Title: Critical Miscellanies (Vol. 3 of 3), Essay 7: W.R. Greg: A Sketch

Author: John Morley

Release date: December 31, 2007 [eBook #24092]

Language: English

Credits: Produced by Paul Murray, ronnie sahlberg and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at http://www.pgdp.net

CRITICAL MISCELLANIES

BY

JOHN MORLEY

VOL. III.

Essay 7: W.R. Greg: A Sketch

London

MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED

NEW YORK: THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1904

W. R. GREG: A SKETCH.

W. R. GREG: A SKETCH.

[213]

It is perhaps a little hard to undertake to write about the personality of a thinker whose ideas one does not share, and whose reading of the events and tendencies of our time was in most respects directly opposite to one's own. But literature is neutral ground. Character is more than opinion. Here we may forget the loud cries and sounding strokes, the watchwords and the tactics of the tented field, and fraternise with the adversary of the eve and the morrow in friendly curiosity and liberal recognition. It fell to the present writer at one time to have one or two bouts of public controversy with Mr. Greg. In these dialectics Mr. Greg was never vehement and never pressed, but he was inclined to be—or, at least, was felt by an opponent to be—dry, mordant, and almost harsh. These disagreeable prepossessions were instantly dissipated, as so often happens, by personal acquaintance. He had not only the courtesy of the good type of the man of the world, but an air of moral suavity, when one came near enough to him, that was infinitely attractive and engaging. He was urbane, essentially modest, and readily interested in ideas and subjects other [214] than his own. There was in his manner and address something of what the French call *liant*. When the chances of residence made me his neighbour, an evening in his drawing-room, or half an hour's talk in casual meetings in afternoon walks on Wimbledon Common, was always a particularly agreeable incident. Some men and women have the quality of atmosphere. The egotism of the natural man is surrounded by an elastic medium. Mr. Greg was one of these personalities with an atmosphere elastic, stimulating, elevating, and yet composing. We do wrong to narrow our interests to those only of our contemporaries who figure with great lustre and *éclat* in the world. Some of the quiet characters away from the centre of great affairs are as well worth our attention as those who in high-heeled cothurnus stalk across the foreground.

Mr. Greg, it is not necessary to say, has a serious reputation in the literature of our time. In politics he was one of the best literary representatives of the fastidious or pedantocratic school of government. In economics he spoke the last word, and fell, sword in hand, in the last trench, of the party of capitalist supremacy and industrial tutelage. In the group of profound speculative questions that have come up for popular discussion since the great yawning rents and fissures have been made in the hypotheses of theology by the hypotheses of science, he set a deep mark on many minds. 'We are in the sick foggy dawn of a new era,' says one distinguished writer of our day, 'and no one saw more clearly than W. R. Greg what the day that would follow was likely to [215] be.' To this I must humbly venture to demur; for there is no true vision of the fortunes of human society without Hope, and without Faith in the beneficent powers and processes of the Unseen Time. That and no other is the mood in which our sight is most likely to pierce the obscuring mists from which the new era begins to emerge. When we have said so much as this, it remains as true as before that Mr. Greg's faculty of disinterested speculation, his feeling for the problems of life, and his distinction of character, all make it worth while to put something about him on record, and to attempt to describe him as he was, apart from the opaque influences of passing controversy and of discussions that are rapidly losing their point.

Mr. Greg was born at Manchester in 1809. The family stock was Irish by residence and settlement, though Scotch in origin. The family name was half jocosely and half seriously believed to be the middle syllable of the famous clan of Macgregor. William Rathbone Greg's grandfather

was a man of good position in the neighbourhood of Belfast, who sent two of his sons to push their fortunes in England. The younger of the two was adopted by an uncle, who carried on the business of a merchant at Manchester. He had no children of his own. The boy was sent to Harrow, where Dr. Samuel Parr was then an assistant master. When the post of head master became vacant, Parr, though only five-and-twenty, entered into a very vehement contest for the prize. He failed, and in a fit of spleen set up an establishment of his own at Stanmore. Many [216] persons, as De Quincey tells us, of station and influence both lent him money and gave him a sort of countenance equally useful to his interests by placing their sons under his care. Among those who accompanied him from Harrow was Samuel Greg. The lad was meant by his uncle to be a clergyman, but this project he stoutly resisted. Instead of reading for orders he travelled abroad, acquired foreign languages, and found out something about the commercial affairs of the continent of Europe. His uncle died in 1783, and the nephew took up the business. It was the date of the American Peace. Samuel Greg was carried forward on the tide of prosperity that poured over the country after that great event, and in a moderate time he laid the foundation of a large and solid fortune. The mighty industrial revolution that was begun by the inventions of Arkwright was now in its first stage. Arkwright's earliest patent had been taken out a few years before, and his factory in Derbyshire had by this time proved a practical success. Instead of sharing the brutish animosity of the manufacturers of Lancashire to the new processes that were destined to turn their county into a mine of gold, Greg discerned their immense importance. The vast prospects of manufacturing industry grew upon his imagination. He looked about him in search of water-power in the neighbourhood of Manchester, and at length found what he wanted a dozen miles away at Wilmslow, over the Cheshire border. Here the stream of the Bollen cuts [217] through a flat and uninteresting table-land, and forms a pretty valley of its own, as it winds between banks of red sandstone. When the mill was built, and a house close to it, Quarry Bank became the home of the family, and it was here that W. R. Greg passed his childhood, youth, and early manhood.

His mother was fifth in descent from Philip Henry, one of the two thousand uncompromising divines who were driven out from their benefices on that Black Bartholomew's Day of 1662, which is still commemorated by the severer Nonconformists of the old school. His son was the better known Mathew Henry, whose famous commentary on the Bible has for more than a century and a half been the favourite manual of devotional reading in half the pious households all over England and the United States. Something of the Puritan element was thus brought into the family. In Ireland the Gregs belonged to the Presbyterians of the New Light, and their doctrine allowed of a considerable relaxation in the rigours of older orthodoxy. Many, again, of the Puritans of the North of England had favoured the teachings of Priestley. The result of these two streams of influence was that the Gregs of Manchester joined the Unitarians. In this body W. R. Greg was brought up. His mother was a woman of strongly marked character. She was cultivated, and had some literary capacity of her own; she cared eagerly for the things of the mind, both for herself and her children; and in spite of ill health and abundant cares, she [218] persisted in strenuous effort after a high intellectual and moral standard. A little book of Maxims compiled by her still remains; and she found time to write a couple of volumes of *Practical Suggestions towards alleviating the Sufferings of the Sick*. One volume is little more than a selection of religious extracts, not likely to be more apt or useful to the sick than to the whole. The other is a discreet and homely little manual of nursing, distinguished from the common run of such books by its delicate consideration and wise counsel for the peculiar mental susceptibilities of the invalid. The collection of Maxims and Observations was designed to be 'an useful gift to her children, gleaned from her own reading and reflection.' Though not intended for publication, they found their way into a few congenial circles, and one at least of those who were educated at Dr. Carpenter's school at Bristol can remember these maxims being read aloud to the boys, and the impression that their wisdom and morality made upon his youthful mind. The literary value of the compilation is modest enough. Along with some of the best of the sayings of Chesterfield, La Rochefoucauld, Addison, and other famous masters of sentences, is much that is nearer to the level of nursery commonplace. But then these commonplaces are new truths to the young, and they are the unadorned, unseen foundations on which character is built.

