind is now greatly exercised with Dr. Whewell's Plurality of Worlds. Crabbe, who is a good deal in the secrets of Providence, admires the work beyond measure, but most indignantly rejects the Doctrine as unworthy of God. I have not read the Book, contented to

hear Crabbe's commentaries. I have been staying with him off and on for two months, and, as I say, give his Address because any letter thither directed will find me sooner or later in my little wanderings. I am at present staying with a Farmer in a very pleasant house near Woodbridge: inhabiting such a room as even you, I think, would sleep composedly in; my host a taciturn, cautious, honest, active man whom I have known all my Life. He and his Wife, a capital housewife, and his Son, who could carry me on his shoulders to Ipswich, and a Maid servant who, as she curtsies of a morning, lets fall the Tea-pot, etc., constitute the household. Farming greatly prospers; farming materials fetching an exorbitant price at the Michaelmas Auctions: all in defiance of Sir Fitzroy Kelly who got returned for Suffolk on the strength of denouncing Corn Law Repeal as the ruin of the Country. He has bought a fine house near Ipswich, with great gilded gates before it, and by dint of good dinners and soft sawder finally draws the country Gentry to him. . . .

Please to look at the September Number of Fraser's Magazine where are some prose Translations of Hafiz by Cowell which may interest you a little. I think Cowell (as he is apt to do) gives Hafiz rather too much credit for a mystical wine-cup, and Cup-bearer; I mean taking him on the whole. The few odes he quotes have certainly a deep and pious feeling: such as the Man of Mirth will feel at times; none perhaps more strongly.

Some one by chance read out to me the other day at the seaside your account of poor old Naseby Village from Cromwell, quoted in Knight's 'Half Hours, etc.' It is now twelve years ago, at this very season, I was ransacking for you ; you promising to come down, and never coming. I hope very much you are soon going to give us something : else Jerrold and Tupper carry all before them.

SATURDAY, *October 14/54.*

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In August 1855 Carlyle went to stay with Fitzgerald at Farlingay, a farm house on the Hasketon road, half a mile from Woodbridge.

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BREDFIELD RECTORY, WOODBRIDGE.

*August 1, [1855].*

DEAR CARLYLE,

I came down here yesterday : and saw my Farming Friends to-day, who are quite ready to do all service for us at any time. They live about two miles nearer Woodbridge than this place I write from and I am certain they and their place will suit you very well. I am going to them any day : indeed am always fluctuating between this place and theirs ; and you can come down to me there, or here, any

day—(for Crabbe and his Daughter will, they bid me say, be very glad if you will come; and I engage you shan't be frightened, and that the place shall suit you as well as the Farmer's). I say you can come to either place any day, and without warning if you like; only in that case I can't go to meet you at Ipswich. Beds, etc., are all ready whether here or at the Farmer's. If you like to give me notice, you can say which place you will come to first: and I will meet you at any time at Ipswich.

I think if you come you had best come as soon as possible, before harvest, and while the Days are long and fine. Why not come directly? while all the Coast is so clear?

Now as to your mode of going. There are Rail Trains to Ipswich from Shoreditch, at 7 a.m. 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. all of which come to Ipswich in time for Coaches which carry you to Woodbridge; where, if you arrive unawares, any one will show you the way to Mr. Smith's, of Farlingay Hall, about half a mile from Woodbridge; or direct you to Parson Crabbe's, at Bredfield, about three miles from Woodbridge. You may take my word (will you?) that you will be very welcome at either or both of these places; I mean, to the owners as well as myself.

Well, then there is a Steamer every Wednesday and Sunday; which starts from Blackwall at 9 a.m.; to go by which you must be at the Blackwall Railroad Station in Fenchurch Street by half past eight. This

Steamer gets to Ipswich at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 5 or 6 ; probably in time for a Woodbridge Coach, but not certainly. It is a very pleasant sail. The Rail to Ipswich takes three or two and a half hours.

Have I more to say? I can't think of it if I have. Only, dear Mrs. Carlyle, please to let me know what C. is '*To Eat—Drink—and Avoid.*' As I know that his wants are in a small compass, it will be as easy to get what he likes as not, if you will only say. If you like Sunday Steam, it will be quite convenient whether here or at Farlingay. Crabbe only is too glad if one doesn't go to his church.

BREDFIELD, *Sunday.*

Scrap for Scrap! I go tomorrow to stay at Farlingay, where you will find me, or I will find you, as proposed in my last. Do not let it be a burden on you to come now, then, or at all ; but, if you come, I think this week will be good in weather as in other respects. You will be at most entire Liberty ; with room, garden, and hours, to yourself, whether at Farlingay or here, where you must come for a day or so. Pipes are the order of the house at both places ; the Radiator always lighting up after his 5 o'clock dinner, and rather despising me for not always doing so. At both places a capital sunshiny airy Bedroom without any noise. I wish Mrs. C. could come, indeed ; but I will not propose this ; for

though my Farm has good room, my Hostess would fret herself to entertain a Lady suitably, and that I would avoid, especially toward Harvest time. Will Mrs. Carlyle believe this? E. F. G.

P.S. Bring some Books. If you don't find yourself well, or at ease, with us, you have really but to go off without any sort of Ceremony as soon as you like: so don't tie yourself to any time at all. If the weather be fair, I predict you will like a week; and I shall like as much more as you please; leaving you mainly to your own devices all the while.

*From T. Carlyle.*

CHELSEA, 7 Aug', 1855.

DEAR FITZGERALD,

In spite of these heavy showers, I persist in believing the weather will clear, and means really to be dry: at any rate I am not made of sugar or of salt; so intend to be off tomorrow;—and am, even now, in all the horrors of a half rotted ship, which has lain two years, dead, among the ooze, and is now trying to get up its anchor again: ropes breaking, sails holed, blocks giving way, you may fancy what a pother there is!

My train is to be 11 a.m. from Shoreditch; which gets to Ipswich about two? If you have a gig and pony, of course it will be pleasant to see your face at the end of my shrieking, mad, (and to me quite horrible) rail operations: but if I see nothing, I will courageously go for the Coach, and shall do quite well there, if



I can get on the outside especially. So don't mind which way it is ; a *small* weight ought to turn it either way. I hope to get to Farlingay not long after 4 o'clock, and have a quiet mutton chop in due time, and have a d° pipe or pipes : nay I could even have a bathe if there was any sea water left in the evening. If you did come to Ipswich, an hour (hardly more) to glance at the old Town might not be amiss.

I will bring Books enough with me : I am used to several hours of solitude every day ; and cannot be said ever to *wear*y of being left well alone. But we will 'drive' to any places you recommend ; do bidding of the omens, to a fair degree withal : in short I calculate on getting some real benefit by this plunge into the maritime rusticities under your friendly guidance, and the quiet of it will be of all things welcome to me.

My wife firmly intended writing to you to-day, and perhaps has done so ; but if not, you are to take it as a thing done, for indeed there was nothing whatever of importance to be said farther.

Tomorrow then (Wednesday 8th) 11 a.m.—wish me a happy passage.

Yours ever truly,

T. CARLYLE.

CHELSEA, 23 *Aug<sup>t</sup>*. 1855.

DEAR FITZGERALD,

Here, after a good deal of bothering to improve it, above all to abridge it, is the proposed Inscription for the Pillar at Naseby. You need not scruple a moment to make any change that strikes you ; I am well aware

it is good for nothing except its practical object, and that I have no skill in lapidary literature.

The worst thing will be, discovering the *date* of your Naseby diggings. I ought to have it here; and probably I have,—in some remote dusty trunk, whither it is a terror to go looking for it! Try you what you can, and the Naseby Farmer too (if he is still extant); then I will try. At worst we can say ‘Ten years ago’; but the exact date would be better.

The figure of the stone ought to be of Egyptian simplicity: a broadish parallelopipedon (or rather *octaedron*; the *corners* well chamfered off, to avoid breakages, will make it 8-faced, I think); in the substance of the stone there is one quality to be looked for, durability; and the letters ought to be cut deep,—and by no means in lapidary *lines* (attend to that!), but simply like two *verses of the Bible*, so that he who runs may read. I rather like the *Siste Viator*,—yet will let you blot it out,—it is as applicable as to any Roman Tomb, and more so than to ours, which are in enclosed places, where any ‘Traveller,’ if he either ‘stop’ or go, will presently have the constable upon him. This is all I have to say about the stone; and I recommend that it be now done straightway, before you quit hold of that troublesome locality.

I find I must not promise to myself to go thither with you; alas, nor at all. I cannot get to sleep again since I came out of Suffolk: the stillness of Farlingay is unattainable in Chelsea for a *second* sleep, so I have to be content with the first, which is oftenest about 5 hours, and a very poor allowance for the afflicted son of Adam. I feel privately confident I *have* got good by my Suffolk

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visit, and by all the kindness of my beneficent brother mortals to me there: but in the meanwhile it has 'stirred up a good deal of bile,' I suppose; and we must wait.

