of the red, and reduced Gibraltar. He was in the battle of Malaga, which followed soon afterwards, and for his gallantry in that action received the honour of knighthood. In 1718 he was made admiral and commander-in-chief of the fleet, and was sent with a squadron into the Mediterranean for the protection of Italy. This commission he executed so well that the king made him a handsome present, and sent him full powers to negotiate with the princes and states of Italy, as there should be occasion. He procured the emperor's troops free access into the fortresses which still held out in Sicily, sailed afterwards to Malta, and brought out the Sicilian galleys, and a ship belonging to the Turkey Company. By his advice and assistance the Germans retook the city of Messina in 1719, and destroyed the ships which lay in the basin—an achievement which completed the ruin of the naval power of Spain. The Spaniards being much distressed offered to quit Sicily; but the admiral declared that the troops should never be suffered to depart from the island till the king of Spain had acceded to the quadruple alliance, and to his conduct it was entirely owing that Sicily was subdued, and the king forced to accept the terms prescribed him by the alliance. On his return to England he was made rear-admiral of Great Britain, a member of the privy council, Baron Byng of Southill, in the county of Bedford, and Viscount Torrington in Devonshire. He was also made one of the Knights Companions of the Bath upon the revival of that order in 1725. In 1727 George II., on his accession to the crown, placed him at the head of naval affairs as first lord of the Admiralty. He died January 15, 1733, in the seventieth year of his age, and was buried at Southill, in Bedfordshire.

BYNG, THE HON. JOHN (1704–1757), British admiral, fourth son of the subject of the preceding notice, entered the navy at an early age, became captain in 1727, and in 1745 was made rear-admiral of the red. In the year 1755 the British Government received intimation that the French were fitting out a naval expedition in Toulon, and it behoved them to attend to the defences of Gibraltar and Minorca. Nothing, however, was done until the intentions of the French were too apparent, and Byng was then entrusted with ten miserably equipped ships of war, and set sail from Spithead on the 7th April 1756. He put in at Gibraltar to receive stores, and there learnt that the French had made good their descent upon Minorca. On the 19th May he came in sight of St Philip's, still held by the British, but failed to establish communications with the governor. On the following day he engaged with the French fleet, which was inferior in number of vessels, but vastly superior in armament and equipment. There seems no doubt that the division under Byng's charge did not second with sufficient eagerness the bold attack made by Admiral West. The action was indecisive, and next morning Byng called a military council, and it was resolved that, under the circumstances, it was hopeless to attempt anything further, and that Minorca must be left to its fate. The fleet returned to Gibraltar. The indignation of the English at the transaction was intense, and the Government took advantage of it to avert from themselves the charge of incapacity. Byng was at once superseded and brought home under arrest. A court-martial on his conduct sat during December 1756 and January 1757, and found that the admiral had not done his utmost to relieve St Philip's, or to defeat the French fleet, though they fully acquitted him of cowardice or treachery. The only punishment open to them to inflict was that of death, and they passed their sentence with the utmost reluctance, coupling it with an earnest recommendation to mercy. No attention was paid to this or to other attempts to mitigate what was felt to be an unduly severe punishment for mere incapacity. The unfortunate admiral was shot on the 14th March 1757.

BYNKERSHOEK, CORNELIUS VAN (1673–1743), a distinguished Dutch jurist, was born at Middleburg in Zealand. In the prosecution of his legal studies, and while holding the offices first of member and afterwards of president of the supreme court, he found the common law of his country so defective as to be nearly useless for practical purposes. This abuse he resolved to reform, and took as the basis of a new system the principles of the ancient Roman law. His works are very voluminous. The most important of them are the *Observationes Juris Romani*, published in 1710, of which a continuation in four books appeared in 1733; the treatise, *De Dominio Maris*, published in 1721; and the *Quæstiones Juris Publici*, published in 1737. Complete editions of his works were published after his death; one in folio at Geneva in 1761, and another in two volumes folio at Leyden in 1766.

