

For instance, the following notes for his family prayers were written by him when about to leave Northrepps in February, 1836, to engage in the duties of the session:—

“In removing, we pray that that merciful Providence, which has stood round about us, may continue; sheltered, refreshed, counselled, strengthened by thee. Ward off danger, baffle our enemy, rob sin of its temptations; make us wholly, in inward thoughts and outward deeds, thine own.

“Be thou the mover of every work in which we engage.

“The counsellor to teach us what to say and do.

“The source of strength, confidence, and comfort.

“May we labour not with eye-service, but in singleness of heart.

“Bless those rising from bondage, and all efforts on their behalf; the heathen, suffering from the evils and oppression of men calling themselves Christians; and may a choice blessing rest on the efforts made for their physical advantage and religious advancement.

“Bless the spread of education, and of thy truth.

“Bless me in dealing with the Church; no self-will, no meaner motive than a desire to advance its interests.”

Nor did he omit to use every means of rendering himself fully acquainted with the case. Writing to the Bishop of London, to request information on many points connected with it, he adds,—“I trust the importance of the subject, and my anxiety to be fully persuaded as to my vote upon it, will be my excuse for giving your lordship so much trouble.” These examples prove, that, whether his conduct on these Church questions did or did not deserve the severe reprobation which it received from many of his religious friends, it was, at least, not undertaken in a spirit of rash self-confidence.

The second reading of Lord John Russell’s Irish Tithe Bill was brought forward on the 1st of June. Mr. Buxton argued strongly in favour of each of the

three leading clauses, which provided, in his own words, "First, that the incumbent should no longer apply to the wretched cottager and impoverished tenant, but should have his claim upon the land itself." "Will any one," exclaimed he, "pretend to say that this is ruin, or even peril to the Church?" "Secondly, that the funds of the Irish Church should be more equally distributed among its ministers." "The present system," he said "by which the Church is often liberal and bountiful to the ineffective, and parsimonious to the useful labourer, is not merely injustice, but also the worst husbandry in the world." "Thirdly, that the remuneration to the clergy should thereafter be confined within certain limits on either hand." "It should be," he said, "not a state of poverty, not a state of abundance; it should neither rise so high as to attract the envy of the people, nor fall so low as to forfeit their respect. \* \* \* Again, I ask, where is the wickedness of all this, and where lies the danger?"

He strongly supported the plan of giving the surplus fund (after the new distribution of the Church revenues) to defray the expense of a system of education in which as much of the Bible was to be read as the Roman Catholics would allow.

"Do I say that this is enough? No! I lament that Scripture is thus sparingly doled out. \* \* \* But though this system does not do all, it does much. It teaches the Catholic to read — it gives him a portion of Scripture to read." "I have better faith," he added, "in the truth of my religion, than to dread that instruction can damage it; and this is good old sound Protestant doctrine."

He concluded by pointing out how little the harsh system hitherto pursued had done towards the spread of truth : —

“How has it been,” he asked, “that truth itself, backed by a Protestant establishment, by a Protestant king, a Protestant army, a Protestant parliament — that truth itself, so far from advancing, has not kept her ground against error? My solution of the question is, that we have resorted to force where reason alone could prevail. We have forgotten that though the sword may do its work — mow down armies and subdue nations — it cannot carry conviction to the understanding of men; nay, the very use of force tends to create a barrier to the reception of that truth which it intends to promote. We have forgotten that there is something in the human breast — no base or sordid feeling, the same which makes a generous mind cleave with double affection to a distressed and injured friend, and which makes men cleave with tenfold fondness — deaf to reason, deaf to remonstrance, reckless of interest, prodigal of life — to a persecuted religion. I charge the failure of Protestant truth in converting the Irish upon the head of Protestant ascendancy.

“Protestant ascendancy! It sounds well enough in English ears. It seems to mean no more than the Church under the peculiar protection of the State; but happy had it been for the Protestant Church had Protestant ascendancy never been heard of — happy had it been had we dared to present our truth to the Irish, not in arms, not in pomp, not decorated with the symbols of earthly power, but in that lowliness and gentleness which naturally belong to it.