The home over which this excellent woman presided offered an ideal picture of domestic felicity [219] and worth. The grave simplicity of the household, their intellectual ways, the absence of display and even of knick-knacks, the pale blue walls, the unadorned furniture, the well-filled bookcases, the portrait of George Washington over the chimney-piece, all took people back to a taste that was formed on Mrs. Barbauld and Dr. Channing. Stanley, afterwards Bishop of Norwich, and father of the famous Dean of our own day, was rector of the adjoining parish of Alderley. Catherine Stanley, his wife, has left a charming memorial of the home of the Gregs.

> Have you ever been to Quarry Bank? It is such a picture of rational, happy life. Mr. Greg is quite a gentleman; his daughters have the delightful simplicity of people who are perfectly satisfied in their place, and never trying to get out of it. He is rich, and he spends just as people do not generally spend their money, keeping a sort of open house, without pretension. If he has more guests than the old butler can manage, he has his maid-servants in to wait. He seldom goes out, except on journeys, so that with the almost certainty of finding a family party at home, a large circle of connections, and literary people, and foreigners, and Scotch and Irish, are constantly dropping in, knowing they cannot come amiss. You may imagine how this sort of life makes the whole family sit loose to all the incumbrances and hindrances of society. They actually do not know what it is to be formal or dull: each with their separate pursuits and tastes,

intelligent and well-informed.

Mrs. Fletcher, again, that beautiful type of feminine character alike as maiden and mother, whose autobiography was given to the world a few years ago, tells how the family at Quarry Bank struck and delighted her. 'We stayed a week with them,' she says, 'and admired the cultivation of mind and refinement of manners which Mrs. Greg preserved in the midst of a money-making and somewhat unpolished community of merchants and manufacturers. Mr. Greg, too, was most gentlemanly and hospitable, and surrounded by eleven clever and well-conducted children. I thought them the happiest family group I had ever seen.'[1] [220]

[1] *Autobiography of Mrs. Fletcher*, p. 97. Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1876.

Samuel Greg was one of thirteen children, and he in his turn became the father of thirteen. W. R. Greg was the youngest of them. The brightness and sweetness of his disposition procured for him even more than the ordinary endearment of such a place in a large family. After the usual amount of schooling, first at home under the auspices of an elder sister, then at Leeds, and finally at Dr. Carpenter's at Bristol, in the winter of 1826-1827 he went to the University of Edinburgh, and remained there until the end of the session of 1828. He was a diligent student, but we may suspect, from the turn of his pursuits on leaving the university, that his mind worked most readily out of the academic groove. After the manner of most young men with an aptitude for literature, he competed for a prize poem in John Wilson's class, but he did not win. When he was in low spirits—a mood so much more common in early manhood than we usually remember afterwards— he drove them away by energetic bursts of work. On one occasion, he says, 'When I was so bad that I thought I should have gone distracted, I shut myself up, and for three days studied all the most abstruse works that I could find on the origin of government and society, such as Godwin, Goguet, Rousseau, *et cætera*, from seven in the morning till twelve at night, which quite set me up again.' 'Natural history,' at another time he tells his sister, 'is my principal pursuit at present, and from half-past six in the morning to twelve at night I am incessantly at work, with the exception of about two hours for exercise, and two more for meals.' [221]

Sir William Hamilton was the chief intellectual influence in Edinburgh at this time, and Greg followed his lectures with lively interest. He was still more attracted by the controversy that then raged in Edinburgh and elsewhere on the value of Phrenology and Animal Magnetism. Hamilton, as all students of contemporary philosophy are aware, denounced the pretensions of Phrenology with curious vehemence and asperity. It was the only doctrine, his friends said, that he could not even tolerate. On Animal Magnetism he held a very different opinion, and he wrote to Greg encouraging his enthusiasm in that direction. 'There has always,' he said, 'seemed to me a foundation of truth in the science, however overlaid with a superstructure of credulity and enthusiasm.... I foresee as great a clamour in favour of the science as there is at present a contempt and prejudice against it, and both equally absurd.' [222]

It was in this field, and not in literature or philosophy, that Greg's interests were most actively aroused during his university career. When his life as a student came to an end, he returned home with his whole faculties of curiosity and enthusiasm concentrated upon natural history, phrenology, and animal magnetism. 'I have a canine appetite for natural history,' he told his brother in 1828. He describes with all the zeal of a clever youth of nineteen how busily he is employed in macerating skulls, dissecting unsavoury creatures before breakfast, watching the ants reduce a viper to a skeleton for him, and striving with all his might to get a perfect collection of animal and human skulls. All this, however, was rather an accidental outbreak of exuberant intellectual activity than serious and well-directed study. He was full of the vague and morbid aspirations of youth.

> As for me [he writes to his elder brother], I am pining after change, I am thirsting for excitement. When I compare what I might be with what I shall be, what I might do with what I shall do, I am ready to curse myself with vexation. 'Why had I, who am so low, a taste so high?' I know you are rather of a more peaceful and quiet temper of mind than I, but I am much mistaken, if you have not much of the same desire for some kind of life more suited to man's lofty passions and his glorious destiny. How can one bear to know how much is to be seen and learned, and yet sit down content without ransacking every corner of the earth for knowledge and wonder and beauty? And after all, what is picking a few skulls (the occupation which gives me the greatest pleasure now), when compared with gaining an intimate and practical acquaintance with all the varieties of man, all the varying phases of his character, all the peculiarities of his ever-changing situations?'[2] [223]
>
> [2] August 28, 1828

We may smile at the youthful rhetoric, as the writer proceeds to describe how shameful it would be to remain inactive in the sight of exertion, to be satisfied with ignorance when in full view of the temple of knowledge, and so forth. But it is the language of a generous ardour for pure aims, and not the commoner ambition for the glittering prizes of life. This disinterested preference remained with Greg from the beginning to the end.

William Greg's truest delight at this time lay in his affectionate and happy intercourse with his brother Samuel. There were three elder brothers. One of them died comparatively young, but Robert and John were eminently successful in the affairs of life; the former of them represented Manchester; they both lived to be octogenarians, and both left behind them the beneficent traces

of long years of intelligent and conscientious achievement. In Samuel Greg an interesting, clear, and earnest intelligence was united to the finest natural piety of character. Enough remains to show the impression that Samuel Greg made even on those who were not bound to him by the ties of domestic affection. The posthumous memorials of him disclose a nature moulded of no [224] common clay; and when he was gone, even accomplished men of the world and scholars could not recall without emotion his bright and ardent spirit, his forbearance, his humility.[3] The two brothers, says one who knew them, were 'now both of them fresh from college: their interest was alike keen in a great variety of subjects—poetry, philosophy, science, politics, social questions. About these the two brothers were never tired of talking together. They would pace up and down all the evening under the stars, and late into the night, discussing things in heaven and earth with a keen zest that seemed inexhaustible. Their appetite for knowledge was insatiable, and their outlook over the rich life that was opening before them was full of hope and promise.'