London is utterly vacant to me, of all but noises from Cremorne and such sources: there is not in Britain a better place for work than this Garret, if one had strength or heart for fronting work to any purpose. I try a little, but mostly with very small result.

If you know *Glyde* of Ipswich, and can understand him to be really worth subscribing for, pray put down your name and mine, as a bit of duty; if not, not,—and burn his letter.

I send the heartiest thanks, and remembrances to kind Mrs. Smith, and all the industrious Harvesters; also to Papa and the young lady at Bredfield:—as I well may!—I recommend myself to your prayers; and hope to come again, if I live, when you have set your own house in order. Yours, dear F., with true regards,

T. CARLYLE.

Naseby Pillar (briefest and final form).

*Siste Viator.*

Here, and for — yards to rearward, lies the Dust of men slain in the Battle of Naseby, 14 June 1645. Hereabouts appears to have been the crisis of the struggle, hereabouts the final charge of Oliver Cromwell and his Ironsides, that day.

<sup>1</sup> This Ground was opened, not irreverently or with<sup>t</sup> reluctance, Sat<sup>y</sup> 23 Sept<sup>r</sup> 1842, to ascertain that fact, and render the contemporary records legible. Peace henceforth to these old Dead.

Edw<sup>d</sup> Fitzg<sup>d</sup> (with date).

ADDISCOMBE FARM, CROYDON,  
15 Sept<sup>r</sup>, 1855.

DEAR FITZGERALD,

I have been here ever since the day you last heard of me; leading the strangest life of absolute *Latrappism*; and often enough remembering Farlingay and you. I live perfectly alone, and without speech at all,—there being in fact nobody to speak to, except one austere punctual housemaid, who does her functions, like an eight-day clock, generally without bidding. My wife comes out now and then to give the requisite directions; but commonly withdraws again on the morrow, leaving the monster to himself and his own ways. I have Books; a complete Edition of *Voltaire*,<sup>2</sup> for one Book, in which I read for *use*, or for idleness oftenest,—getting into endless reflexions over it, mostly of a sad and not very utterable nature. I find V. a ‘gentleman,’ living in a world partly furnished with such; and that there are now almost no ‘gentlemen’ (not quite *none*): this is one great head of my reflexions, to which there is no visible *tail* or finish. I have also a Horse (borrowed

<sup>1</sup> This with a wider margin, or in some other way distinguishable from the rest of the inscription.

<sup>2</sup> Some volumes of which C. had brought down to Suffolk, being then engaged with his Frederick II. *MS. note by Fitz-Gerald.*

from my fat Yeoman friend, who is at sea bathing in Sussex); and I go riding, at great lengths daily, over hill and dale: this I believe is really the main good I am doing,—if in this either there be much good. But it is a strange way of life to me, for the time; perhaps not unprofitable: To let *Chaos* say out its say, then, and one's Evil Genius give one the very worst language he has, for a while. It is still to last for a week or more. To day, for the first time, I ride back to Chelsea, but mean to return hither on Monday. There is a great circle of yellow light all the way from Shooter's Hill to Primrose Hill, spread round my horizon every night, I see it while smoking my pipe before bed (so bright, last night, it cast a visible shadow of me against the white window-shutters); and this is all I have to do with London and its *gases* for a fortnight or more. My wife writes to me, there was an awful jangle of bells last day she went home from this; a Quaker asked in the railway, of some porter, 'Can thou tell me what these bells mean?'—'Well, I suppose something is up. They say Sebastopol is took, and the Rushans run away.'—*À la bonne heure*: but won't they come back again, think you?

On the whole I say, when you get your little Suffolk cottage, you must have in it a 'chamber in the wall' for me, *plus* a pony that can trot, and a cow that gives good milk: with these outfits we shall make a pretty rustication now and then, not wholly *Latrappish*, but only *half*, on much easier terms than here; and I shall be right willing to come and try it, I for one party.—Meanwhile, I hope the Naseby matter is steadily going ahead; sale *completed*; and even the *monument* concern

making way. Tell me a little how that and other matters are. If you are at home, a line is rapidly conveyed hither, steam all the way : after the beginning of the next week, I am at Chelsea, and (I dare say) there is a fire in the evenings now to welcome you there. Shew face in some way or other.

And so adieu ; for my hour of riding is at hand.

Yours ever truly,

T. CARLYLE.

*To E. B. Cowell.*

31 GREAT PORTLAND STREET, P. PLACE.

[1856.]

MY DEAR COWELL,

. . . You never say a word about your Hafiz. Has that fallen for the present, Austin not daring to embark in it in these days of war, when nothing that is not warlike sells except Macaulay? Don't suppose I bandy compliments ; but, with moderate care, any such Translation of such a writer as Hafiz by you into pure, sweet, and partially measured Prose must be better than what I am doing for Jámí ;<sup>1</sup> whose ingenuous prattle I am stiling into too Miltonic verse. This I am very sure of. But it is done.

[*Jan.* 1856.]

MY DEAR COWELL,

I send you a sketch of Jámí's Life, which cut, correct, and annotate as you like. Where there was

<sup>1</sup> Salámán and Absál.

so little to tell I have brought in all the fine Names and extra bits I could to give it a little sparkle. There is very little after all; I have spread it over Paper to give you room to note *upon* it. Only take care not to lose either these, or Yesterday's, Papers—for my Terror at going over the Ground!

You must put in the corrected Notice about the Sultan Hussein, both in the Memoir and in the Note to the Poem. The latter will have room for at least four (I think five) lines of note Type: which you must fill, and not overflow: 'Strong without rage, etc.'

I feel guilty at taking up your Time and Thoughts: and also at Dressing myself so in your Plumes. But I mean to say a word about this, *φωνᾶντα συνετοῖσιν*, in my Preliminary Notice; and would gladly dedicate the little Book to you by Name, with due acknowledgment, did I think the world would take it for a Compliment to you. But though I like the Version, and you like it, we know very well the world—even the very little world, I mean, who will see it—may not; and might laugh at us both for any such Compliment. They cannot laugh at your Scholarship; but they might laugh at the use I put it to: and at my dedicating a *cobweb* (as Carlyle called Maud the other night) to you.

31 GT PORTLAND ST., P. PLACE.

*Jan. 10/56.*

MY DEAR COWELL,

Do make a sign of some sort to me. I sent you a string of Questions about Salámán last week, all of which I did not want you to answer *at once*, but wishing at least to hear if you had leisure and Inclination to meddle with them. There is no reason in the world you should unless you really have Time and Liking. If you *have*, I will send you the Proofs of the Little Book which Mr. Childs is even now putting in hand. Pray let me know as soon as you can what and how much of all this will be agreeable to you.

You don't tell me how Hafiz gets on. There is one thing which I think I find in Salámán which may be worth your consideration (not needing much) in Hafiz: namely, in Translation to retain the original Persian Names as much as possible—'Shah' for 'king' for instance—'Yūsuf and Suleyman' for 'Joseph and Solomon,' etc. The Persian is not only more musical, but removes such words and names further from Europe and European Prejudices and Associations. So also I think best to talk of '*A Moon*' rather than '*a Month*,' and perhaps 'sennight' is better than 'week.'

This is a little matter; but it is well to rub off as little Oriental Colour as possible.

As to a Notice of Jámí's Life, you need not trouble yourself to draw it up unless you like; since I can



make an extract of Ouseley's, and send you for any addition or correction you like. Very little needs be said. I have not yet been able to find Jámí out in the Biographie Universelle. . . .

Now let me hear from you *something*—whatever you like. Yours and Lady's, E. F. G.

You, I believe, in your Oxford Essay, translate Jámí's 'Haft Aurang' as the '*Seven Thrones*,' it also meaning, I see, the seven Stars of the Great Bear—'The Seven Stars.' Why should not this latter be the Translation? more intelligible, Poetical, and Eastern (as far as I see) than '*Thrones*.'

*To Mrs. Cowell.*

LONDON. Friday [April 25, 1856].

MY DEAR LADY,

The Picture after all did not go down yesterday as I meant, but shall and will go to-morrow (Saturday). Also I shall send you dear Major Moor's '*Oriental Fragments*'; an almost worthless Book, I doubt, to those who did not know him—which means, *love* him!<sup>1</sup> And somehow all of us in our corner of Suffolk knew something of him: and so again loved something of him. For there was nothing at all

<sup>1</sup> In another letter written about the same time he says, 'The letter to Major Price at the beginning is worth any Money, and almost any Love!' This dedication by Major Moor to his old comrade-in-arms FitzGerald would sometimes try to read aloud, but would break down before he could finish it.

about him not to be beloved. Ah! I think how interested he would have been with all this Persian: and how we should have disputed over parts and expressions over a glass of his Shiraz wine (for he had some) in his snug Parlour, or in his Cornfields when the Sun fell upon the latest Gleaners! He is dead, and you will go where he lived, to be dead to me!