“But I dare not trespass longer on the House. I like the bill, and shall vote for it; first, because tithe is adjusted; secondly, because stipend is to be measured by duty; thirdly, because education is to be granted. I like and shall vote for the bill, lastly, because it bears no affinity to the old overbearing system of Protestant ascendancy; and because, as I have so often said, it gives my faith fair play; because, at last the Protestant religion will do herself justice. Stripped of her odious disguise, she will appear to the Irish what we know she is. She will appear in her natural, her peaceful, her charitable, her attractive character.”

This speech gave great displeasure to many of his clerical friends, who conceived that he was bent on the ruin — though all he desired was the temperate reform

— of the Irish Church establishment; and although “he had taken the opportunity,” as he writes the day after the debate, “of separating himself from the Radicals by condemning Hume’s proposal for paying church-rates out of the money to be saved from bishops and deans.”

*To Joseph John Gurney, Esq.*

“The Vicarage, Lowestoft, 1836.

“ \* \* \* Francis Cunningham preached a noble sermon last night; plain, strong, earnest, and no self about it. It would not have disgraced Goat Lane\*, as I have heard those there and at Bradpole, which would have done honour to a cathedral.

“It is curious and instructive to see Francis and his wife going full drive, and devoting their all to their sacred calling. I love, at least I think I love the *real thing* — this entire dedication, whether it displays itself among Churchmen or Dissenters. But I am not flattered by Churchmen for my views! Our friend — writes thus to Francis: — ‘Buxton cuts me to the heart; I never read such hollow, weak, flashy, unsatisfactory speeches in my life.’ And this but represents the general impression among Evangelicals, for whom I feel, nevertheless, the strongest affection, and with whom, I must add (though they would be indignant at my presumption if they heard it), the strongest union.”

\* The Friends’ Meeting House, in Norwich.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

1836.

SCOTLAND.—CAPERCAILZIE.—LETTERS.—HABITS OF LIFE AT NORTH-REPPS.—ORDER.—LOVE OF POETRY.—HIS DOMESTIC CHARACTER.—LETTERS.

OVERWROUGHT with toil and anxiety, Mr. Buxton was delighted to escape to Scotland in the beginning of August. While he was on this tour, the Marquis of Breadalbane, with true Highland hospitality, placed one of his moors at his disposal, and accordingly he remained for some time at Dalmally, and afterwards at Luib\*, enjoying the sport afforded by the surrounding country.

Wishing to express his sense of this act of kindness, he applied to his relative, Mr. Llewellyn Lloyd †, who was residing in Sweden, engaging him to use his best exertions to procure as many live capercailzie as possible, as a present to Lord Breadalbane.

The capercailzie, or cock of the woods, as it is well known, were in former times denizens of the Scotch forests, but the last specimen was shot about a hundred years ago in Perthshire. They are large birds, a full-grown cock weighing about twelve pounds; they live, for the most part, in larch forests, and are found throughout Sweden and Norway. Mr. Lloyd sent

\* While at Luib Inn he was rendered uneasy after two or three days by the non-appearance of his letters. "I understood you had a post here," said he to the landlord. "Oh yes, sir," was the reply, "but the last day or two he has been out shooting with you."

† Author of "Northern Field Sports."

advertisements for live capercaillie to the villages up the country. These advertisements, according to the Swedish custom, were read from the pulpits after divine service; and in the course of the winter thirteen cocks and sixteen hens were procured, which were placed under the care of Larry Banvill (Mr. Buxton's faithful Irish gamekeeper), who had been sent to Sweden for the purpose, and by whom they were successfully conveyed to Taymouth Castle. After a time they were all turned out into the large woods at Taymouth, in which they have thriven so well that they are now stated to amount to about two thousand; and as several other proprietors have followed the example, and have introduced them from Sweden, there is every reason to expect that this fine bird will become once more naturalised in Scotland.\*

Mr. Buxton writes from Loch-earn-head:—

“ August 27. 1836.