[3] See the little volume entitled *A Layman's Legacy*; published in 1877 (Macmillan and Co.), with a prefatory letter by the late Dean of Westminster.

The energetic and high-minded mother of the house died at the end of 1828, and the tenderness and skill of her youngest son in the sickroom surpassed the devotion of women. In the following year he went to manage one of his father's mills at Bury, where he went to reside. The Gregs had always been distinguished for their efforts to humanise the semi-barbarous population that the extraordinary development of the cotton industry was then attracting to Lancashire. At Quarry Bank the sedulous cultivation of their own minds had always been subordinate to the constant [225] and multifarious demands of their duties towards their workpeople. One of the curious features of that not very distant time was the Apprentice House. The employer procured children from the workhouse and undertook the entire charge of them. The Gregs usually had a hundred boys and girls between the ages of ten and twenty-one in their apprentice house, and the care of them was one of the main occupations of the family. They came from the refuse of the towns, yet the harmony of wise and gentle rule for the young, along with dutifully adjusted demand and compliance between the older hands and their employers, ended in the transformation of the thin, starved, half-dazed creatures who entered the gates of the factory into the best type of workpeople to be found in the district. The genial side of the patriarchal system was seen at its best. There is a touch of grace about the picture of the pleasant house with its old beech-trees and its steep grassy lawns sloping to the river, with the rhythmic hum of the mill, the loud factory bell marking the hours like the voice of time itself, the workers pouring through the garden in the summer morning on their way to Wilmslow church, and receiving flowers and friendly salutation from the group at the open door of the great house. It was little wonder that these recollections acquired a fascination for William Greg that never passed away, and gave that characteristic form to his social ideas which they never lost. [226]

At Bury and at Quarry Bank the two brothers were unresting in their efforts both to acquire knowledge for themselves and to communicate it to their neighbours. They delivered courses of lectures, and took boundless trouble to make them interesting and instructive. In these lectures William Greg took what opportunities he could find to enforce moral and religious sentiment. 'I lay it down,' he said, 'as an indubitable fact that religion has double the effect on Saturday that it has on Sunday; and weekday morality, incidentally introduced, meets with far more attention than the tautology of Sabbath subjects, treated in the style in which they generally are by professed teachers.' A more questionable diligence displayed itself in the zealous practice of experiments in animal magnetism and mesmerism. With a faith that might have moved mountains the two brothers laid their hands upon all sorts of sick folk, and they believed themselves to have wrought many cures and wonders. William Greg described animal magnetism as a 'discovery bearing more immediately and extensively on the physical happiness of the world than any which the last three centuries have witnessed.' The cowardice of doctors and others, who believed but were afraid to speak, stirred all the generous fire of youth. 'Here, of itself,' he cries out to his sister (September 4, 1829), 'is a bitter satire upon human nature, and a sufficient answer to all who moralise on the impropriety of flying in the face of received opinions and public prejudice. I [227] assure you it is a knowledge of how often the ridicule and contempt of the world has crushed truth in the embryo or stifled it in the cradle, which makes me so eager to examine and support those opinions which mankind generally condemn as visionary and irrational.' In later times these interests became a bond between W. R. Greg and Miss Martineau. He finally let the subject drop, with the conviction that years of practice had brought it no farther on its way either to scientific rank or to practical fruitfulness. The time would have been better spent in severer studies, though these were not absent. From Green Bank he writes to his sister in 1830:—

> Sam and I are at present engaged in some calculations on population, which have brought us to a very curious, beautiful, and important conclusion hitherto overlooked by all writers on the subject whom I have consulted, and which threatens to invalidate a considerable part of Malthus's theory. It respects the increase or diminution of fecundity; but I will write you more fully when we have quite established our facts. I have just finished a number of very tedious tables, all of which confirm our conclusions in a manner I had not ventured to anticipate....
>
> I am now (September 3, 1830) very busy reading and arranging and meditating for my lectures on history, which will be ten times the labour of my last; also collecting from all history and all science every fact, or principle, or opinion, or admission, or event, which can in any way bear upon magnetism, or suggest any argument for its correctness, whereby I have amassed a profusion of ancient and modern learning,

> which I think will astonish the natives when I bring it forward. My other occupations at present are reading through the best authors and orators of our country—to get a perfect command of language and style—as Hooker, Taylor, Burke, Canning, Erskine, Fox, etc., after which I shall take to French literature, and make myself as well acquainted with Voltaire, Molière, Bossuet, Massillon, Fléchier, and Condorcet, as I am with Mme. de Staël and Rousseau and Montesquieu and Volney. This will be work enough for another year; and what fit may then come upon me, it is impossible to see. My views on population are confirmed by every fresh calculation I see, and Sadler's new work affords me the means of controverting his theory and establishing my own. The moral, physical, and political influence of manufactures and Poor Laws I must next examine. [228]

A little later he writes:—

> Everything bears indications of some approaching struggle between the higher and lower classes, and the guilt of it, if it does come, will lie at the door of those who, by their inflammatory speeches, public and private, and by their constant and monotonous complaints, have raised among the people a universal spirit of rebellion and disaffection to everything and everybody whom Nature has ordained to rule over them. We are all waiting in some alarm and much indignation for the result, and in the meantime (*entre nous*) I have written a small pamphlet, addressed to the higher classes on the present state of public feeling among the lower, urging them to moderate and direct it if they can. But sooner than the present state of things should continue, I would adopt any principles, conceiving it to be the duty of all men, as Burke says, 'so to be patriots as not to forget that we are gentlemen, to mould our principles to our duties and our situations, and to be convinced that all (public) virtue which is impracticable is spurious.' I write to induce the people to leave politics to wiser heads, to consent to learn and not endeavour to direct or teach. [229]

We here see that before he was one-and-twenty years old, Greg was possessed by the conception that haunted him to the very end. When the people complain, their complaint savours of rebellion. Those who make themselves the mouthpieces of popular complaint must be wicked incendiaries. The privileged classes must be ordained by Nature to rule over the non-privileged. The few ought to direct and teach, the many to learn. That was Greg's theory of government from first to last. It was derived at this time, I suppose, from Burke, without the powerful correctives and indispensable supplements that are to be found in Burke's earlier writings. Some one said of De Tocqueville, who afterwards became Mr. Greg's friend, and who showed in a milder form the same fear of democracy, 'Il a commencé à penser avant d'avoir rien appris; ce qui fait qu'il a quelquefois pensé creux.' What is to be said for Mr. Greg, now and always, is that he most honourably accepted the obligations of his doctrine, and did his best to discharge his own duties as a member of the directing class.

He did not escape moods of reaction. The truth seems to be, that though his life was always well filled, he inherited rather the easy and buoyant disposition of his father than the energy and strenuousness of his mother, though he too could be energetic and strenuous enough upon occasion. Both William Greg and his favourite brother were of what is called, with doubtful [230] fitness, the feminine temperament. It was much less true of William than of Samuel Greg; but it was in some degree true of him also that, though firm, tenacious, and infinitely patient, 'he rather lacked that harder and tougher fibre, both of mind and frame, which makes the battle of life so easy and so successful to many men.' It may be suspected in both cases that their excessive and prolonged devotion to the practice of mesmerism and animal magnetism had tended to relax rather than to brace the natural fibre. Samuel Greg broke down at a comparatively early age; and though his brother's more vigorous system showed no evil results for many long years to come, there was a severe reaction from the nervous tension of their mesmeric experimentation.