BYROM, JOHN (1691–1763), a poet and miscellaneous writer, was born at Kersall, near Manchester, and educated at Trinity College, Cambridge. His first poetical essay, the well-known *Colin and Phœbe*, appeared in the *Spectator*, No. 603. After leaving the university he studied medicine at Montpellier, and became a convert to the mystical theology of Bourignon and Boehme. He was elected a member of the Royal Society in 1723. Having reduced himself to narrow circumstances by a precipitate marriage, he supported himself by teaching a new method of short-hand writing, of his own invention, till he succeeded to an estate on the death of an elder brother. He was a man of lively wit, of which, as opportunity offered, he gave many specimens. A collection of his miscellaneous poems was printed at Manchester, in two vols. 8vo, 1773, and reprinted at Leeds in 1814, with a life of Byrom by an anonymous writer. Byrom's *Private Journal and Correspondence* have appeared among the publications of the Chetham Society (vols. xxxiv. and xliv.)

BYRON, GEORGE NOEL GORDON BYRON, LORD (1788–1824). The portrait of the most remarkable figure in the literature of this century is still too often made up on the principle of putting in all the shadows and leaving out all the lights. Not only the facts of his own life, but even the records and traditions of his ancestry, are partially selected in this way. It is true, no doubt, that a man's immediate ancestors must be supposed to have most influence on his character, and that Byron's immediate ancestors were far from being quiet, respectable people. His father, Captain Byron, was a profligate officer, whose first wife was a divorced lady with whom he had eloped to France, who married a second time only to find the means for paying his debts, and who left his wife as soon as her fortune was exhausted. His mother, Catherine Gordon, heiress of Gight in Aberdeenshire, was a fitful and passionate woman, who knew no stable halting-place between the extremes of indulgent fondness and vindictive disfavour. His grand-uncle, whom he succeeded in the title, had killed his neighbour and relative, Mr Chaworth, in a drunken brawl, had been tried before the House of Lords on the charge of murder and acquitted, but had been so wrought upon by remorse and the sense of public opprobrium, that he shut himself up at Newstead, let the place go to ruin, and acquired such a bad repute by his solitary excesses that he was known as the "wicked Lord Byron." Even in this wild ancestry it is easy to detect the corruption of good things. In other parts of the family line the nobler elements are seen running clear and pure. The poet's grandfather, Admiral Byron, "Foul-weather Jack," who had as little rest on sea as the poet on land, had the virtues without the vices of the race. Farther down the family tree we find the Byrons distinguishing themselves in the field. Seven brothers fought in the

battle of Edgehill. None of the family would seem to have been stirred by the poetic impulse in the brightest period of English song, but later on, under Charles II., there was a Lord Byron who patronized literature, and himself wrote some verses in which he professed—

> "My whole ambition only doth extend
> To gain the name of Stedman's faithful friend."

Sir Egerton Brydges, however, has found a poetic ancestry for Byron by connecting the Byrons of the 17th century with the family of Sydney.

The poverty into which Byron was born, and from which his accession to high rank did not free him, had much to do in determining his future career. That he would have written verses in whatever circumstances he had been born we may safely believe; but if he had been born in affluence we may be certain that, with his impressionable disposition, he would never have been the poet of the Revolution—the most powerful exponent of the modern spirit. By the time of his birth (at Holles Street, London, January 22, 1788), his father had "squandered the lands o' Gight awa," and his mother was on her way back from the Continent with a small remnant of her wrecked fortune. Mrs Byron took up her residence in Aberdeen; and her "lame brat," as she called him in her fits, was sent for a year to a private school at 5s. a quarter, and afterwards to the grammar school of the town. Many little stories are told of the boy's affectionate gratitude and venturesome chivalry, as well as of his exacting and passionate temper. The sisters Gray, who were his successive nurses, found him tractable enough under kind treatment. His mother, whose notions of discipline consisted in hurling things at him when he was disobedient, had no authority over him; he met her violence sometimes with sullen resistance, sometimes with defiant mockery; and once, he tells us, they had to wrench from him a knife which he was raising to his breast. At school he passed from the first to the fourth class, but with all his ambition to excel he was too self-willed to take kindly to prescribed tasks, too emotional for dry intellectual work; and he probably learned more from Mary Gray, who taught him the Psalms and the Bible, than he did from his schoolmaster. Before he left Aberdeen, which he did on the death of his grand-uncle and his accession to the peerage in May 1798, he gave a remarkable proof of the precocious intensity of his affections by falling in love with his cousin Mary Duff. So strong a hold did this passion take of him, that six years afterwards he nearly went into convulsions on hearing of her marriage.