“ I am astonishingly idle, and it agrees with me beyond any other medicine. I do not get much shooting, but plenty of walking and wetting, plenty of appetite, and plenty of sleep. Sad thoughts of distant friends cloud the imagination, but the bodily benefit is still obtained. I certainly wanted a holiday, and in one sense I have got a complete one, for I have nothing to do, nothing to read, and this is almost the only letter I have written for a week.”

The illness of his sister-in-law, Mrs. Samuel Hoare, was one of the painful circumstances to which he refers

\* When the Queen visited Lord Breadalbane in 1842, he kindly permitted my brother and myself (then staying in the neighbourhood) to shoot the first of these birds that had been killed in Scotland for a hundred years, in preparation for Her Majesty's dinner. They were so extremely wild, that it took the whole day to get six shots. We could just see them vanishing from the tops of the tall larches while we were still a great distance from them, and we could only kill them by using cartridges of No. 3.  
— Ed.

as clouding his enjoyment. On receiving the account of her death, he writes from the house of Mr. Johnston to the Bishop of Calcutta:—

“ Renny Hill, Fife, Sept. 10., 1836.

“ Our minds have been occupied of late by a most sad event — the death of my wife’s sister. I am sure you must remember Mrs. Samuel Hoare of Hampstead. I hardly know how to speak of her as I ought; she was almost as dear to me as anything upon earth. For more than thirty years I have been united to her in the closest intimacy. In all that time I cannot recollect one moment’s ruffle between us, or one word which betokened anything but affection or love. But what is my loss compared with that of her husband and children? She came as near perfection as any human being I ever knew. It was not that she had one kind of merit carried to a great height. She possessed each accomplishment of a female and a Christian in the same rare degree. Soft and gentle as she was, she was no less steadfast, firm, and immoveable. To these moral qualities, to the most winning manners, to a noble countenance, to the utmost refinement and delicacy, she joined an intellect of a very high order. Her views on every subject were broad and capacious. There was nothing petty about her. \* \* \* She laid out her talents to the best advantage, and never was idle. She read a great deal, and turned all her reading to account, as her Tracts and her Hints on early Education evince. \* \* \* I know not why I pour out all this to you, but my mind and my pen can turn to no other subject.”

After spending a few weeks at Renny Hill, Mr. Buxton returned to Northrepps, and resumed the usual tenor of his life there during the autumnal months. Every year seemed to increase his delight at leaving behind him the cares and turmoils of London; and often, when nearly worn out by the fatigues of the session, would Swift’s lines rise to his lips:—

“ Thus in a sea of folly toss’d,  
My choicest hours of life are lost;  
Yet always wishing to retreat,  
Oh, could I see my country seat!

There, leaning near a gentle brook,  
 Sleep, or peruse some ancient book ;  
 And there in sweet oblivion drown  
 Those cares that haunt the court and town.  
 O charming noons ! and nights divine !  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 Each willing to be pleased, and please,  
 And e'en the very dogs at ease !”

His system on coming into the country was, after a thorough arrangement of his personal affairs, to abandon the first few weeks to the relaxation of field sports. Towards the end of October, when Mr. Hoare usually left Norfolk, Mr. Buxton resumed his settled occupations, and was strict in devoting to them the best hours of the day. He thus adapted to himself some well-known lines of Sir Edward Coke : —

“ Secure six hours for thought, and one for prayer,  
 Four in the fields, for exercise and air,  
 The rest let converse, sleep, and business share.”

Six hours may appear a large proportion of his day to give to reflection, but his singular power of sustained and concentrated thought was unquestionably the most remarkable feature of his mind. Not, indeed, that he had a turn for meditation upon speculative or philosophical questions, but when (as very often happened) his decision was required upon practical matters of an intricate character, he would wrap his mind in reflection upon them with an intensity not often equalled. He could not, like some, take a question by storm, and in a moment put every doubt to flight; he seemed to give every difficulty its fullest weight, and to balance the arguments on one side against the arguments on the other with accurate care; giving them such close attention, that, whatever might be going on around him, his mind could scarcely be diverted by anything from its track. When going to London with various important