Those who trace despondent speculations of the mind to depressed or morbid conditions of body will find some support for their thesis in Mr. Greg's case. When he was only one-and-twenty he writes to his sister (December 2, 1830):—

> I am again attacked with one of those fits of melancholy indifference to everything, and total incapacity for exertion, to which I am so often subject, and which are indeed the chronic malady of my existence. They sometimes last for many weeks, and during their continuance I do not believe, among those whose external circumstances are comfortable, there exists any one more thoroughly miserable.... For nearly four years these fits of melancholy and depression have been my periodical torment, and as yet I have found no remedy against them, except strong stimulants or the society of intimate [231] friends, and even these are only temporary, and the latter seldom within my reach, and the former I abstain from partly on principle, but more from a fear of consequences. Every one has a thorn in the flesh, and this is mine; but I am egotistical, if not selfish, in inflicting it upon others. I begin to think I have mistaken my way both to my own happiness and the affections of others. My strongest passion has always been the desire to be loved—as the French call it, 'le besoin d'être aimé.' It is the great wish, want, desire, necessity, desideratum of my life, the source through which I expect happiness to flow to me, the ultimate aim and object which has led me on in all the little I have done, and the much that I have tried to do.

From these broodings the young man was rescued by a year of travel. It was one of the elements in the domestic scheme of education that the university should be followed by a year abroad, and in William Greg's case it had been postponed for a season by the exigences of business and the factory at Bury. He went first through France and Switzerland to Italy. At Florence he steeped himself in Italian, and read Beccaria and Machiavelli; but he had no dæmonic passion (like Macaulay's) for literature. 'Italian,' he said, 'is a wonderfully poor literature in everything but poetry, and the poets I am not up to, and I do not think that I shall take the trouble to study them.' When he reached that city which usually excites a traveller as no other city on earth can excite him, dyspepsia, neuralgia, and vapours plunged him into bad spirits, and prevented him from enjoying either Rome or his books. The sights of Rome were very different fifty years ago [232] from those that instruct and fascinate us to-day. Except the Colosseum, the Pantheon, and a few pillars covered thick with the filth of the modern city, the traveller found the ancient Rome an undistinguishable heap of bricks. Still, when we reflect on the profound and undying impression that Rome even then had made on such men as Goethe, or Winckelmann, or Byron, the shortcoming must have been partly in the traveller. In truth, Mr. Greg was not readily stirred either by Goethe's high artistic sense, or by Byron's romantic sense of the vast pathos of Rome.

> I pass my time here [he says] with extreme regularity and quietness, not knowing, even to speak to, a single individual in Rome; and the direction to my valet when I start on my perambulations, 'al Campidoglio,' 'al Foro,' forms the largest part of my daily utterances.... In a fit of desperation I took to writing a kind of political philosophy, in default of my poetical aim, which is quite gone from me. It is a setting forth of the peculiar political and religious features of the age, wherein it differs from all preceding ones, and is entitled the *Genius of the Nineteenth Century*. I do not know if I shall ever finish it; but if I could write it as I have imagined it, it will at least be entitled to come under Mr. Godwin's definition of eloquence. That gentleman being in a company of literati, who were comparing their notions of what eloquence could be defined to consist in, when his opinion was asked replied, 'Eloquence is truth spoken with fervour.' I am going on with it, though slowly, and fill up the rest of my leisure time with Dante and Machiavelli (with which last author I am delighted) in the morning, and [233] with Boccaccio and our English poets in the evening. Sight-seeing does not occupy much of my time.[4]
>
> [4] November 30, 1831.

From Rome Mr. Greg and a companion went to Naples, and from Naples they made their way to Sicily. I have said that Mr. Greg had not Byron's historic sense; still this was the Byronic era, and no one felt its influence more fervently. From youth to the end of his life, through good and evil repute, Mr. Greg maintained Byron's supremacy among poets of the modern time. It was no wonder, then, that he should write home to his friends,—'I am tired of civilised Europe, and I want to see a *wild* country if I can.' Accordingly at Naples he made up his mind to undertake what would be a very adventurous tour even in our day, travelling through Greece and Asia Minor to Constantinople, and thence northwards through Hungary to Vienna. This wild and hazardous part of his tour gave him a refreshment and pleasure that he had not found in Swiss landscapes or Italian cities, and he enjoyed the excitement of the 'wild countries' as thoroughly as he had expected. On his return to England he published anonymously an account of what he had seen in Greece and Turkey, in a volume which, if occasionally florid and imaginative, is still a lively and copious piece of description. It is even now worth turning to for a picture of the ruin and distraction of Greece after the final expulsion of the Turk.[5]

> [5] *Sketches in Greece and Turkey, with the Present Condition and Future Prospects of the Turkish Empire.* London: Ridgway, 1833.

On his return he found the country in the throes of the great election after the Reform Bill. [234] Perhaps his experiences of the sovereign Demos on that occasion helped to colour his opinions on popular government afterwards.

> *December 5, 1832.*—On Tuesday we nominated—there was a fearful crowd of 10,000 ruffians, Grundy's friends from the country. A tremendous uproar. I seconded Mr. Walker's nomination, but was received with yells and groans, owing chiefly to the prosecution which I have instituted against the other candidate and four of his supporters for intimidation of voters. The ruffians roared at me like so many bulls of Bashan, and shook their fists at me, whereupon I bowed profoundly; and, finding it impossible to obtain a hearing, I turned to the opposite candidate and his immediate supporters on the hustings and spoke to them. When we concluded, the uproar was fearful. I was warned to escape as I could, which I did, amid groans and hisses, but no violence. The next morning we started polling. I had the honour of giving the first vote, and at four o'clock the poll was decided in our favour—Walker, 301; Grundy, 151. The next day I returned from Manchester, and had not been in the mill two hours before I was summoned to assist in quelling a riot. I rode down immediately with three other gentlemen and a magistrate to the scene of faction. We found plenty of broken windows and heads, but no one killed. Here were two parties of such bludgeon men as I never before witnessed, evidently bent on mischief. We read the Riot Act—sent for the military and the Haslams! I rode among the ruffians. They were in a state of extreme exasperation, especially against me, but listened to my exhortations, and after shaking their bludgeons at me, came at last to shake hands. About dusk I received several hints

to take care of myself, so rode back to Green Bank, and lay with my blunderbuss and sword, ready to give entertainment to any visitor. [235]

It is little wonder that in a man of his literary temperament and predispositions a strong reaction followed close behind these energetic performances.

> Do you know [he writes, December 29], I am sick of public life. I mean sicker than ever. The reward, or rather success, is so very inadequate to the sacrifice; and the exertion, and the injury to one's character, mentally, morally, and religiously, is so great, and one's real happiness suffers yet more. My love for retirement and the country, scientific studies, and calm, quiet, and refreshing society, such as the country only can afford, which has always been a sort of passion, is now urging me more strongly and imperiously than ever, to weigh conflicting interests and tastes, and to hold fast that which is good. And is it not far better to retire in the full vigour of life, when the energy of application is still unimpaired, and can be usefully directed?