When Byron's name was first called in school with the prefix "Dominus," the tradition is that he burst into tears,—from pride, M. Taine conjectures,—from pain at the gulf thus placed between him and his school-fellows, the Countess Guiccioli. Soon after, his mother, who had frequently taken advice for the cure of his lame foot, went with him to Nottingham, and placed him under the cure of an empiric, who tortured him to no purpose. The torture was renewed under the advice of a London physician at Dr Glennie's school at Dulwich, at which he was entered in the summer of 1799; and at last the foot, as he wrote to his old Scotch nurse, was so far restored that he was able to put on a common boot. He was two years with Dr Glennie, and though he made little progress in his classical studies, he had the run of his master's library, and added greatly to his general information. Before he left for Harrow he had contracted another passion for his cousin Margaret Parker, so intense that he could not sleep nor eat when he was looking forward to meeting her. He went to Harrow in 1801, "a wild northern colt," as the head-master said of him, very much behind his age in Latin and Greek. This deficiency he never quite overcame, though he worked enough to get into the same form with boys of his own age. Antiquarian studies never had any charm for him. But though, according to his own account, he was always cricketing, rebelling, and getting into mischief, his brain was not idle. Partly to keep up his school repute for "general information," he read every history he could lay hands on, and not without system either, for he set himself deliberately to know something about every country. He also went through all the British classics, both in Johnson and in Anderson, and most of the living poets. Few boys left Harrow with such a store of useful learning. Many anecdotes are told of the warmth of his friendships at Harrow, and his chivalry in defending his juniors. In the vacation of 1803 he again fell in love—this time more seriously—with Miss Chaworth, whose grandfather "the wicked Lord Byron" had killed. In the melancholy moods of his after life her rejection of him was often a subject of passionate regret.

Byron's residence at Cambridge (Trinity College, 1805 to 1808, with interval of a year) added little to his knowledge of academical learning. The arts in which he qualified himself to graduate were swimming, riding, fencing, boxing, drinking, gaming, and the other occupations of idle undergraduates. When he went up to Cambridge he was wretched, he tells us, partly from leaving Harrow, partly "from some private domestic circumstances of different kinds," chiefly, it may be presumed, the want of money; but his friend Scrope Davies lent him large sums, and he lived with a certain reckless happiness which had a great deal more to do with his moodiness and melancholy than the libertine excesses with which he is popularly credited. Much more important than his residence in Cambridge, as bearing on his mental development, was his year's residence at Southwell. From that happy period, which saw the serious dawn of his genius, M. Taine has picked out only the unhappy violent quarrel with his mother, which was the cause of its termination. His intimacy with the Pigotts, and the expansion of his poetic impulses under their genial encouragement, are much more worthy of notice than this culmination of miserable bickerings which he was now strong enough to laugh at, when the domestic storm was over. He had scribbled many verses at Harrow, but had been too shy to show them to his roystering friends; and now finding for the first time an admiring audience, he put forth his powers in earnest, as he could do only under the influence of love or defiance. The result came before the public in the *Hours of Idleness*, published by Ridge of Newark in March 1807.[1] The poems in that collection have something of the insipidity of the circumstances that gave them birth, but the fact of publication bound him to his vocation to a degree of which he was not at all aware. Hitherto his ambition had pointed towards politics as his natural field, and he said as much in the somewhat disdainful preface to his poems. Putting his ambition into verse, he characteristically compared himself to a slumbering volcano, and longed to burst on the world as a Fox or a Chatham. But the *Hours of Idleness* decided his career for him. When he went back to Trinity College he could not help eagerly watching their effect. Again and again he wrote to the friendly Miss Pigott to hear how they were succeeding. He was prepared for defeat, he said, and he promised to take vengeance on adverse critics. He was made a new man by the publication; he had tasted public applause and hungered for more of it. It was then that he carefully examined himself, and took stock of his acquirements in the very remarkable document dated

[1] He had previously printed a volume for private circulation, and it is characteristic of his docility, under gentle influences, that he burnt the first impression when Mr Becher rebuked him for the too warm colouring of one of the poems.