matters on his hands, he would often take a list of them with him, and going regularly through it, would clench his mind upon them one after the other, till, by dint of strenuous thought, he had mastered all their bearings and made up his mind for ever. Once decided, he seldom turned to the question again. His character may be said to have been formed of a *durable material*, so that an impression once effectually made seemed never to be obliterated, scarcely even to lose the sharpness of its edge, by the lapse of years.\* This quality was seen in lesser as well as in greater matters, and in no instance was it more displayed than in the important point of *order*. The love of order, and power to maintain it, had certainly not been given him by nature; for many busy years of his life, his study, wherever it might happen to be, seemed a chaos of confusion, crowded with heaps of books and papers, letters and documents, unsorted and unlabelled,—nor would he allow any one to touch them. But in the year 1827 he was vividly impressed by a casual view of the order and precision maintained in one of the Government offices. After the illness of that year, when he could not bear mental application, a favourable opportunity presented itself for carrying out his resolution to have his “papers in subjection.” For three weeks he devoted himself, with his domestic helpers, to this task; every document in his possession, public and private, was looked over, folded to a certain size, with its contents accurately endorsed upon it, and then classified. The parcels of papers were tied up in boards made to the same size, legibly marked; the

\* In early life he was often unpunctual in his attendance at church; but after hearing a sermon from the Rev. Samuel Crowther on the duty of being present at the beginning of public worship, and joining in the confession, he was thoroughly convinced, and was never again (as he said himself thirty years after) late at church through carelessness.

more copious subjects, such as slavery, filling many of these packets, under different subdivisions. Pigeon-holes in his bookcases and other expedients were provided, by which these packets were so placed as to be instantly accessible. The work once accomplished, he never relaxed in it again ; from this time to the end of his life every paper that came into his hands was subjected to the same regulations, and his various secretaries well remember the playful but unremitting strictness with which he required the execution of his plans in this respect. The same principle extended to all his pecuniary affairs. He had some unalterable rules about money matters, which preserved him from the dangers that might otherwise have resulted from his natural tendency to free expenditure. In his private accounts he was exact, but not minute ; and once a-year he thoroughly investigated the whole state of his property. At the beginning of his private ledger the following sentences were written : —

“ ‘ Quod refert igitur quantis jumenta fatiget  
Porticibus, quantâ nemorum vertetur in umbrâ,  
Jugera quot vicina foro, quas emerit ædes ?  
Nemo malus felix.’ — *Juvenal*, Sat 4.

“ ‘ What need so much provision for so short a journey ? ’ — Hopkins, vol. iv. p. 57.

“ ‘ What a nothing it is that we make so much of, and follow so greedily, and hold so fast ! ’ — Baxter, vol. iii. p. 429.

“ ‘ To work our own contentment, we should not labour so much to increase our substance, as to moderate our desires.’ — Bishop Sanderson.

“ ‘ He that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.’ — Jeremiah, chap. xvii. verse 11.”

He was an excellent man of business, handling minute details with ease and unfailing patience, yet always

keeping his eye fixed upon their general scope and bearing. Before undertaking any thing, he would ponder over the matter for days together, weighing it and examining it again and again before he put his shoulder to the wheel. But though he was too deliberate to be a vehement man, he was in the highest degree energetic. He feared neither fatigue nor labour. Where he gave his mind, he gave the whole of it. When once resolved to act, he threw his whole heart and soul into the attainment of the object before him; every wish and feeling became swept into the vortex; nothing else seemed capable of attracting his interest, nor would he leave it till it was done, and done well.

Except that his hospitalities were more bounded by want of room, his life at Northrepps was much the same as it had been at Cromer Hall, domestic yet social. The mornings were spent, as has been said, in his study or with his gun; and after dinner he usually lay upon the sofa, while some one read aloud to him from the passing literature of the day. Reading, in fact, filled up every leisure hour; he never tired of listening to it. "Well, what shall we read?" was the first question upon his entering the drawing-room; and he paid the closest attention, being always able to repeat the words that terminated the passage read on the previous evening. He had a great taste for biography, perhaps still more for works of humour; but especially he had, as he said himself, an "insatiable thirst for military adventure." His love of poetry has been alluded to before, and he endeavoured to cultivate the same taste in those about him. Every Sunday evening his children were expected to repeat a passage of poetry, and he always required the utmost fluency and accuracy in the repetition: he insisted also on the reciter looking him full in the face

while going through the task. He distributed his rewards with his usual open-handed generosity, and sometimes his guests were playfully invited to join in the exercise, and received their half-crown with the rest. His frequent quotations (especially from Shakspeare, Pope, and Dryden) showed how thoroughly his mind was imbued with the writings of the principal English poets. Johnson's "Vanity of Human Wishes" was a favourite with him. On the well-known lines —