Remember to take poor Barton's little Book<sup>1</sup> with you to India; better than many a better Book to you there!

I got a glimpse of Professor Müller's Essay<sup>2</sup>—full of fine things; but I hardly gather it up into a good whole, which is very likely my fault; from hasty perusal, ignorance, or other Incapacity. Perhaps, on the other hand, he found the Subject too great for his Space; and so has left it disproportioned, which the German is not inapt to do. But one may be well thankful for such admirable fragments, perhaps left so in the very honesty that is above rounding them into a specious Theory which will not hold.

[1856.]

MY DEAR LADY,

. . . If you see Trench's new Book about Calderon<sup>3</sup> you will see he has dealt very handsomely

<sup>1</sup> The Selection from his Letters, etc., published after his death, in which FitzGerald wrote a sketch of his life.

<sup>2</sup> On Comparative Mythology, in the Oxford Essays for 1856.

<sup>3</sup> Life's a Dream: The Great Theatre of the World. From the Spanish of Calderon.

with me. He does not approve the Principle I went on ; and what has he made of his own ! I say this with every reason, as you will see, to praise him for his good word. He seems to me wrong about his ‘asonantes,’ which were much better *un*-assonanted as Cowell did his Specimens.<sup>1</sup> With Trench the Language has to be forced to secure the shadow of a Rhyme which is no pleasure to the Ear. So it seems to me on a hasty Look.

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Mr. Cowell was appointed Professor of History at the Presidency College, Calcutta, in 1856, and went out to India by the Cape in August, greatly to FitzGerald’s regret. ‘Your talk of going to India,’ he wrote, ‘makes my Heart hang really heavy at my side.’

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*To E. B. Cowell.*

31 GT PORTLAND ST. LONDON.

*Jan. 22/57.*

MY DEAREST COWELL,

As usual I blunder. I have been taking for granted all this while that of course we could not write to you till you had written to us ! Else how several times I could have written ! could have sent you some Lines of Hafiz or Jámí or Nizámí that I

<sup>1</sup> In an article on Spanish Literature in the Westminster Review for April 1851, pp. 281-323.

thought wanted Comment of some kind: so as the Atlantic should have been no greater Bar between us than the two hours rail to Oxford. And now I have forgot many things, or have left the Books scattered in divers places; or, if I had all here, 'twould be too much to send. So I must e'en take up with what the present Hour turns up.

It was only yesterday I heard from your Brother of a Letter from you, telling of your safe Arrival; of the Dark Faces about you at your Calcutta Caravan-serai! Methinks how I should like to be there! Perhaps should not, though, were the Journey only half its length! Write to me one day. . . .

I have now been five weeks alone at my old Lodgings in London where you came this time last year! My wife in Norfolk. She came up yesterday; and we have taken Lodgings for two months in the Regent's Park. And I positively stay behind here in the old Place on purpose to write to you in the same condition you knew me in and I you! I believe there are new Channels fretted in my Cheeks with many unmanly Tears since then, 'remembering the Days that are no more,' in which you two are so mixt up. Well, well; I have no news to tell you. Public Matters you know I don't meddle with; and I have seen scarce any Friends even while in London here. Carlyle but once; Thackeray not once; Spedding and Donne pretty often. Spedding's first volume of Bacon is out; some seven hundred pages; and the Reviews already begin to think it over-

commentaried. How interested would you be in it! and from you I should get a good Judgment, which perhaps I can't make for myself. I hear Tennyson goes on with King Arthur; but I have not seen or heard from him for a long long while.

Oddly enough, as I finished the last sentence, Thackeray was announced; he came in looking gray, grand, and good-humoured; and I held up this Letter and told him whom it was written to and he sends his Love! He goes Lecturing all over England; has fifty pounds for each Lecture: and says he is ashamed of the Fortune he is making. But he deserves it.

And now for my poor Studies. I have read really very little except Persian since you went: and yet, from want of Eyes, not very much of that. I have gone carefully over two-thirds of Hafiz again with Dictionary and Von Hammer: and gone on with Jámí and Nizámí. But my great Performance all lies in the last five weeks since I have been alone here; when I wrote to Napoleon Newton to ask him to lend me his MS. of Attár's Mantic uttair; and, with the help of Garcin de Tassy<sup>1</sup> have nearly made out about two-thirds of it. For it has greatly interested me, though I confess it is always an old Story. The Germans make a Fuss about the Súfi Doctrine; but, as far as I understand, it is not very abstruse

<sup>1</sup> In his 'Mémoire sur la poésie philosophique et religieuse chez les Persans.' His edition of the text of Attár's poem came out in 1857, but the French translation only in 1863.

Pantheism, and always the same. One becomes as wearied of the *man-i* and *du-i* in their Philosophy as of the *bulbul*, etc., in their Songs. Attár's Doctrine seems to me only Jámí and Jeláledín (of whom I have poked out a little from the MS. you bought for me), but his Mantic has, like Salámán, the advantage of having a Story to hang all upon; and some of his illustrative Stories are very agreeable: better than any of the others I have seen. He has not so much Fancy or Imagination as Jámí, nor I dare say, so much depth as Jeláledín; but his touch is lighter. I mean to make a Poetic Abstract of the Mantic, I think: neither De Tassy nor Von Hammer<sup>1</sup> gives these Stories which are by far the best part, though there are so many childish and silly ones. Shah Máhmúd figures in the best. I am very pleased at having got on so well with this MS. though I doubt at more cost of Eyesight than it is worth. I have exchanged several Letters with Mr. Newton, though by various mischances we have not yet met; he has however introduced me to Mr. Dowson of the Asiatic, with whom, or with a certain Seyd· Abdúllah recommended by Allen, I mean (I think) to read a little. No need of this had you remained behind! Oh! how I should like to read the Mantic with you! It is very easy in the main. But I believe I shall never see you again; I really do believe that. And my Paper is gradually overcome as I write this: and I must say Good Bye. Good Bye, my dear dear

<sup>1</sup> In his 'Geschichte der schönen Redekünste Persiens.'

Friends! I dare not meddle with Mr. and Mrs. Charlesworth.<sup>1</sup> Thackeray coming in overset me, with one thing and another. Farewell. Write to me; direct—whither? For till I see better how we get on I dare fix on no place to live or die in. Direct to me at Crabbe's, Bredfield, till you hear further.

24 PORTLAND TERRACE, REGENT'S PARK.

Saturday *January* 23 [? 24] 1857.

MY DEAR E. B. C.,

I must write you a second Letter (which will reach you, I suppose, by the same Post as that which I posted on Thursday Jan. 22) to tell you that not half an hour after I had posted that first Letter, arrived yours! And now, to make the Coincidence stranger, your Brother Charles, who is now with us for two days, tells me that very Thursday Jan. 24 (? 22) is your Birthday! I am extremely obliged to you for your long, kind, and interesting Letter: yes, yes: I should have liked to be on the Voyage with you, and to be among the Dark People with you even now. Your Brother Charles, who came up yesterday, brought us up your Home Letter, and read it to us last night after Tea to our great Satisfaction. I believe that in my already posted Letter I have told you much that you enquire about in yours received half an hour after: of my poor Studies at all events. This

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Cowell's father and mother.

morning I have been taking the Physiognomy of the 19th Birds. . . . There are, as I wrote you, very pleasant stories. One, of a Shah returning to his Capital, and his People dressing out a Welcome for him, and bringing out Presents of Gold, Jewels, etc., all which he rides past without any Notice, till, coming to the Prison, the Prisoners, by way of their Welcome, toss before him the Bloody Heads and Limbs of old and recent Execution. At which the Shah for the first time stops his Horse—smiles—casts Largess among the Prisoners, etc. And when asked why he neglected all the Jewels, etc., and stopped with satisfaction at such a grim welcome as the Prisoners threw him, he says, ‘The Jewels, etc., were but empty Ostentation—but those bloody Limbs prove that my Law has been executed, without which none of those Heads and Carcases would have parted Company, etc.’ De Tassy notices a very agreeable Story of Mahmúd and the Lad fishing: and I find another as pleasant about Mahmúd consorting ‘incog:’ with a Bath-Stove-Keeper, who is so good a Fellow that, at last, Mahmúd, making himself known, tells the Poor Man to ask what he will—a Crown, if he likes. But the poor Fellow says, ‘All I ask is that the Shah will come now and then to me as I am, and here where I am; here, in this poor Place, which he has made illustrious with his Presence, and a better Throne to me with Him, than the Throne of Both Worlds without Him, etc.’ You observed perhaps in De Tassy’s Summary that he



notices an Eastern Form of William Tell's Apple? A Sultan doats on a beautiful Slave, who yet is seen daily to pine away under all the Shah's Favour, and being askt why, replies, 'Because every day the Shah, who is a famous Marksman with the Bow, shoots at an Apple laid on my Head, and always hits it; and when all the Court cries "Lo! the Fortune of the King!" He also asks me why I turn pale under the Trial, he being such a Marksman, and his Mark an Apple set on the Head he most doats upon?' I am going to transcribe on the next Page a rough draft of a Version of another Story, because all this will amuse you, I think. I couldn't help running some of these Apologues into Verse as I read them: but they are in a very rough state as yet, and so perhaps may continue, for to correct is *the* Bore.