November 30, 1807, to which we are indebted for our knowledge of the extent of his studies. In the midst of his rollicking set at Cambridge he was secretly girding up his loins, and collecting his powers to make a grand struggle for fame. Perhaps no poet was ever drawn out so directly by the thirst for public honour; no poet ever appealed so directly to the public eye and heart. He launched himself bodily before the world, almost ravenous for sympathy and homage.

It is generally said that but for the savage attack of the *Edinburgh Review* in the spring of 1808 Byron might never have returned to poetry. But the fact is that the review did not appear till a year after the publication of *Hours of Idleness*, and in the interval Byron, for all his farewell to poetry, was "scribbling," as he called it, more furiously than ever. "I have written," he wrote to Miss Pigott, six months before the Edinburgh attack, "214 pages of a novel; one poem of 380 lines, to be published (without my name) in a few weeks with notes; 560 lines of *Bosworth Field*, and 250 lines of another poem in rhyme, besides half a dozen smaller pieces. The poem to be published is a satire." This satire was the poem which he afterwards converted into a reply to the *Edinburgh Review*. He anticipated censure, and fore-armed himself—always as eager to defy reproof as he was to win applause. Apparently he put off publishing his satire till all his critics should have had their say, and he should know clearly where to hit. When the attack came it wounded him bitterly; but a friend who called on him at the time thought from the fierce light in his eye that he had received a challenge. He was in no hurry to publish; he worked at leisure, with a confident consciousness of his powers, and *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* did not make its appearance till the spring of 1809. When it did appear the authorship was soon discovered, and it was the talk of the town. To us who look back upon it dispassionately, and compare its somewhat heavy and mechanical couplets with the exquisite lightness and fitting-point of its antitype the *Dunciad*, the satire appears to possess no great force; but the personalities told at the time, when there was a vague unrest in the literary world at the outspoken severity and sometimes truculent malice of the Scotch review, and the injured poet had his revenge in a general acknowledgment that the objects of his wrath deserved castigation, and that the lash was well laid on.

Soon after the publication of his satire, Byron, in June 1809, left for his travels on the Continent; and one would have expected that the young lord, with the wreath of triumph still fresh on his head after his first literary battle, would have gone on his journey with satisfaction and hopeful curiosity. He sailed in deep dejection, with all the bitterness of a man who feels himself friendless and solitary, and he returned after two years' wandering in Spain, Albania, Greece, Turkey, and Asia Minor, sadder than before. Why was this? Those who identify him with his own Childe Harold, are ready with the answer that he had lived a life of dissolute pleasure, and was already, at the age of twenty-one, experiencing the pains of satiety and exhaustion. But this is not borne out by such scanty light as he and his friends have thrown on his life at this period. He himself always protested, both in public and private, against being identified with Childe Harold. Childe Harold's manor was an old monastic residence; he left his country in bitter sadness; in the original MS. his name was Childe Burun; he left behind him a mother and a sister; and he passed through the scenes of Byron's travels. But there the resemblance ends. The resemblance is really confined, as the author alleged, to local details. There is no reason to disbelieve what the author affirmed, that Childe Harold was a purely fictitious character, "introduced for the sake of giving some connection to the piece." To make him what he intended—"a modern Timon, perhaps a poetical Zeluco,"—the poet drew, no doubt, upon his own gloomier moods; he felt occasionally as he makes Harold feel habitually, but the process was much more dramatic than the world, in spite of his protests, took for granted. Byron, with all his bitter moods of forlorn despondency, was too susceptible a spirit to "stalk in joyless reverie" through the south of Europe, as his letters home testify. And we know that his picture of the Bacchanalian feasts in the monastery, with "Paphian girls," and "flatterers and parasites," is not at all like what actually occurred at Newstead Abbey. There were no "laughing dames" there, except the domestics, and the flatterers and parasites were his bosom friends whom he loved with a romantic ardour. They held "high jinks" there as any young men might have done, masqueraded about in monkish habits to be in whimsical conformity with the place, practised pistol-shooting in the old hall, had a wolf and a bear chained at the entrance, had the garden dug up in search of concealed treasure, found a skull there, had it made into a cup, and passed this cup round after dinner, with the conceit that their mouths did it less harm than the worms, and that when its wit had ceased to sparkle, it had better be filled with Burgundy to make other wits sparkle than lie rotting in the earth. Byron himself was too poor, as Moore has remarked, to keep a harem, had such been his wish. He is known to have had a romantic passion for a girl who used to travel with him in England in boy's clothes; but whoever thinks he was satiated with this poor creature's devotion to him, should read the concluding stanzas of the second canto of *Childe Harold*, where the poet speaks in his own person, and laments her death in language utterly out of keeping with the dark unfeeling mood of his "modern Timon." One can then understand why he should have said that "he would not for worlds be a man like his hero." There is really very little of the personage Childe Harold in the poem; the poet simply has him by his side as a connecting link, while he describes the scenes through which he passed. In the two last cantos, indeed, Byron, angry that the public had identified him with Childe Harold, and then more defiant of public opinion, hardly cared to keep up the separation between his own character and the pilgrim's; and in the last canto he avowedly makes them coalesce.