"In life's last scene, what prodigies arise,  
Fears of the brave, and follies of the wise."—

"I take that," he remarked, "to be one of the truest things ever said in poetry; but," he added, "the word 'last' should be omitted. Life is *crowded* with 'fears of the brave, and follies of the wise.'"

With Cowper's poems he became acquainted somewhat late in life. He was with a shooting party at Marham (the seat of Mr. Villebois, in Norfolk), when, being driven in by rain, and thoroughly wetted, he retreated to his room. It happened that there was no book there but a volume of Cowper's poems. He read them for hours, and ever afterwards took the greatest delight in them. For more modern poetry he had less taste, but to that of Sir Walter Scott he would listen again and again with the keenest enjoyment. When tea was finished, he usually walked into his study, and returned after a time with any letters or papers connected with his undertakings that he might have received or written in the course of the day, and the reading of these, with the discussions upon them, which he encouraged, usually occupied the remainder of the evening. In all Missionary enterprises he took the liveliest interest, listening with avidity to intelligence of their progress. Many

private communications of this nature were also made to him ; especially from Africa and the West Indies. He annually made himself complete master of the affairs and proceedings of the Bible Society, his fidelity to which never wavered. " I am ready to confess," he once wrote, " that there is no cause, not even Emancipation itself, to which I would more readily give a helping hand than to the Bible Society."

Some mention ought to be made of the part he took in the establishment of the London City Mission. He was not alarmed at the novelty and boldness of the experiment ; its catholic character was completely to his taste, and it always received his adherence and generous support. On its first foundation by Mr. David Nasmith, in September 1835, he wrote to that gentleman :—

" Dear Sir,

" I have only reached home within these five minutes ; but, in order to save the post, which is just starting, I write at once to say that I will, with pleasure, accept the office of treasurer ; and only hope that you are right and I am wrong as to the propriety of the selection."

This office he held till his death.

His family were early trained to take an interest in his pursuits, and to share in his hopes and fears ; he encouraged the remarks and the criticisms even of its younger members, and would accept from them the most trivial assistance. Indeed, he seemed to have a strong feeling of personal gratitude to any one who would share his solicitude for the welfare of his black clients. " From the time that I became closely connected with him," writes Mr. Johnston, " I saw how much of his time and mind were given to his great objects, in his domestic circle, as well as in his study.

He had a happy art of imbuing all those around him with his own feelings, and of inducing them to give him their most strenuous aid. He was, indeed, a delightful chief to work for, so stimulating yet so indulgent, and so ready to repay, with lavish liberality, every effort, however trifling, made on behalf of those to whom he was devoting not labour only, but life itself. \* \* \* His generosity, in fact, was unbounded — he seemed to watch for opportunities of heaping kindness upon those he loved.”

The extreme tenderness of his feelings was especially shown if any of them were in sickness or distress; or when he received them again under his roof after any lengthened absence, — “Never, I think,” observed one, “was such a welcome seen on any human face.” His papers bear witness to his unremitting, untiring “labours in prayer” for the members of his family; they are individually mentioned, on every occasion, with discriminating affection, and striking, indeed, was the solemnity and the fervour with which he poured out his supplications.

As a parent he was remarkably indulgent: a trivial instance may be quoted from one of his letters to Mrs. Buxton.

“I write now about the coursing to-morrow. As — did not behave well and kindly, you were quite right in deciding to deprive him of the sport to-morrow: but, as it is so very great a pleasure to me to think of him as happy and enjoying himself, I hope you will for this time excuse him, and that he will make a point of repaying the indulgence by very good behaviour. Thus we shall think of him as happy and good too.” \*

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\* In order that this letter might be in time for the coursing, he sent a man over with it from Norwich, a distance of 20 miles.