In 1833 Mr. Greg started in business on his own account at Bury. He inherited his father's mechanical taste, and took a lively interest in the improvements that were constantly being made in those years in the wonderful machinery of the cotton manufacture. With his workpeople his relations were the most friendly, and he was as active as he had ever been before in trying to better their condition. A wider field was open for his philanthropic energies. Lancashire was then the scene of diligent social efforts of all kinds. Mr. Greg was an energetic member of the circle at Manchester (Richard Cobden was another) which at this time pushed on educational, sanitary, [236] and political improvements all over that important district. He fully shared the new spirit of independence and self-assertion that began to animate the commercial and manufacturing classes in the north of England at the time of the Reform Bill. It took a still more definite and resolute shape in the great struggle ten years later for the repeal of the Corn Laws. 'It is among these classes,' he said, in a speech in 1841, 'that the onward movements of society have generally had their origin. It is among them that new discoveries in political and moral science have invariably found the readiest acceptance; and the cause of Peace, Civilisation, and sound National Morality has been more indebted to their humble but enterprising labours, than to the measures of the most sagacious statesman, or the teachings of the wisest moralist.'

In 1835 Mr. Greg married the daughter of Dr. Henry, an eminent physician in Manchester, and honourably known to the wider world of science by contributions to the chemistry of gases that were in their day both ingenious and useful. Two years after his marriage he offered himself as a candidate for the parliamentary representation of Lancaster. He was much too scrupulous for that exceedingly disreputable borough, and was beaten by a great majority. In 1841 the health of his wife made it desirable to seek a purer air than that of the factory district, and in the spring of 1842 they settled in a charming spot at the foot of Wansfell—the hill that rises to the southeast [237] above Ambleside, and was sung by Wordsworth in one of his latest sonnets:—

> Wansfell! this household has a favoured lot,
> Living with liberty on thee to gaze,
> To watch while morn first crowns thee with her rays:
> Or when along thy breast securely float
> Evening's angelic clouds....
> When we are gone
> From every object dear to mortal sight,
> As soon we shall be, may these words attest
> How oft, to elevate our spirits, shone
> Thy visionary majesties of light,
> How in thy pensive glooms our hearts found rest.

Such a step had long been in his mind. From Naples when on the threshold of active life, he had written (February 6, 1832):—

> I am becoming more and more anxious to realise a competence speedily, every time I look to the future, and reflect on the true objects of life, and the likeliest means of procuring them. I am desirous to be able to realise the projects I have formed before the age of feeling and acting be past, and before the energy of youth has been evaporated by long repression. Life and talents and desires were not given me to be wasted in a situation where the power of doing good is at best very limited, and where that of acquiring the higher kinds of knowledge and enjoying the best gifts of life is still more confined.

The nearer prospect of the world of business and actual contact with it made no change in the perpetual refrain. [238]

> I wonder [he writes, May 15, 1833] how long philosophy or indecision will induce to continue the dog's life I am leading here. I never open a book, but shun them as if they were poison, rise at half-past five o'clock, go to bed at ten, and toil like a galley slave all day, willy, nilly. Man labours for the meat which perisheth, and the food which satisfieth not.

The move to the Lakes, though it enriched his lite with many delicious hours, and gave him

leisure for thought and composition, yet seems to have led directly to commercial difficulties. At first he spent alternate weeks at Bury and at Wansfell, and for a little time he even removed to Macclesfield. But business fell by insensible degrees into the second place. Mr. Greg's temperament, moreover, was too sanguine in practical affairs, as Cobden's was; and we might almost gather from his writings that he had not that faculty of sustained attention to details which is the pith and marrow of success in such a business as his. At last the crash came in 1850. Three years before this the health of his brother Samuel had broken down, and William Greg added the management of his affairs to his own. The strain was too great, and a long struggle ended in defeat. Both mills were closed, and the forty thousand pounds of capital with which Mr. Greg had begun business were almost entirely swept away. At the age of forty-one he was called upon to begin life afresh. The elasticity of his mind proved equal to all the demands upon it, and they were severe. The illness of his wife cast the shadow of a terrible cloud over his house, and [239] for long periods it was deprived of a mother, and he of a companion. Yet amid these sore anxieties and heavy depressions he never lost either his fortitude or, what is much rarer than fortitude, that delicate and watchful consideration for others which is one of the most endearing of human characteristics. When he was twenty years younger, he had written of himself to one of his sisters (January 14, 1830):—

> Nature never cut me out for a happy man, for my mind is so constituted as to create difficulties and sorrows where I do not find them, and to strive with and overcome them when I meet them. I am never so happy as in times of difficulty and danger and excitement, and I am afraid my line of life will furnish me with but few of these times, so that I shall remain in the ground like the seed of a strong plant, which has never found the soil or the atmosphere necessary for its germination.

The judgment was not an unjust one, and the apprehension that life would bring too few difficulties was superfluous, as most of us find it to be. When the difficulties came, he confronted them with patient stoicism. His passionate love of natural beauty was solace and nourishment to him during the fifteen years of his sojourn in that taking, happy region of silver lake and green mountain slope. He had many congenial neighbours. Of Wordsworth he saw little. The poet was, in external manner and habit, too much of the peasant for Greg's intellectual fastidiousness. He called on one occasion at Rydal Mount, and Wordsworth, who had been regravelling his little [240] garden-walks, would talk of nothing but gravel, its various qualities, and their respective virtues. The fine and subtle understanding of Hartley Coleridge, his lively fancy, his literature, his easy play of mind, made him a more sympathetic companion for a man of letters than his great neighbour. Of him Mr. Greg saw a good deal until his death in 1849.[6] Southey was still lingering at Greta Hall; but it was death in life. He cherished and fondled the books in his beloved library as if they had been children, and moved mechanically to and fro in that mournful 'dream from which the sufferer can neither wake nor be awakened.' Southey's example might, perhaps, have been a warning to the new-comer how difficult it is to preserve a clear, healthy, and serviceable faculty of thinking about public affairs, without close and constant contact with those who are taking the lead in them.[7] There was a lesson for the Cassandra of a later day in the picture of Southey when Mrs. Fletcher took tea with him in 1833.

> [6] Hartley Coleridge must, in Mr. Greg's case, have overcome one of his prepossessions. 'I don't like cotton manufacturers much, nor merchants over much. Cobden seems to be a good kind of fellow, but I wish he were not a cotton-spinner. I rather respect him. I'm always on the side of the poor.'
>
> [7] I do not forget the interesting passage in Mill's *Autobiography* (pp. 262, 263), where he contends that 'by means of the regular receipt of newspapers and periodicals, a political writer, who lives many hundreds of miles from the chief seat of the politics of his country, is kept *au courant* of even the most temporary politics, and is able to acquire a more correct view of the state and progress of opinion than he could acquire by personal contact with individuals.'

> I never saw any one [she said] whose mind was in so morbid a state as that of this [241] excellent poet and amiable man on the subject of the present political aspect of affairs in England. He is utterly desponding. He believes the downfall of the Church and the subversion of all law and government is at hand; for in spite of all our endeavours to steer clear of politics, he slid unconsciously into the subject, and proclaimed his belief that the ruin of all that was sacred and venerable was impending.[8]
>
> [8] *Autobiography*, p. 214.