To look for the causes of moodiness and melancholy in material circumstances is a very foolish quest; but we may be certain that insufficiency of this world's money, and the daily vexations and insults to which his rank was thereby exposed, had much more to do with Byron's youthful gloom than satiety of this world's pleasures. His embarrassed finances, and the impossibility of securing the respect due to his title, formed a constant source of annoyance, put his whole system into a morbid condition, in which every little slight and repulse festered and rankled with exaggerated virulence. From the daily humiliations and impertinences to which his false position exposed him, aggravated by his jealous and suspicious irritability, he may have turned sometimes to Childe Harold's consolations—"the harlot and the bowl," but his nature prompted him rather to forget his vexations in purer and worthier objects. Unfortunately for him, such impetuous and passionate affections as his could rarely find the response for which he craved. In those few cases where devotion was repaid with devotion, the warmth of his gratitude was unbounded; he loaded poor Thyrza's memory with caresses, careless of what the world might say, remembering only that the poor girl clung to him with unselfish love; and he returned his sister's tender regard with an ardour and constancy that showed how highly he prized and how eagerly he reciprocated

sincere affection. Circumstances that would have fallen lightly on a less sensitive man preyed upon his self-torturing spirit. In his dejection he had taken pleasure in the romantic notion of collecting the portraits of his friends, and one of them refused to sit on the ground that he could not afford it. Another friend, invited to say good-bye, excused himself on the ground that he had to go shopping with his mother. Another prop on which he leaned also precipitated him into the Slough of Despond. His ambition pointed to political distinction, and having given fair youthful proof of the power he felt to be in him, his pride taught him to look for a warm welcome from his party chiefs when he came of age, but on the contrary, there was a haggle over his admission. Lord Carlisle held coldly aloof, and he had to wait with savage indignation till the marriage certificate of his grandfather was fished up in Cornwall before he could take his seat. This cold but perfectly correct and formal indifference added another pang to the bitterness with which he took leave of his country. When after two years' absence he returned, still dogged by impecuniosity and the incivilities, real and imagined, that follow in its train, he "found fresh cause to roam." Nursed as he had been in superstitions, he could hardly keep from crying out that the stars had combined against him, when in the months following his return friend after friend went to the grave. Matthews was drowned in the Cam; Wingfield died of fever at Coimbra; and he heard of both deaths on the same day. His mother died in the same month, and in spite of all their quarrels, he felt the bereavement bitterly.