Nothing was more remarkable than the activity of his kindness in small things : the pains he would take to give pleasure. In the midst of his business he would help his children to find their lost playthings, or go out himself to buy what they might want ; nor did they fear to interrupt his studies with the most trifling requests. At the time of his hardest work in London, he would often, on his way to the House, buy pictures, and conceal them in his waste-paper basket, to enjoy the glee of his younger children, and their daily renewed astonishment, at discovering them there in the morning.

His manner to them, as they grew older, is shown in the following casual mention of it by one of his sons, then a mere boy :—

“ I cannot help being struck with the exquisite tenderness of heart which my father always displays ; his unwillingness to debar us from pleasure, the zeal with which he will make any sacrifice or take any trouble to gratify us, is most surprising. One little example to-day will describe his whole conduct. He, being really unwell, was lying nearly asleep on the sofa, and observing me upon another, with my feet hanging over the side, he quietly got up, placed a chair under them, and then lay down again. His whole appearance, with his worn and thoughtful face, is so much that of a man whom one would approach with some sensation of awe, that these small, though exquisite acts of tenderness, are the more unexpected, and, consequently, the more pleasing.”

He occasionally, but very rarely, gave direct admonitions. The following letter was addressed to one of his sons on entering Trinity College, Cambridge :—

“ My dear —,

“ It is always a disappointment to me to be absent when my boys are at home ; but I particularly regretted being away last week, as I think I might have done something for your shooting before you went to College. I need not, I hope, tell you of

the extreme interest I take in the launch of your little skiff on the ocean of life, and how heartily I desire that 'soft airs and gentle heavings of the wave' may accompany your voyage; and that you may be safely piloted into the serene and lovely harbour prepared by the love of God. It is not often that I trouble my children with advice; and never, I believe, unless I have something particular to say. At the present time I think I have that to say which is deeply important to your success in the business of life; nay, its effects may extend beyond the grave. You are now a man, and I am persuaded that you must be prepared to hold a very inferior station in life to that which you might fill, unless you resolve, with God's help, that whatever you do, you will do it *well*; unless you make up your mind that it is better to accomplish perfectly a very small amount of work than to half-do ten times as much. What you do know, know thoroughly. There are few instances in modern times of a rise equal to that of Sir Edward Sugden. After one of the Weymouth elections I was shut up with him in a carriage for twenty-four hours. I ventured to ask him what was the secret of his success; his answer was, 'I resolved, when beginning to read law, to make every thing I acquired perfectly my own, and never to go to a second thing till I had entirely accomplished the first. Many of my competitors read as much in a day as I read in a week; but, at the end of twelve months, my knowledge was as fresh as on the day it was acquired, while theirs had glided away from their recollection.'

"Let the same masculine determination to act to some purpose go through your life. Do the day's work to-day. At college I was extremely intimate with two young men, both of extraordinary talents. The one was always ahead of his tutor; he was doing this year the work of next year, and, although upon many parts of the subject he knew more than his examiner, yet he contrived to answer what was actually proposed to him most scandalously;—while the other, by knowing perfectly what it was his business to know (though not confining himself to that), never, to the best of my recollection, failed to answer any question that was put to him.

"Again, be punctual. I do not mean the merely being in time for lectures, &c.; but I mean that spirit out of which punctuality grows, that love of accuracy, precision, and vigour,



which makes the efficient man ; the determination that what you have to do *shall be done*, in spite of all petty obstacles, and finished off at once, and finally. I believe I have told you the story of Nelson and his coachmaker, but you must hear it once more. When he was on the eve of departure for one of his great expeditions, the coachmaker said to him, 'The carriage shall be at the door punctually at six o'clock.' 'A quarter before,' said Nelson ; 'I have always been a quarter of an hour before my time, and it has made a man of me.'