When Yúsuf from his Father's House was torn,  
 His Father's Heart was utterly forlorn;  
 And, like a Pipe with but one note, his Tongue  
 Still nothing but the name of Yúsuf rung.  
 Then down from Heaven's Branches came the Bird  
 Of Heaven, and said 'God wearies of that Word.  
 Hast thou not else to do, and else to say?'  
 So Yacúb's Lips were sealed from that Day.  
 But one Night in a Vision, far away  
 His Darling in some alien Home he saw,  
 And stretch'd his Arms forth; and between the Awe  
 Of God's Displeasure, and the bitter Pass  
 Of Love and Anguish, sigh'd forth an *Alas!*  
 And stopp'd—But when he woke The Angel came,  
 And said, 'Oh, faint of purpose! Though the Name  
 Of that Belovèd were not uttered by  
 Thy Lips, it hung sequester'd in that Sigh.'

You see this is very imperfect, and I am not always quite certain of always getting the right Sow by the Ear; but it is pretty anyhow. In this, as in several other Stories, one sees the fierce vindictive Character of the Eastern Divinity and Religion: a 'jealous God' indeed! So there is another Story of a poor Hermit, who retires into the Wilderness to be alone with God, and lives in a Tree; and there in the Branches a little Bird has a Nest, and sings so sweetly that the poor old Man's Heart is drawn to it in spite of Himself; till a Voice from Heaven calls to Him—'What are you about? You have bought *Me* with your Prayers, etc., and I *You* by some Largess of my Grace: and is this Bargain to be cancelled by the Piping of a little Bird?'<sup>1</sup> So I construe at least right or wrong. . . .

<sup>1</sup> This Apologue FitzGerald afterwards turned into verse; but it remained an unfinished fragment. Professor Cowell has kindly filled up the gaps which were left.

A Saint there was who three score Years and ten  
 In holy Meditation among Men  
 Had spent, but, wishing, ere he came to close  
 With God, to meet him in complete Repose,  
 Withdrew into the Wilderness, where he  
 Set up his Dwelling in an aged Tree  
 Whose hollow Trunk his Winter Shelter made,  
 And whose green branching Arms his Summer Shade.  
 And like himself a Nightingale one Spring  
 Making her Nest above his Head would sing  
 So sweetly that her pleasant Music stole  
 Between the Saint and his severer Soul,  
 And made him sometimes [heedless of his] Vows  
 Listening his little Neighbour in the Boughs.  
 Until one Day a sterner Music woke  
 The sleeping Leaves, and through the Branches spoke—  
 'What! is the Love between us two begun  
 And waxing till we Two were nearly One  
 For three score Years of Intercourse unstirr'd  
 Of Men, now shaken by a little Bird;  
 And such a precious Bargain, and so long  
 A making, [put in peril] for a Song?'

Monday Jan. 25 [? 26]. Like your Journal, you see, I spread my Letter over more than a Day. On Saturday Night your Brother and I went to hear Thackeray lecture on George III.—very agreeable to me, though I did not think highly of the Lecture. . . . I should like to see Nizám's *Shírín*, though I have not yet seen enough to care for in Nizámí. Get me a MS. if you can get a fair one ; as also one of Attár's *Birds* ; of which however *Garcin de Tassy* gives hint of publishing a Text. There might be a good Book made of about half the Text of the Original ; for the Repetitions are many, and the stories so many of them not wanted. What a nice Book too would be the Text of some of the best Apologues in *Jámí*, *Jeláleddín*, *Attár*, etc., with literal Translations ! . . .

I was with *Borrow*<sup>1</sup> a week ago at *Donne's*, and also at *Yarmouth* three months ago : he is well, but not yet agreed with *Murray*. He read me a long Translation he had made from the Turkish : which I could not admire, and his Taste becomes stranger than ever.

24 PORTLAND TERRACE,

REGENT'S PARK.

MY DEAR COWELL,

. . . March 12. You see I leave this Letter like an unfinished Picture ; giving it a touch every now and then. Meanwhile it lies in a volume of

<sup>1</sup> *George Borrow*, Author of *The Bible in Spain*, etc.

Sir W. Ouseley's Travels. Meanwhile also I keep putting into shape some of that Mantic which however would never do to publish. For this reason ; that anything like a literal Translation would be, I think, unreadable ; and what I have done for amusement is not only so unliteral, but I doubt *unoriental*, in its form and expression, as would destroy the value of the Original without replacing it with anything worth reading of my own. It has amused me however to reduce the Mass into something of an Artistic Shape. There are lots of Passages which—how should I like to talk them over with you ! Shall we ever meet again ? I think not ; or not in such plight, both of us, as will make Meeting what it used to be. Only to-day I have been opening dear old Salámán : the original Copy we bought and began this time three years ago at Oxford ; with all my scratches of Query and Explanation in it, and the Notes from you among the Leaves. How often I think with Sorrow of my many Harshnesses and Impatiences ! which are yet more of manner than Intention. My wife is sick of hearing me sing in a doleful voice the old Glee of 'When shall we Three Meet again ?' Especially the Stanza, 'Though in foreign Lands we sigh, Parcht beneath a hostile Sky, etc.' How often too I think of the grand Song written by some Scotch Lady,<sup>1</sup> which I sing to myself for you on Ganges Banks !

<sup>1</sup> Evan Banks, by Miss Williams. See Allan Cunningham's Songs of Scotland, iv. 59.

Slow spreads the Gloom my Soul desires,  
 The Sun from India's Shore retires :  
 To *Orwell's* Bank, with temperate ray—  
 Home of my Youth !—he leads the Day :  
 Oh Banks to me for ever dear,  
 Oh Stream whose Murmur meets my Ear ;  
 Oh all my Hopes of Bliss abide  
 Where Orwell mingles with the Tide.

The Music has come to me for these Words, little good otherwise than expressive : but there is no use sending it to India. To India ! It seems to me it would be easy to get into the first great Ship and never see Land again till I saw the Mouth of the Ganges ! and there live what remains of my shabby Life.

But there is no good in all such Talk. I never write to you about Politics in which you know I little meddle. . . . March 20. Why, see how the Time goes ! And here has my Letter been lying in Sir W. Ouseley for the last ten days, I suppose. To-day I have been writing twenty pages of a metrical Sketch of the Mantic, for such uses as I told you of. It is an amusement to me to take what Liberties I like with these Persians, who (as I think) are not Poets enough to frighten one from such excursions, and who really do want a little Art to shape them. I don't speak of Jelâled-dîn whom I know so little of (enough to show me that he is no great Artist, however), nor of Hafiz, whose *best* is untranslatable because he is the best Musician of Words. Old Johnson<sup>1</sup> said

<sup>1</sup> Boswell's Johnson, 11 April 1776.

the Poets were the best Preservers of a Language : for People must go to the Original to relish them. I am sure that what Tennyson said to you is true : that Hafiz is the most Eastern—or, he should have said, most *Persian*—of the Persians. He is the best representative of their character, whether his Sâki and Wine be real or mystical. Their Religion and Philosophy is soon seen through, and always seems to me *cuckooed* over like a borrowed thing, which people, once having got, don't know how to parade enough. To be sure, their Roses and Nightingales are repeated enough ; but Hafiz and old Omar Khayyám ring like true Metal. The Philosophy of the Latter is, alas !, one that never fails in the World. 'To-day is ours, etc.'

While I think of it, why is the Sea<sup>1</sup> (in that Apologue of Attár once quoted by Falconer) supposed to have lost God? Did the Persians agree with something I remember in Plato about the Sea and all in it being of an inferior Nature, in spite of Homer's 'divine Ocean, etc.' And here I come to the end of my sheet, which you will hardly get through, I think. I scarce dare to think of reading it over. But I will try.

<sup>1</sup> This struck E. F. G. so much that he introduced it into Omar Khayyám, stanza xxxiii. Professor Cowell writes, 'I well remember shewing it to FitzGerald and reading it with him in his early Persian days at Oxford in 1855. I laughed at the quaintness ; but the idea seized his imagination from the first, and, like Virgil with Ennius' rough jewels, his genius detected gold where I had seen only tinsel. He has made two grand lines out of it.'