But the death which most deeply wounded him came later. Nothing ever racked him with sharper anguish than the death of her whom he mourned under the name of Thyrza. To know the bitterness of his struggle with this sorrow, we have only to look at what he wrote on the day that the news reached him (October 11, 1811); some of his wildest and most fiercely misanthropical verse, as well as some of his sweetest and saddest, belongs to that blackest of dates in his calendar. It is time that something were done to trace this attachment, which has been strangely overlooked by the essayists and biographers, because it furnishes an important clue to Byron's character, and is, indeed, of hardly less importance than his later attachment to the Countess Guiccioli. Mr John Morley, in an essay which ought to be read by everybody who wishes to form a clear idea of Byron's poetry as a revolutionary force in itself and an index to the movement of the time, remarks upon the respect which Byron, with all his raillery of the married state in modern society, still shows for the domestic idea. It is against the artificial union, the marriage of convenience, that Byron's raillery is directed; he always upholds singleness of attachment as an ideal, however cynically or mournfully he laments its infrequence, and points with laughter or with tears at the way in which it is crossed and cut short by circumstances when it does exist. Byron is not a railer against matrimony, except as a counterfeit of the natural union of hearts. His attachment to Thyrza shows that in this, as in other matters, he was transparently sincere. It is commonly taken for granted that his youth before, and, indeed, after his marriage with Miss Milbanke, was a featureless level of promiscuous debauchery; but those who look more narrowly into the facts cannot fail to see that, whatever may have been the number of his "light of loves,"—his fugitive passions were innumerable,—and however often he may have lapsed into vulgar rakery in bitter despair or reckless wantonness, he was always pining for some constant love, and cursing the fate that had denied it to him. This purer sentiment was always enshrined in his heart of heart, from his boyhood to the end of his days. Who Thyrza was can probably never be known, but in trying to convey the impression that she was merely imaginary, probably with the intention of shielding his friend's memory, by declaring him innocent of a relationship unsanctioned by society, Moore really did Byron an injustice. The poor girl, whoever she was, and however much she was deified after her death by his imagination, would really seem to have been his grand passion. Her "dear sacred name" his hand, he says years afterwards, would have trembled to write; he wished it to "rest ever unrevealed;" and when he was questioned by the Countess Guiccioli, he was deeply agitated, and begged her not to recur to the subject. We find him in his *Journal*, with her in his memory, writing with contempt of the amours of some of his acquaintances, and scoffing at the idea of their applying the name of love to favours that could be purchased. She is the presiding genius of his series of *Eastern Tales*; he has recorded the fact that when he drew the portrait of Zuleika his whole soul was full of her memory, and her image was again before him when he described the relationship between Zara and the disguised Gulnare. Conrad, with all his conscious villany, had one redeeming passion—"love unchangeable, unchanged." The Giaour, too, loved but one; he learnt that lesson, he said, from the birds; he despised "the fool still prone to range," and "envied not his varied joys." All these portraitures of single-hearted devotion are tributes to the memory of Thyrza, the "more than friend," commemorated in the second canto of *Childe Harold*. Medora's song in the *Corsair*, "Deep in my soul that tender secret dwells," though not flawless as a lyric, is one of his most beautiful expressions of this mournful sentiment in a subdued key. When we realize how bitterly he lamented her death, and how he could not even bear to write her name, there seems some reason for believing that the mysterious object of Manfred's love and remorse is another of the forms that she took in his imagination. Whoever cares to look into the matter will find many little corroborative particulars. It is quite in keeping with the morbid self-accusing tendency, the exaggerated moral sensibility, which Byron showed all his life through, that he should have been consumed with remorse at a recollection which colder-hearted men of the world bear about with them every day without a pang.

For some months after his return to England, Byron lived at Newstead very unhappily. He wrote that he was growing nervous, "really, wretchedly, ridiculously, fine-ladically nervous." He could not arrange his thoughts; he feared his brain was giving way, and it would end in madness. He felt at times a strange tendency to mirth. Sometimes he thought of seeking relief in a warfare against society, and he besought one of his friends, when he heard of his deepening crimes, to remember the cause. The inconsistency between this hunger for sympathy and the reckless ferocity of the resolution, shows how distempered his mind was by care and sorrow, "like sweet bells jangled, harsh, and out of tune." At other times he thought more soberly of parliament as a diversion. All his life through, however, "most of his convulsions ended in verse." He found occupation in correcting the proof-sheets of *Childe Harold*. He went up to London, not to plunge into a lawless and pitiless course of crime, but to enter upon a political career. He spoke two or three times in the House of Lords on the House-Breaker's Bill, and a petition for Roman Catholic Emancipation, but the publication of *Childe Harold* put an end at once to his parliamentary ambitions. "When *Childe Harold* was published," he says, "nobody thought of my prose afterwards, nor indeed did I."

It has often been asked what was the cause of the instantaneous and wide-spread popularity of *Childe Harold*,