"How often have I seen persons who would have done well if they would but have acted up to their own sense of duty ! Thankful I am to believe that conscience is the established ruler over your actions ; but I want to enlarge its province, and to make it condescend to these, which may appear to you minor matters. Have a *conscience* to be fitting yourself for life, in whatever you do, and in the management of your mind and powers. In Scripture phrase, 'Gird up the loins of your mind.' Sheridan was an example of the want of this quality. In early life he got into a grand quarrel and duel, the circumstances of which were to his credit (always excepting the fighting the duel), but they were misrepresented : he came to town, resolved to set the British public right, and as Perry, the editor of the 'Morning Chronicle,' was his friend, he resolved to do so through the channel of that paper. It was agreed between them that Sheridan, under a fictitious name, should write a history of the affair, as it had been misrepresented, and that he should subsequently reply to it in his own name, giving the facts of the case. The first part he accomplished, and there appeared in the 'Chronicle' a bitter article against him, written, in fact, by himself ; but he could never find time to write the answer, and it never was written : 'The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting.'

"All the men who have done things well in life have been remarkable for decision of character. Tacitus describes Julius Cæsar as '*monstrum incredibilis celeritatis atque audaciæ*;' and Bonaparte, having published to all the world the day on which he should leave Paris to meet Wellington at Waterloo, did actually start on that day ; but he had so arranged matters, and travelled with such expedition, that he took the British army by surprise.

“The punctuality which I desire for you involves and comprehends the exact arrangement of your time. It is a matter on which much depends; fix how much time you will spend upon each object, and adhere all but obstinately to your plan. ‘Method,’ says Cecil, ‘is like packing things in a box; a good packer will get in half as much again as a bad one.’ My letter, I see, is swelling into a sermon, but the day is fine, and Larry is waiting, so I must bring it to a close. Ponder well what I have said, and call on God to help you in arraying yourself in the qualities which I desire. If you mean to be the effective man, you must set about it earnestly, and at once. No man ever yet ‘yawned it into being with a wish;’ you must make arrangements for it; you must watch it; you must notice when you fail, and you must keep some kind of journal of your failures.

“But, whatever negligence may creep into your studies, or into your pursuits of pleasure or of business, let there be one point, at least, on which you are always watchful, always alive; I mean in the performance of your religious duties. Let nothing induce you, even for a day, to neglect the perusal of Scripture. You know the value of prayer; it is precious beyond all price: never, never neglect it.

“Well, my dear boy, or man if you please, if I have been somewhat hard upon you in parts of this letter, you must excuse me, remembering that few have a father so deeply and tenderly attached as you have; or one, in general, more blind to defects, or more keen-eyed in the discernment of excellencies.

“Your most affectionate friend and father,

“T. FOWELL BUXTON.”

Mr. Buxton, as we have noticed before, and as appears in this letter, was very fond of anecdotes, both of hearing and telling them. The following were some of his parliamentary reminiscences, as taken down by one of his friends: —

Mr. Buxton.—“I was several years in Parliament with Lord Castlereagh. He had some excellent qualities for a leader, and some very much the reverse. His temper was admirable; but then in speaking he was strangely obscure, and sometimes made

the most queer blunders, so that occasionally, in the midst of a pathetic speech, he would say something which would make the whole House burst out laughing.

“Huskisson gave me a melancholy account of Castlereagh’s last days. He had taken up the idea that none of his colleagues would speak to him. It made him miserable, and nothing could drive it from his mind. At length he was obliged to give a Cabinet dinner, but he was confident that none of the ministers would come, and most unhappy the idea made him. Huskisson was the first to arrive, and he was received with such extravagant warmth and cordiality as were quite incomprehensible to him. The rest came, and everything went on smoothly, till at last he counted them and said, ‘There is one too few — Palmerston is not here: the others are all my private friends, but you see Palmerston won’t come.’ His gloom instantly returned, and he did not speak again the whole evening. A day or two after he put an end to his life. Clerk says that no man would shoot himself if he took two doses of physic beforehand; and probably if poor Castlereagh had consulted a doctor, he might have been alive now.