24 PORTLAND TERRACE,  
REGENT'S PARK.

*March 29, [1857].*

MY DEAR COWELL,

I only posted my last long letter four days ago : and how far shall I get with this ? Like the other, I keep it in Sir W. Ouseley, and note down a bit now and then. When the time for the Mail comes, the sheet shall go whether full or not. I had a letter from your Mother telling me she had heard from you—all well—but the Heats increasing. I suppose the Crocuses we see even in these poor little Gardens hereabout would wither in a Glance of your Sun. Now the black Trees in the Regent's Park opposite are beginning to show green Buds ; and Men come by with great Baskets of Flowers ; Primroses, Hepaticas, Crocuses, great Daisies, etc., calling as they go, 'Growing, Growing, Growing ! All the Glory going !' So my wife says she has heard them call : some old Street cry, no doubt, of which we have so few now remaining. It will almost make you smell them all the way from Calcutta. 'All the Glory going !' What has put me upon beginning with this Sheet so soon is, that, (having done my Will for the present with the Mantic—one reason being that I am afraid to meddle more with N. Newton's tender MS., and another reason that I now lay by what I have sketched out so as to happen on it again one day with fresh eyes)—I say, this

being shelved, I took up old Hafiz again, and began with him where I left off in November at Brighton. And this morning came to an ode we did together this time two years ago when you were at Spiers' in Oxford. . . . How it brought all back to me ! Oriel opposite, and the Militia in Broad Street, and the old Canary-coloured Sofa and the Cocoa or Tea on the Table ! . . .

I should think Bramford begins to look pretty about this time, hey, Mr. Cowell ? And Mrs. Cowell ? There is a house there constantly advertised to let in the Papers. I think that one by the Mill ; not the pleasant place where *Trygæus*<sup>1</sup> looked forth on the Rail ! 'The Days are gone when Beauty bright, etc.' . . .

Spedding has been once here in near three months. His Bacon keeps coming out : his part, the Letters, etc., of Bacon, is not come yet ; so it remains to be seen what he will do then : but I can't help thinking he has let the Pot boil too long. Well, here is a great deal written to-day : and I shall shut up the Sheet in Ouseley again. March 30. Another reason for thinking the *máhi* which supports the world to be only a *myth* of the simple Fish genus is that the stage next above him is *Gau*, the Bull, as the Symbol of *Earth*. It seems to me one sees this as it were pictured in those Assyrian Sculptures ; just some waving lines and a fish to represent Water, etc. And it hooks

<sup>1</sup> A retired clergyman who lived at Bramford.



on, I think, to Max Müller's Theory in that Essay<sup>1</sup> of his. Saturday, April 4. Why, we are creeping toward another Post day! another 25th when the 'Viâ Marseilles' Letters go off! And I now renew this great Sheet, because in returning to old Hafiz two or three days ago, I happened on a line which you will confer with a Tetrastich of Omar's. . . . Donne has got the Licenser's Post; given him in the handsomest way by Lord Bredalbane to whom the Queen as handsomely committed it. The said Donne has written an Article on Calderon in Fraser,<sup>2</sup> in which he says very handsome things of me, but is not accurate in what he says. I suppose it was he wrote an Article in the Saturday Review some months ago to the same effect; but I have not asked him. I find people like that Calderon book. By the bye again, what is the passage I am to write out for you from the Volume you gave me, the old Bramford Volume, 'E. B. Cowell, Bramford, Aug. 20, 1849?' Tell me, and I will write it in my best style: I have the Volume here in my room, and was looking into it only last night; at that end of the *Mágico* which we read together at Elmsett! I don't know if I could translate it now that the '*astus*' caught from your sympathy is gone! . . . April 5. In looking into the '*Secreto Agravio*' I see an Oriental superstition, which was likely enough however to

<sup>1</sup> On Comparative Mythology. Oxford Essays, 1856.

<sup>2</sup> Fraser's Magazine for April 1857.

be a poetical fancy of any nation : I mean, the Sun turning Stone to Ruby, etc. Enter Don Luis : ‘Soy mercador, y trato en los Diamantes, que hoy son Piedras, y rayos fueron antes de Sol, que perficiona é ilumina rústico Grano en la abrasada Mina.’ The Partridge in the Mantic tells something of the same ; he digs up and swallows Rubies which turn his Blood to Fire inside him and sparkle out of his Eyes and Bill. This volume of Calderon is marked by the Days on which you finished several Plays, all at Bramford ! Wednesday, April 8. I have been reading the ‘Mágico’ over and remembering other days ; I saw *us* sitting at other tables reading it. Also I am looking over old Æschylus—Agamemnon—with Blackie’s Translation. . . . Is it in Hafiz we have met the Proverb (about *pregnant* Night) which Clytemnestra also makes her Entry with [264, 5] ? εὐάγγελος μὲν, ὥσπερ ἡ παροιμία, ἕως γένοιτο μητρὸς εὐφρόνης πάρα. I think one sees that the Oriental borrowed this Fancy, which smacks of the Grecian Personification of Mother Night. What an Epitaph for a Warrior are those two Greek words by which the Chorus express all that returns to Mycenæ of the living Hero who went forth [435]—τεύχη καὶ σποδός !

Well ; and I have had a Note from Garcin de Tassy whom I had asked if he knew of any Copy of Omar Khayyám in all the Paris Libraries : he writes ‘I have made, by means of a Friend, etc.’ But I shall enclose his Note to amuse you. Now what

I mean to do is, in return for his politeness to me, to copy out as well as I can the Tetrastichs as you copied them for me, and send them as a Present to De Tassy. Perhaps he will edit them. I should not wish him to do so if there were any chance of your ever doing it ; but I don't think you will help on the old Pantheist, and De Tassy really, after what he is doing for the Mantic, deserves to make the acquaintance of this remarkable little Fellow. Indeed I think you will be pleased that I should do this. Now for some more *Æschylus*. Friday, April 17. I have been for the last five days with my Brother at Twickenham ; during which time I really copied out Omar Khayyám, in a way ! and shall to-day post it as a '*cadeau*' to Garcin de Tassy in return for his Courtesy to me. I am afraid, a bad return : for my MS. is but badly written and it would perhaps more plague than profit an English 'savant' to have such a present made him. But a Frenchman gets over all this very lightly. Garcin de Tassy tells me he has printed four thousand lines of the Mantic. And here is April running away and it will soon be time to post you another Letter ! When I once get into the Country I shall have less to write you about than now ; and that, you see, is not much.

Tuesday, April 21. Yours and your wife's dear good Letters put into my hand as I sit in the sunshine in a little Balcony outside the Windows

looking upon the quite green hedge side of the Regent's Park. For Green it is thus early, and such weather as I never remember before at this Season. Well, your Letters, I say, were put into my hand as I was there looking into Æschylus under an Umbrella, and waiting for Breakfast. My wife cried a good deal over your wife's Letter, I think, I think so. Ah me! I would not as yet read it, for I was already sad; but I shall answer hers to me which I did read indeed with many thoughts: perhaps I can write this post; at least I will clear off this letter to you, my dear Cowell.

E. F. G.

*April 21.*

MY DEAR LADY, I have told E. B. C. at the close of my long letter to him how his and yours were put into my hand this morning. Well, as in telling him that I finished that sheet of Paper, I will e'en take one scrap more to thank you; and (since you have, I believe, some confidences together) some things I have yet got to say to him shall be addressed to you; and you can exercise your own Discretion as to telling him. One thing tell him however, which my overflowing Sheet had not room for, and was the very thing that most needed telling: viz. that he, a busy man, must not feel bound to write me as long Letters in return. Who knows how long I shall keep up any thing like to my own mark; for I daily grow worse with the

Letter-pen : and, beside his other employments, the Sun of India will '*belaze*' him (I doubt if the word be in Johnson). But '*vogue la Galère*' while the wind blows ! Again you may give him the enclosed instead of a former Letter from the same G. de T. For is it not odd he should not have time to read a dozen of those 150 Tetrastichs ? I pointed out such a dozen to him of the best, and told him if he liked them I would try and get the rest better written for him than I could write. I had also told him that the whole thing came from E. B. C. and I now write to tell him I have no sort of intention of writing a paper in the *Journal Asiatique*, nor I suppose E. B. C. neither. G. de Tassy is very civil to me however. How much I might say about your Letter to me ! you will hardly comprehend how it is I almost turn my Eyes from it in this Answer, and dally with other matter. You make me sad with old Memories ; yet, I don't mean quite disagreeably sad, but enough to make me shrink recurring to them. I don't know whether to be comforted or not when *you* talk of India as a Land of Exile— . . .