The condition, say of Bury, in Lancashire, at that time, contrasted with its condition to-day, is the adequate answer to these dreary vaticinations.

One resident of the Lake District was as energetic and hopeful as Southey was despondent. This was Harriet Martineau, whom Mr. Greg first introduced to the captivating beauty of Westmoreland, and whom he induced in 1850 to settle there. Other friends—the Speddings, the Arnolds at Fox How, the Davys at Ambleside, the Fletchers at Lancrigg—formed a delightful circle, all within tolerably easy reach, and affording a haven of kind and nourishing companionship. But, for a thinker upon the practical aspects of political and social science, it was all too far from—

> Labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar.

For during these years Mr. Greg did not handle merely the abstract principles of politics and sociology. A very scanty livelihood would have come by that way. He discussed the men, [242] measures, and events of the day; and most of what strikes one as unsatisfactory in the discussion is probably due to a want of that close observation of facts which was hardly possible to a student on the shores of Windermere. On the other hand, it is still more certain that it was in these meditative scenes that the germs were ripened of those grave, ingenious, and affecting speculations which afterwards came to their full growth in the *Enigmas of Life*—to most of us by so much the most interesting of all its author's performances. His note-book shows that the thoughts that are suggested in this short but important volume were springing up in his mind for years, and that it touches the problems that were most constantly present to him in his best moments. It was during his residence at Windermere that he worked out and published (1851) his memorable book on the *Creed of Christendom*. It is enough here to remind ourselves how serious a place is held by that work in the dissolvent literature of the generation. The present writer was at Oxford in the last three years of the decade in which it appeared, and can well recall the share that it had, along with Mansel's *Bampton Lectures* and other books on both sides, in shaking the fabric of early beliefs in some of the most active minds then in the University. The landmarks have so shifted within the last twenty years that the *Creed of Christendom* is now comparatively orthodox. But in those days it was a remarkable proof of intellectual courage and [243] independence to venture on introducing to the English public the best results of German theological criticism, with fresh applications from an original mind. Since then the floods have broken loose. One may add that Mr. Greg's speculations show, as Hume and smaller men than Hume had shown before, how easily scepticism in theology allies itself with the fastidious and aristocratic sentiment in politics.

As was to be expected under the circumstances, much of Mr. Greg's time was given to merely fugitive articles on books or groups of passing events. Even the slightest of them, so far as they are known to me, show conscience and work. In 1852, for example, he wrote no less than twelve articles for the four leading quarterlies of that date. They were, with one exception, all on political or economical subjects. 'Highland Destitution,' and 'Irish Emigration,' 'Investments for the Working Classes,' 'The Modern Exodus;'—these were not themes to be dealt with by the facile journalist, standing on one foot. Mr. Greg always showed the highest conception of the functions and the obligations of the writer who addresses the public, in however ephemeral a form, on topics of social importance. No article of his ever showed a trace either of slipshod writing or of make-believe and perfunctory thinking. To compose between four and five hundred pages like these, on a variety of grave subjects, all needing to be carefully prepared and systematically [244] thought out, was no inconsiderable piece of work for a single pen. The strain was severe, for there was insufficient stimulus from outside, and insufficient refreshment within his own home. Long days of study were followed by solitary evening walks on the heights, or lonely sailing on the lake. In time, visits to London became more frequent, and he got closer to the world. Once a year he went to Paris, and he paid more than one visit to De Tocqueville at his home in Normandy. I remember that he told me once how surprised and disappointed he was by the indifference of public men, even the giants like Peel, to anything like general views and abstract principles of politics or society. They listened to such views with reasonable interest, but only as matters lying quite apart from their own business in the world. The statesman who pleased him best, and with whom he found most common ground, was Sir George Cornewall Lewis.

Like most men of letters who happen to be blessed or cursed with a prudential conscience, Mr. Greg was haunted by the uncertainty of his vocation. He dreaded, as he expressed it, 'to depend on so precarious a thing as a brain always in thinking order.' In every other profession there is much that can be done by deputy, or that does itself, or is little more than routine and the mechanical. In letters alone, if the brain be not in working order, all is lost. In 1856 Sir Cornewall Lewis, who was then Chancellor of the Exchequer, offered Greg a place on the Board of Customs, [245] and he accepted it. Yet, as he said, he did so 'with some loathing and great misgiving.' Five years earlier he would have entered upon it with eagerness, but in five years he was conscious of having made 'sad progress in that philosophy whose root is idleness, indulged freedom, and increasing years.' To James Spedding he wrote on the 24th of May 1856:—

> My position every one but myself seems to think most enviable. *I* contrast Lower Thames Street with The Craig, and my heart sinks into my shoes. The attendance is onerous; the actual work is not. It seems to be a place wherein a man may grow old comfortably. There is a good salary (nominally £1200), and a liberal retiring allowance when you are worked out. A board every day—except for two months' holiday, varied only by occasional tours of inspection—sounds horrible slavery to a man accustomed to wander at his own free will; and finally, at my time of my life, I have an indefinable dislike to anything involving a total change of life and habits. *En revanche*, I have a provision for old age and for my family, and shall be almost as glad to be spared the necessity of writing for bread—for butter at least—as sorry to be tied out from scribbling when and where the spirit moves me.
>
> My last quarter's labours are an article on America in the *National*, and on Montalembert in the *Edinburgh*, and one on Macaulay in the *North Briton*, of which I am not proud. Froude's History I have not yet seen. I hope now, as I write less, I shall have more time for reading. It seems to be somewhat paradoxical. By the way, is not Carlyle sadly gone off? I met him the other day, and he did nothing but blaspheme, and pour out a torrent of bad language against blackguards, fools, and devils that was appalling to listen to.

On the whole, when the time came, his new employment brought him moderate interests of its own. What may be called the literary part of the work, such as the drawing up of reports, naturally fell into his hands. The necessity of working with other people, which does not always come easily to men accustomed to the isolation and independence of their own libraries, he found an agreeable novelty. Still he was not sorry when, at the end of 1864, the chance came to him of a move to the Stationery Office. Here he was the head of a department, and not merely a member of a Board, and the regulation of his hours fell more into his own hands. [246]

From the time when he came to London, until his death five and twenty years later (November 1881), his life was for the most part without any incident in which the world can have an interest. He formed many acquaintances according to the cheerful and hospitable fashion of London, and he made a number of warm and attached friends. In 1873 his wife died. In the following year he married a daughter of Mr. James Wilson, well known as the fellow-worker of Cobden and Bright in the agitation against the Corn Laws, and as Finance Minister in India, where he sank under the cares of his office in 1860. Mr. Wilson had been Greg's intimate friend from the days of the League down to the time of his death. When by and by Mr. Greg retired from his post as Controller (1877), he wrote:— [247]

> For myself, since I gave up office, I feel comparatively and indeed positively in haven and peace, and with much and rather unusual brightness and sunshine round me, and with my interest in the world, both speculative and practical, quite undiminished, and finding old age on the whole cheerful and quiet, and the position of a *spectator* by no means an unenviable one.

This was his attitude to the end. A heavy shock fell upon him in the death of his brother-in-law, Walter Bagehot (1877), that brilliant original, well known to so many of us, who saw events and books and men with so curious an eye.

> He was quite a unique man [Mr. Greg wrote to Lady Derby], as irreplaceable in private life as he is universally felt to be in public. He had the soundest head I ever knew since Cornewall Lewis left us, curiously original, yet without the faintest taint of crotchetiness, or prejudice, or passion, which so generally mars originality. Then he was high-minded, and a gentleman to the backbone; the man of all I knew, both mentally and morally, best *worth talking things over with*; and I was besides deeply attached to him personally. We had been intimates and *collaborateurs* in many lines for twenty-five years; so that altogether there is a great piece gone out of my daily life, and a great stay also—the greatest, in fact. There is no man living who was, taken all in all, so much of me.

There is a pensive grace about one of his last letters to the widow of the favourite brother of earlier days:—

> I cannot let Christmas pass, dear Mary, without sending you a word of love and greeting from us both, to all of you of both generations. It cannot be a "merry" Christmas for any of us exactly; there is so much around that is anxious and sad, and indeed almost gloomy, and life is passing away to our juniors. But we have still much to make us thankful and even happy; and, as a whole, life to those whom it concerns, much more than to us, to most of them at least, is reasonably cheerful. At least they are young and vigorous, and have pluck to face the battle of years to come. We have little to do now but watch and sympathise, and give what little help we can. [248]

Greg's own departure was not much longer deferred. He died in November 1881.

He was not one of the fortunate beings who can draw on a spontaneous and inexhaustible fund of geniality and high spirits. He had a craving both for stimulation and for sympathy. Hence he belonged to those who are always happier in the society of women than of men. In his case this choice was not due, as it so often is, to a love of procuring deference cheaply. It was not deference that he sought, but a sympathy that he could make sure of, and that put him at his ease. Nobody that ever lived was less of a pedant, academic don, or loud Sir Oracle. He was easy to live with, a gay and appreciative companion, and the most amiable of friends, but nothing was further from his thoughts than to pose as guide and philosopher. His conversation was particularly neat and pointed. He had a lucidity of phrase such as is more common in French society than among ourselves. The vice of small talk and the sin of prosing he was equally free from; and if he did not happen to be interested, he had a great gift of silence. [249]

The grace of humility is one of the supreme moral attractions in a man. Its outward signs are not always directly discernible; and it may exist underneath marked intrepidity, confidence in one's own judgment, and even a strenuous push for the honours of the world. But without humility, no veracity. There is a genuine touch of it in a letter which Greg wrote to a friend who had consented to be the guardian of his children:—

> I have no directions as to their education to give. I have too strong a sense of the value of religion myself, not to wish that my children should have so much of it (I speak of feeling, not of creed) as is compatible with reason. I have no ambition for them, and can only further say in the dying words of Julie, 'N'en faites point des savans—faites-en des

hommes bienfaisans et justes.' If they are this, they will be more than their father ever was, and all he ever desired to be.

This sentiment of the unprofitable servant was deep in his nature—as it may well be in all who are not either blinded by inborn fatuity, or condemned by natural poverty of mind to low and gross ideals.

Though he took great delight in the enchanted land of pure literature, apart from all utility, yet he was of those, the fibres of whose nature makes it impossible for them to find real intellectual interest outside of what is of actual and present concern to their fellows. Composition, again, had [250] to him none of the pain and travail that it brings to most writers. The expression came with the thought. His ideas were never vague, and needed no laborious translation. Along with them came apt words and the finished sentence. Yet his fluency never ran off into the fatal channels of verbosity. Ease, clearness, precision, and a certain smooth and sure-paced consecutiveness, made his written style for all purposes of statement and exposition one of the most telling and effective of his day. This gift of expression helped him always to appear intellectually at his best. It really came from a complete grasp of his own side of the case, and that always produces the best style next after a complete grasp of both sides. Few men go into the troubled region of pamphleteering, article-writing, public controversy, and incessant dialectics, without suffering a deterioration of character in consequence. Mr. Greg must be set down as one of these few. He never fell into the habitual disputant's vice of trying to elude the force of a fair argument; he did not mix up his own personality in the defence of his thesis; differences in argument and opinion produced not only no rancour, but even no soreness.

The epicurean element was undoubtedly strong in him. He liked pleasant gardens; set a high value on leisure and even vacuity; did not disdain novels; and had the sense to prefer good wine to bad. When he travelled in later life he showed none of the over-praised desire to acquire [251] information for information's sake. While his companions were 'getting up' the Pyramids, or antiquities in the Troad, or the great tomb of Alyattis, Mr. Greg refused to take any trouble to form views, or to pretend to find a sure footing among the shifting sands of archæological or pre-historic research. He chose to lie quietly among the ruins, and let the beauty and wonder of the ancient world float silently about him. For this poetic indolence he had a great faculty. To a younger friend whom he suspected of unwholesome excess of strenuousness, he once propounded this test of mental health: 'Could you sit for a whole day on the banks of a stream, doing nothing and thinking of nothing, only throwing stones into the water?'

The ascetic view of things was wholly distasteful to him. He had a simple way of taking what was bright and enjoyable in life, refusing to allow anything but very distinct duty to interfere with the prompt acceptance of the gifts of the gods. Yet, as very seldom happens in natures thus composed, he was before all things unselfish. That is to say, he struck those who knew him best as less of a centre to himself than most other people are. Though thoroughly capable of strong and persistent wishes, and as far as possible from having a character of faint outlines and pale colours, it came to him quite naturally and without an effort to think of those for whom he cared, and of himself not at all. There was something of the child of nature in him. Though nobody liked [252] the fruits of cultivated life better—order, neatness, and grace in all daily things—yet nobody was more ready to make short work of conventionalities that might thrust shadows between him or others and the substance of happiness.

It would be difficult for me here to examine Mr. Greg's writings with perfect freedom and appropriateness. The man rather than the author has prompted this short sketch. His books tell their own story. There is not one of them that does not abound in suggestion both in politics and in subjects where there is more room for free meditation and the subtler qualities of mind than politics can ever afford. Mr. Greg is not one of the thinkers whom we can place in any school, still less in any party. It may be safely said of him that he never took up an idea or an opinion, as most writers even of high repute are not afraid of doing, simply because it was proffered to him, or because it was held by others with whom in a general way he was disposed to agree. He did not even shrink from what looked like self-contradiction, so honest was his feeling for truth, and so little faith had he in the infallibility of sect and the trustworthiness of system. In the *Enigmas of Life* (1875) there is much that is hard to reconcile with his own fundamental theology, and he was quite aware of it. He was content with the thought that he had found fragments of true ore. Hence the extraordinary difficulty of classifying him. One would be inclined to place him as a Theist, yet can we give any other name but Agnostic to a man who speaks in such terms as these? [253] —

> I cannot for a moment *not* believe in a Supreme Being, and I cannot for a moment doubt that His arrangement must be right and wise and benevolent. But I cannot also for a moment feel confident in any doctrines or opinions I could form on this great question.[9]