Wednesday, April 22. Now this morning comes a second Letter from Garcin de Tassy saying that his first note about Omar Khayyám was '*in haste*' : that he has read some of the Tetrastichs which he finds not very difficult ; some difficulties which are probably errors of the '*copist*' ; and he proposes his writing an Article in the *Journal Asiatique* on it in

which he will 'honourably mention' E. B. C. and E. F. G. I now write to deprecate all this:<sup>1</sup> putting it on the ground (and a fair one) that we do not yet know enough of the matter: that I do not wish E. B. C. to be made answerable for errors which E. F. G. (the '*copist*') may have made: and that E. F. G. neither merits nor desires any honourable mention as a Persian Scholar: being none. Tell E. B. C. that I have used his name with all caution, referring De Tassy to Vararuchi, etc. But these Frenchmen are so self-content and superficial, one never knows how they will take up anything. To turn to other matters—we are talking of leaving this place almost directly. . . . I often wonder if I shall ever see you both again! Well, for the present, Adieu, Adieu, Adieu!

LONDON, *May 7/57.*

MY DEAR COWELL,

Owing partly to my own Stupidity, and partly to a change in the India Post days, my last two letters (to you and wife) which were quite ready by the Marseilles Post of April 25th will not get off till the Southampton Mail of this May 10. Your letter of March 21 reached me three days ago. Write only when you have Leisure and Inclination, and only as much as those two good things are good for: I will

<sup>1</sup> M. Garcin de Tassy scrupulously observed this injunction in his Note sur les Rubâ'iyât de 'Omar Khaïyâm, which appeared in the Journal Asiatique.

do the same. I will at once say (in reply to a kind offer you make to have Hatifi's 'Haft Paikar' copied for me) that it will [be] best to wait till you have read it; you know me well enough to know whether it will hit my taste. However, if it be but a very short poem, no harm would be done by a Copy: but do let me be at the Charges of such things. I will ask for Hatifi's Laili: but I didn't (as you know) take much to what little I saw. As to any copies Allen might have had, I believe there is no good asking for them: for, only yesterday going to put into Madden's hands Mr. Newton's MS. of the Mantic, I saw Allen's house *kharáb*. There had been a Fire there, Madden told me, which had destroyed stock, etc., but I could not make much out of the matter, Madden putting on a Face of foolish mystery. You can imagine it? We talked of you, as you may imagine also: and I believe in that he is not foolish. Well, and to-day I have a note from the great De Tassy which announces, 'My dear Sir, Definitely I have written a little Paper upon Omar with some Quotations taken here and there at random, avoiding only the too badly sounding *rubayát*. I have read that paper before the Persian Ambassador and suite, at a meeting of the Oriental Society of which I am Vice President, the Duc de Dondeauville being president. The Ambassador has been much pleased of my quotations.' So you see I have done the part of an ill Subject in helping France to ingratiate herself with Persia when England might have had the

start! I suppose it probable *Ferukh Khan* himself had never read or perhaps heard of Omar. I think I told you in my last that I had desired De Tassy to say nothing about you in any Paper he should write; since I cannot have you answerable for any blunders I may have made in my Copy, nor may you care to be named with Omar at all. I hope the Frenchman will attend to my desire; and I dare say he will, as he will then have all credit to himself. He says he can't make out the metre of the *rubayât* at all—never could—though 'I am enough skilful in scanning the Persian verses as you have seen' (Q<sup>y</sup>?) 'in my Prosody of the languages of Musulman Countries, etc.' So much for De Tassy. No; but something more yet: and better, for he tells me his Print of the Mantic is finisht, 'in proofs,' and will be out in about a Month: and he will send me one. Now, my dear Cowell, can't I send one to you? Yes, we must manage that somehow.

Well, I have not turned over Johnson's Dictionary for the last month, having got hold of *Æschylus*. I think I want to turn his Trilogy into what shall be readable English Verse; a thing I have always thought of, but was frightened at the Chorus. So I am now; I can't think them so fine as People talk of: they are terribly maimed; and all such Lyrics require a better Poet than I am to set forth in English. But the better Poets won't do it; and I cannot find one readable translation. I shall (if I make one) make a very free one; not for Scholars,



but for those who are ignorant of Greek, and who (so far as I have seen) have never been induced to learn it by any Translations yet made of these Plays. I think I shall become a bore, of the Bowring order, by all this Translation: but it amuses me without any labour, and I really think I have the faculty of making some things readable which others have hitherto left unreadable. But don't be alarmed with the anticipation of another sudden volume of Translations; for I only sketch out the matter, then put it away; and coming on it one day with fresh eyes trim it up with some natural impulse that I think gives a natural air to all. So I have put away the Mantic. When I die, what a farrago of such things will be found! Enough of such matter. . . .

Friday, June 5! What an interval since the last sentence! And why? Because I have been moving about nearly ever since till yesterday, and my Letter, thus far written, was packt up in a Box sent down hither, namely, Gorlestone Cliffs, Great Yarmouth. Instead of the Regent's Park, and Regent Street, here before my windows are the Vessels going in and out of this River: and Sailors walking about with fur caps and their brown hands in their Breeches Pockets. Within hail almost lives George Borrow who has lately published, and given me, two new Volumes of Lavengro called 'Romany Rye,' with some excellent things, and some very bad (as I have made bold to write to him—how shall I face him!). You would not like the Book at all, I

think. But I must now tell you an odd thing, which will also be a sad thing to you. I left London last Tuesday fortnight for Bedfordshire, meaning to touch at Hertford in passing; but as usual, bungled between two Railroads and got to Bedford, and not to Hertford, on the Tuesday Evening. To that latter place I had wanted to go, as well to see it, as to see N. Newton, who had made one or two bungled efforts to see me in London. So, when I got to Bedford, I wrote him a line to say how it was I had missed him. On the very Saturday immediately after, I received a Hertford Paper announcing the sudden Death of N. Newton on the very Tuesday on which I had set out to see him! He had been quite well till the Saturday preceding: had then caught some illness (I suppose some infectious fever) which had been visiting some in his house; died on the Tuesday, and was buried on the Thursday after! What will Austin do without him? He had written to me about your Hafiz saying he had got several subjects for Illustration, and I meant to have had a talk with him on the matter. What should be done? I dare not undertake any great responsibility in meddling in such a matter even if asked to do so, which is not likely to be unless on your part; for I find my taste so very different from the Public that what I think good would probably be very unprofitable.

When in Bedfordshire I put away almost all Books except Omar Khayyám!, which I could not help looking over in a Paddock covered with Butter-

cups and brushed by a delicious Breeze, while a dainty racing Filly of W. Browne's came startling up to wonder and snuff about me. 'Tempus est quo Orientis Aurâ mundus renovatur, Quo de fonte pluviali dulcis Imber reseratur; *Musi-manus* undecumque ramos insuper splendescit; Jesu-spiritusque Salutaris terram pervagatur.' Which is to be read as Monkish Latin, like 'Dies Iræ,' etc., retaining the Italian value of the Vowels, not the Classical. You will think me a perfectly Aristophanic Old Man when I tell you how many of Omar I could not help running into such bad Latin. I should not confide such follies but to you who won't think them so, and who will be pleased at least with my still harping on our old Studies. You would be sorry, too, to think that Omar breathes a sort of Consolation to me! Poor Fellow; I think of him, and Oliver Basselin, and Anacreon; lighter Shadows among the Shades, perhaps, over which Lucretius presides so grimly. Thursday, June 11. Your letter of April is come to hand, very welcome; and I am expecting the MS. Omar which I have written about to London. And now with respect to your proposed Fraser Paper on Omar. You see a few lines back I talk of some lazy Latin Versions of his Tetrastichs, giving one clumsy example. Now I shall rub up a few more of those I have sketched in the same manner, in order to see if you approve, if not of the thing done, yet of

*(letter breaks off abruptly at the end of the page.)*

June 23. I begin another Letter because I am looking into the Omar MS. you have sent me, and shall perhaps make some notes and enquiries as I go on. I had not intended to do so till I had looked all over and tried to make out what I could of it ; since it is both pleasant to oneself to find out for oneself if possible, and also saves trouble to one's friends. But yet it will keep me talking with you as I go along : and if I find I say silly things or clear up difficulties for myself before I close my Letter (which has a month to be open in!) why, I can cancel or amend, so as you will see the whole Process of Blunder. I think this MS. furnishes some opportunities for one's critical faculties, and so is a good exercise for them, if one wanted such ! First however I must tell you how much ill poor Crabbe has been : a sort of Paralysis, I suppose, in two little fits, which made him think he was sure to die : but Dr. Beck at present says he may live many years with care. Of this also I shall be able to tell you more before I wind up. The brave old Fellow ! he was quite content to depart, and had his Daughter up to give her his Keys, and tell her where the different wines were laid ! I must also tell you that Borrow is greatly delighted with your MS. of Omar which I showed him : delighted at the terseness so unusual in Oriental Verse. But his Eyes are apt to cloud : and his wife has been obliged, he tells me, to carry off even the little Omar out of reach of them for a while. . . .

June 27. Geldestone Hall. I brought back my

two Nieces here yesterday : and to-day am sitting as of old in my accustomed Bedroom, looking out on a Landscape which your Eyes would drink. It is said there has not been such a Flush of Verdure for years : and they are making hay on the Lawn before the house, so as one wakes to the tune of the Mower's Scythe-whetting, and with the old Perfume blowing in at open windows. . . .

July 1. June over ! A thing I think of with Omar-like sorrow. And the Roses here are blowing—and going—as abundantly as even in Persia. I am still at Geldestone, and still looking at Omar by an open window which gives over a Greener Landscape than yours. To-morrow my eldest Nephew, Walter Kerrich, whom I first took to school, is to be married in the Bermudas to a young Widow. He has chosen his chosen sister Andalusia's Birthday to be married on ; and so we are to keep that double Festival. . . .

*Extract from Letter begun 3 July, 1857.*

Monday, July 13. This day year was the last I spent with you at Rushmere ! We dined in the Evening at your Uncle's in Ipswich, walking home at night together. The night before (yesterday year) you all went to Mr. Maude's Church, and I was so sorry afterward I had not gone with you too ; for the last time, as your wife said. One of my manifold stupidities, all avenged in a Lump now ! I think I

shall close this letter to-morrow : which will be the Anniversary of my departure from Rushmere. I went from you, you know, to old Crabbe's. Is he too to be wiped away by a yet more irrecoverable exile than India? By to-morrow I shall have finisht my first Physiognomy of Omar, whom I decidedly prefer to any Persian I have yet seen, unless perhaps Salámán. . . .

Tuesday, July 14. Here is the Anniversary of our Adieu at Rushmere. And I have been (rather hastily) getting to an end of my first survey of the Calcutta Omar, by way of counterpart to our joint survey of the Ouseley MS. then. I suppose we spoke of it this day year ; probably had a final look at it together before I went off, in some Gig, I think, to Crabbe's. We hear rather better Report of him, if the being likely to live a while longer is better. I shall finish my Letter to-day ; only leaving it open to add any very particular word. I must repeat I am sure this Calcutta Omar is, in the same proportion with the Ouseley, by as good a hand as the Ouseley : by as good a hand, if not Omar's ; which I think you seemed to doubt if it was, in one of your Letters. . . .

Have I previously asked you to observe 486, of which I send a poor Sir W. Jones' sort of Parody which came into my mind walking in the Garden here ; where the Rose is blowing as in Persia? And with this poor little Envoy my Letter shall end. I will not stop to make the Verse better.

I long for wine ! oh Sáki of my Soul,  
 Prepare thy Song and fill the morning Bowl ;  
 For this first Summer month that brings the Rose  
 Takes many a Sultan with it as it goes.

*To Mrs. Charles Allen.*<sup>1</sup>

GELDESTONE HALL, BECCLES.

*August 15/57.*

MY DEAR MRS. ALLEN,

One should be very much gratified at being remembered so long with *any* kindness : and how much more gratified with so kind Remembrances as yours ! I may safely say that I too remember you and my Freestone days of five and twenty years ago with a particular regard ; I have been telling my Nieces at the Breakfast Table this morning, after I read your letter, how I remembered you sitting in the '*School-room*'—too much sheltered with Trees—with a large Watch open before you—your Sister too, with her light hair and China-rose Complexion—too delicate !—your Father, your Mother, your Brother—of whom (your Brother) I caught a glimpse in London two years ago. And all the *Place* at Freestone—I can walk about it as I lie awake here, and see the very yellow flowers in the fields, and hear that distant sound of explosion in some distant Quarry. The coast at Bosherston one could never forget once seen, even if it had no domestic kindness to frame its Memory in. I might have profited more of those

<sup>1</sup> See Letter to John Allen, 12 July 1840.

good Days than I did ; but it is not my Talent to take the Tide at its flow ; and so all goes to worse than waste !

But it is ungracious to talk of oneself—except so far as shall answer some points you touch on. It would in many respects be very delightful to me to walk again with you over those old Places ; in other respects sad :—but the pleasure would have the upper hand if one had not again to leave it all and plunge back again. I dare not go to Wales now.

I owe to Tenby the chance acquaintance of another Person who now from that hour remains one of my very best Friends. A Lad—then just 16—whom I met on board the Packet from Bristol : and next morning at the Boarding House—apt then to appear with a little *chalk* on the edge of his Cheek from a touch of the Billiard Table Cue—and now a man of 40—Farmer, Magistrate, Militia Officer—Father of a Family—of more use in a week than I in my Life long. You too have six sons, your Letter tells me. They may do worse than do as well as he I have spoken of, though he too has sown some wild oats, and paid for doing so.

*My* family consists of some eight Nieces here, whom I have seen, all of them, from their Birth upwards—perfectly good, simple, and well-bred, women and girls ; varying in disposition but all agreed among themselves and to do what they can in a small Sphere. They go about in the Village here with some consolation both for Body



and Mind for the Poor, and have no desire for the Opera, nor for the Fine Folks and fine Dresses there. There is however some melancholy in the Blood of some of them—but none that mars any happiness but their own: and that but so slightly as one should expect when there was no Fault, and no Remorse, to embitter it!

You will perhaps be as well entertained with this poor familiar news as any I could tell you. As to public matters, I scarcely meddle with them, and don't know what to think of India except that it is very terrible. I always think a Nation with great Estates is like a Man with them:—more trouble than Profit: I would only have a *Competence* for my Country as for myself. Two of my very dearest Friends went but last year to Calcutta:—he as Professor at the Presidency College there: and now he has to shoulder a musket, I believe, as well as deliver a Lecture. You and yours are safe at home, I am glad to think.

Please to remember me to all whom I have shaken hands with, and make my kind Regards to those of your Party I have not yet seen. I am sure all *would be* as kind to me as others who bear the name of Allen *have been*.

Once more—thank you thank you for *your* kindness; and believe me yours as ever very truly,

EDWD. FITZGERALD.

*To E. B. Cowell.*

RUSHMERE, *October 3/57.*

MY DEAR COWELL,

I hope things will not be so black with you and us by the time this Letter reaches you, but you may be amused and glad to have it from me. Not that I have come into Suffolk on any cheerful Errand: I have come to bury dear old Mr. Crabbe! I suppose you have had some Letters of mine telling you of his Illness; Epileptic Fits which came successively and weakened him gradually, and at last put him to his Bed entirely, where he lay some while unable to move himself or to think! They said he might lie so a long time, since he eat and drank with fair Appetite: but suddenly the End came on and after a twelve hours Stupor he died. On Tuesday September 22 he was buried; and I came from Bedfordshire (where I had only arrived two days before) to assist at it. I and Mr. Drew were the only persons invited not of the Family: but there were very many Farmers and Neighbours come to pay respect to the remains of the brave old Man, who was buried, by his own desire, among the poor in the Churchyard in a Grave that he wishes to be no otherwise distinguisht than by a common Head and Footstone. . . .

You may imagine it was melancholy enough to me to revisit the house when He who had made it

so warm for me so often lay cold in his Coffin unable to entertain me any more! His little old dark Study (which I called the 'Cobbler's') smelt strong of its old Smoke: and the last Cheroot he had tried lay three quarters smoked in its little China Ash-pan. This I have taken as a Relic, as also a little silver Nutmeg Grater which used to give the finishing Touch to many a Glass of good hot Stuff, and also had belonged to the Poet Crabbe. . . .

Last night I had some of your Letters read to me: among them one but yesterday arrived, not very sunshiny in its prospects: but your Brother thinks the Times Newspaper of yesterday somewhat bids us look up. Only, all are trembling for Lucknow, crowded with Helplessness and Innocence! I am ashamed to think how little I understand of all these things: but have wiser men, and men in Place, understood much more? or, understanding, have they *done* what they should? . . .

Love to the dear Lady, and may you be now and for time to come safe and well is the Prayer of yours,  
E. F. G.