The same impossibility of classification meets us in his politics. He was certainly, in a philosophic sense, a Conservative; he was anti-popular and anti-democratic. Yet he was an ardent champion of the popular and democratic principle of Nationalities; he was all for the Greeks and Bulgarians against the Turks, and all for the Hungarians and Italians against the Austrians.[10] Nor had he any sympathy with the old ordering of society as such. He had no zeal, as far as one can see, for an hereditary peerage and an established church. He threw himself into the memorable battle of

the Reform Bill of 1832 with characteristic spirit and energy. His ideal, like that of most literary thinkers on politics, was an aristocracy, not of caste, but of education, virtue, and public spirit. It was the old dream of lofty minds from Plato down to Turgot. Every page of Greg's political writing is coloured by this attractive vision. Though as anxious as any politician of his time for [254] practical improvements, and as liberal in his conception of their scope and possibility, he insisted that they could only be brought about by an aristocracy of intellect and virtue.[11] But then the great controversy turns on the best means of securing sense and probity in a government. The democrat holds that under representative institutions the best security for the interests of the mass of the community is, that the mass shall have a voice in their own affairs, and that in proportion as that security is narrowed and weakened, the interests of the mass will be subordinate to those of the class that has a decisive voice. Mr. Greg had no faith in the good issues of this rough and spontaneous play of social forces. The extension of the suffrage in 1867 seemed to him to be the ruin of representative institutions; and when that was capped by the Ballot in 1872, the cup of his dismay was full. Perhaps, he went on to say, some degree of safety might be found by introducing the Ballot inside the House of Commons. De Tocqueville wrote Mr. Greg a long and interesting letter in 1853, which is well worth reading to-day in connection with *scrutin de liste* and the Ballot.[12] De Tocqueville was for both. He was, as has been said, 'an aristocrat who accepted his defeat,' and he tried to make the best of democracy. Greg fought against the enemy to the last, and clung to every device for keeping out the deluge. He could not [255] get on to common ground with those who believe that education is no sort of guarantee for political competency; that no class, however wise and good, can be safely trusted with the interests of other classes; and finally, that great social and economic currents cannot be checked or even guided by select political oligarchies, on whatever base any such oligarchy may rest.

[9] To the Rev. E. White

[10] 'When the Hungarian exiles were in England,' writes Professor F. W. Newman, 'he was not too rich, nor had I any close relations with him, but he voluntarily gave me ten pounds for any service to them which I judged best.'

[11] 'When the Hungarian exiles were in England,' writes Professor See his two volumes of reprinted articles, *Essays on Political and Social Science* (1853).

[12] 'When the Hungarian exiles were in England,' writes Professor *Correspondence*, vol. ii. pp. 212-220.

Lord Grey's prescription for correcting the practical faults revealed by experience in our present system of representation, consisted of the following ingredients:—the cumulative vote; not fewer than three seats to each constituency; universities and some other constituencies, necessarily consisting of educated men, to have increased representation; a limited number of life members to be introduced into the House of Commons, the vacancies to be filled, when not less than three had occurred, by cumulative vote within the House itself. On all this Mr. Greg wrote to Lord Grey (May 28, 1874): 'I quite agree with you that this impending danger we both foresee might be averted, if our country would listen either to you or to me.'

Tenderness for these truly idle devices for keeping power in the hands of a restricted class was all the less to be expected in Mr. Greg, as he had made a serious study of French politics prior to 1848. Now the Monarchy of July maintained a narrow and exclusive franchise, and its greatest minister was the very type of the class from whom Mr. Greg would have sought the directors of [256] national affairs. If ever there was a statesman who approached the fulfilment of Mr. Greg's conditions, it was Guizot. Guizot had undergone years of patient historic study; nobody of his time had reflected more carefully on the causes and forces of great movements; he had more of what is called the calm philosophic mind, than any one then eminent in literature; he overflowed with what Mr. Greg describes as the highest kind of wisdom; his moral pretensions were austere, lofty, and unbending to a fault. No man of any time would seem to have been better entitled to a place among the Wise and the Good whom nations ought to seek out to rule over them. Yet this great man was one of the very worst statesmen that ever governed France. The severe morality of the student was cast behind him by the minister. He did not even shrink from defending, from considerations of political convenience, the malversations of a colleague. The pattern of wisdom and goodness devised and executed a cynical and vile intrigue, from which Sir Robert Walpole would have shrunk with masculine disgust, and that would have raised scruples in Dubois or Calonne. Finally, this famous professor of political science possessed so little skill in political practice, that a few years of his policy wrecked a constitution and brought a dynasty to the ground.

All these political regrets and doubts, however, cannot lessen or affect our interest in those ingenious, subtle, and delicate speculations which Mr. Greg called *Enigmas of Life*. Though his [257] *Creed of Christendom* may have made a more definite and recognisable mark, the later book rapidly fell in with the needs of many minds, stirred much controversy of a useful and harmonious kind, and attracted serious curiosity to a wider variety of problems. It is at this moment in its fifteenth edition. The chapters on Malthus and on the Non-Survival of the Fittest make a very genuine and original contribution to modern thought. But it is the later essays in the little volume that touched most readers, and will for long continue to touch them. They are as far as possible from being vague, or misty, or aimless. Yet they have, what is so curiously rare in English literature, the charm of reverie. As the author said, they 'contain rather suggested thoughts that may fructify in other minds than distinct propositions which it is sought argumentatively to prove.' They have the ever seductive note of meditation and inwardness,

which, when it sounds true, as it assuredly did here, moves the spirit like a divine music. There is none of the thunder of Carlyle (which, for that matter, one may easily come in time to find prodigiously useless and unedifying); there is not the piercing concentrated ray of Emerson: but the complaints, the misgivings, the aspirations of our generation find in certain pages of Mr. Greg's book a voice of mingled fervour and *recueillement*, a union of contemplative reason with spiritual sensibility, which makes them one of the best expressions of one of the highest moods of [258] this bewildered time. They are in the true key for religious or spiritual composition, as Rousseau's Savoyard Vicar is; thought and emotion are fused without the decorations of misplaced rhetoric. That meditations so stamped with sincerity, and so honestly directed to the actual perplexities of thoughtful people, should have met with wide and grateful acceptance, is no more than might have been expected. Least of all can their fine qualities be underrated even by those who, like the present writer, believe that, ponder these great enigmas as we may, we shall never get beyond Goethe's majestic psalm:—

Edel sey der Mensch,
Hülfreich und gut!
Denn das allein
Unterscheidet ihn
Von allen Wesen
Die wir kennen....

Denn unfühlend
Ist die Natur:
Es leuchtet die Sonne
Ueber Bös' und Gute,
Und dem Verbrecher
Glänzen, wie dem Besten,
Der Mond und die Sterne....

Nach ewigen, ehrnen
Grossen Gesetzen
Müssen wir alle
Unseres Daseyns
Kreise vollenden.

Nur allein der Mensch
Vermag das Unmögliche;
Er unterscheidet
Wählet und richtet
Er kann dem Augenblick
Dauer verleihen.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.”

- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.

- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.

- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may

demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you 'AS-IS', WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™'s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations ($1 to $5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses.

Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.