31 PORTLAND STREET, LONDON.  
*Decr. 8/57.*

MY DEAR COWELL,

You will recognize the Date of my Abode. Two years ago you were coming to see me in it much about this Season: and a year ago I wrote you my first Letter to India from it. I came hither from

Brighton a week ago : how long to be here uncertain : you had best direct to Goldington Hall, Bedford. I sent you a short Letter by last Marseilles' Post from Brighton : and I now begin this short one because I have happened again to take hold of some Books which we are mutually interested in. I have left with Borrow the Copy of the Mantic De Tassy gave me ; so some days ago I bought another Copy of Norgate. For you must know I had again taken up my rough Sketch of a Translation, which, such as it is, might easily be finisht. But it is in truth no Translation : but only the *Paraphrase of a Syllabus* of the Poem : quite unlike the original in Style too :— But it would give, I think, a fair proportionate Account of the Scheme of the Poem. If ever I finish it, I will send it you. Well ; then in turning this over, I also turned over Volume I of Sprenger's Catalogue, which I bought by itself for 6s. a year ago. As it contains all the Persian MSS. I supposed that would be enough for me. I have been looking at his List of Attár's Poems. What a number ! All almost much made up of *Apologues* in which Attár excels, I think. His Stories are better than Jámí's : to be sure, he gives more to pick out of. An interesting thing in the Mantic is, the stories about Mahmúd : and these are the best in the Book. I find I have got seven or eight in my brief Extract. I see Sprenger says Attár was born in 513—four years before poor Omar Khayyám died ! He mentions one of Attár's Books—'The Book of Union,' *waslat*

*námah*, which seems to be on the very subject of the Apologue to the *Peacock's* Brag in the Mantic: line 814 in De Tassy. I suppose this is no more the Orthodox *Mussulman* Version than it is ours. Sprenger also mentions as one separate Book what is part of the Mantic—and main part—the *Haft wady*. Sprenger says (p. 350) how the MSS. of Attár differ from one another.

And now about old Omar. You talked of sending a Paper about him to Fraser and I told you, if you did, I would stop it till I had made my Comments. I suppose you have not had time to do what you proposed, or are you overcome with the Flood of bad Latin I poured upon you? Well: don't be surprised (*vext*, you won't be) if I solicit Fraser for room for a few Quatrains in English Verse, however—with only such an Introduction as you and Sprenger give me—very short—so as to leave you to say all that is Scholarly if you will. I hope this is not very Cavalier of me. But in truth I take old Omar rather more as my property than yours: he and I are more akin, are we not? You see all [his] Beauty, but you don't feel *with* him in some respects as I do. I think you would almost feel obliged to leave out the part of Hamlet in representing him to your Audience: for fear of Mischief. Now I do not wish to show Hamlet at his maddest: but mad he must be shown, or he is no Hamlet at all. G. de Tassy eluded all that was dangerous, and all that was characteristic. I think these *free* opinions are less dangerous in an old

Mahometan, or an old Roman (like Lucretius) than when they are returned to by those who have lived on happier Food. I don't know what you will say to all this. However I dare say it won't matter whether I do the Paper or not, for I don't believe they'll put it in.

Then—yesterday I bought at that shop in the Narrow Passage at the end of Oxford Street a very handsome small Folio MS. of Sadi's *Bostán* for 10s. But I don't know when I shall look at it to read : for my Eyes are but bad : and London so dark, that I write this Letter now at noon by the Light of two Candles. Of which enough for To-day. I must however while I think of it again notice to you about those first Introductory Quatrains to Omar in both the Copies you have seen ; taken out of their Alphabetical place, *if they be Omar's own*, evidently by way of putting a good Leg foremost—or perhaps *not* his at all. So that which Sprenger says begins the Oude MS. is manifestly, not any Apology of Omar's own, but a Denunciation of him by some one else :<sup>1</sup> and is a *sort* of Parody (in *Form* at least) of Omar's own Quatrain 445, with its indignant reply by the Sultan.

Tuesday Dec. 22. I have your Letter of Nov. 9—giving a gloomy Account of what has long ere this been settled for better or worse ! It is said we are to have a Mail on Friday. I must post this Letter before then. Thank you for the MSS. You will let me know what you expend on them. I have been

<sup>1</sup> Rather of the Orthodox reader by Omar himself.

looking over De Tassy's Omar. Try and see the other Poems of Attár mentioned by Sprenger: those with Apologues, etc., in which (as I have said) Attár seems to me to excel. Love to the Lady. I have no news of the Crabbes, but that they do pretty well in their new home. Donne has just been here and gone—asking about you. I dine with him on Christmas Day. E. F. G.

[MERTON RECTORY].  
*September 3/58.*

MY DEAR COWELL,

. . . Now about my Studies, which, I think, are likely to dwindle away too. I have not turned to Persian since the Spring; but shall one day look back to it: and renew my attack on the 'Seven Castles,' if that be the name. I found the Jámí MS. at Rushmere: and there left it for the present: as the other Poem will be enough for me for my first onslaught. I believe I will do a little a day, so as not to lose what little knowledge I had. As to my Omar: I gave it to Parker in January, I think: he saying Fraser was agreeable to take it. Since then I have heard no more; so as, I suppose, they don't care about it: and may be quite right. Had I thought they would be so long however I would have copied it out and sent it to you: and I will still do so from a rough and imperfect Copy I have (though not now at hand) in case they show no signs of printing me. My Translation will interest you from

its *Form*, and also in many respects in its *Detail*: very unliteral as it is. Many Quatrains are mashed together: and something lost, I doubt, of Omar's Simplicity, which is so much a Virtue in him. But there it is, such as it is. I purposely said in the very short notice I prefixed to the Poem that it was so short because better Information might be furnished in another Paper, which I thought *you* would undertake. So it rests. Nor have I meddled with the Mantic lately: nor does what you say encourage me to do so. For what I had sketcht out was very paraphrase indeed. I do not indeed believe that any readable Account (unless a prose Analysis, for the History and Curiosity of the Thing) will be possible, for *me* to do, at least. But I took no great pleasure in what I had done: and every day get more and more a sort of Terror at re-opening any such MS. My '*Go*' (such as it was) is *gone*, and it becomes *Work*: and the Upshot is not worth *working* for. It was very well when it was a Pleasure. So it is with Calderon. It is well enough to sketch such things out in warm Blood; but to finish them in cold! I wish I could finish the '*Mighty Magician*' in my new way: which I know you would like, in spite of your caveat for the Gracioso. I have not wholly dropt the two Students, but kept them quite under; and brought out the religious character of the Piece into stronger Relief. But as I have thrown much, if not into Lyric, into Rhyme, which strikes a more Lyric Chord, I have found it much harder to



satisfy myself than with the good old Blank Verse, which I used to manage easily enough. The 'Vida es Sueño' again, though blank Verse, has been difficult to arrange; here also Clarin is not quenched, but subdued: as is all Rosaura's Story, so as to assist, and not compete with, the main Interest. I really wish I could finish these some lucky day: but, as I said, it is so much easier to leave them alone; and when I had done my best, I don't know if they are worth the pains, or whether any one (except you) would care for them even if they were worth caring for. So much for my grand Performances: except that I amuse myself with jotting down materials (out of Vocabularies, etc.) for a Vocabulary of *rural* English, or *rustic* English: that is, only the best country words selected from the very many Glossaries, etc., relating chiefly to country matters, but also to things in general: words that carry their own story with them, without needing Derivation or Authority, though both are often to be found. I always say I have heard the Language of Queen Elizabeth's, or King Harry's Court, in the Suffolk Villages: better a great deal than that spoken in London Societies, whether Fashionable or Literary: and the homely [strength] of which has made Shakespeare, Dryden, South, and Swift, what they could not have been without it. But my Vocabulary if ever done will be a very little Affair, if ever done: for here again it is pleasant enough to jot down a word now and then, but not to equip all for the Press.

FARLINGAY, WOODBRIDGE. *Nov. 2/58.*

MY DEAR COWELL,

. . . No. I have not read the *Jámí Díwán*; partly because I find my Eyes are none the better, and partly because I have now no one to 'prick the sides of my Intent'; not even 'Vaulting Ambition' now. I have got the Seven Castles<sup>1</sup> in my Box here and old Johnson's Dictionary; and these I shall strike a little Fire out of by and by: *Jámí* also in time perhaps. I have nearly finisht a metrical Paraphrase and Epitome of the Mantic: but you would scarce like it, and who else would? It has amused me to give a 'Bird's Eye' View of the Bird Poem in some sixteen hundred lines. I do not think one could do it as *Salámán* is done. As to Omar, I hear and see nothing of it in Fraser yet: and so I suppose they don't want it. I told Parker he might find it rather dangerous among his Divines: he took it however, and keeps it. I really think I shall take it back; add some Stanzas which I kept out for fear of being too strong; print fifty copies and give away; one to you, who won't like it neither. Yet it is most ingeniously tessellated into a sort of Epicurean Eclogue in a Persian Garden.

<sup>1</sup> Hatifi's *Haft Paikar*, a poem on the Seven Castles of *Bahrám Gúr*, as I learn from Professor Cowell, 'each with its princess who lives in it, and tells *Bahrám* a story.' He adds, 'We always used the name with an understood playful reference to Corporal Trim's unfinished story of the King of Bohemia and *his* Seven Castles.'

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*To* W. H. THOMPSON, 79, 85

*The asterisks indicate the letters which are here printed for the first time.*

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