“Nothing ever was so delightful as to hear Canning make a fine rich poetical speech, and then Tierney pull it to pieces. But Tierney has no name, wonderful as he was. That is because he never *did* anything; but to be sure his talents were surpassing. He had the most delicate wit; everybody we hear now is coarse, blunt, and gross, compared to him. The House was extremely fond of him; let him rise when he would, it would listen to him with eagerness. He deserted his party, and joined Lord Sidmouth’s government at last. It was, however, inscribed on his tomb, or proposed to be so, ‘He lived without an office, and died without a debt.’

“Canning could be extremely entertaining too, but his speeches were evidently prepared and polished. He was the first man I ever heard speak in the House, and I remember asking my neighbour who he was. There was, also, when I first went into Parliament, another man of remarkable talents — Mr. Ward, afterwards Lord Dudley and Ward. He, too, finished his speeches down to the minutest comma, and he only made one or two in a year. You know the epigram upon him on its being said he was a man of no heart :

‘You say Ward has no heart ; but I deny it,  
He has a heart — and gets his speeches by it.’

“The first time I heard Chalmers was in a chapel on the other side of the river. It was so crowded that Canning and Wilberforce had to climb in at the window. Seven years after I heard Canning make that sermon the substance of a speech on the Catholic question.

“A certain member of Parliament changed his opinions rather rapidly after losing a place in the Government. Whereupon my friend S—— quoted Lord Bacon’s words, ‘The two great alterants of human opinion are *time* and *place*.’ ‘Now,’ said he, ‘in this case *time* there has been none, so \* \* \* ,’ but the remainder of the sentence was drowned in the laughter and applause of the House.

“Sir Robert Peel’s Currency Act is said to have enormously increased the national debt. It certainly was one of the boldest measures that have been done in our time, but probably the author of it scarcely foresaw the whole result. But it was perhaps an act of justice. When Attwood brought forward his bill for its repeal, Mr. Grote said he was like the unjust steward in the parable: ‘How much owest thou? A hundred measures of oil—then take thy bill, sit down quickly, and write fifty.’

“When Peel’s Currency Bill was passing, Hudson Gurney moved an amendment in which six members only supported him ; of whom I was one, and Mr. Wodehouse another. Three days afterwards, however, the ministers, who had reconsidered the question, came down to the House, and carried that very amendment by a large majority. So we received the title of ‘the seven wise men.’

“I lately dined in company with Sir James Scarlett. I asked him what was the secret of his pre-eminent success as an advocate. He replied, that he took care to press home the one principal point of the case, without paying much regard to the others. He also said that he knew the secret of being short. I find, said he, that when I exceed half a hour, I am always doing mischief to my client : if I drive into the heads of the jury important matter, I drive out matter more important, which I had previously lodged there.”

One event of the year 1836 had been the marriage of

Mr. Buxton's eldest son to Catherine, second daughter of Mr. Samuel Gurney.

Soon afterwards, he writes to Mrs. Buxton, from Bellfield : —

“ It is now five o'clock ; we dine at half-past ; the interval, my dearest wife, is reserved for you. I have much enjoyed being here ; I went off from London very comfortably, having the coach to myself almost the whole way. I slept the first stage and the last, so I had from seven in the morning till seven at night to read and reflect, and I was very happy, and I feel very strongly, perhaps never so strongly, that mercy and goodness have followed me all the days of my life. Others may deny that there is a special Providence, but it is too barefaced a lie for me. What kept me from the brewery at fourteen, sent me to college, and made me avail myself of its advantages ? What led me to Earlham. \* \* \* What placed me in so prosperous a business, without which I never could have thought of public life ? What placed me under Pratt's ministry, where my eyes were first opened to real truth ; and what sent severe illness to confirm and ripen the impression made at Wheeler Chapel ? What placed me in Parliament, and kept me there for nearly twenty years, in spite of almost desperate probabilities against me ? What made my mother sow the seeds of abhorrence of slavery in my mind ; and dear Priscilla exhort me to undertake the subject, when she was dying, and Wilberforce commit it to me, when he became unable to continue the task ? I could go on till the dinner-bell to-morrow evening, recounting the instances in which I have seen the finger of a blessed and divine Providence.

“ I looked yesterday and to-day, in walking through this serene place, at the present posture of our affairs, and I could see only cheering prospects, and causes of deep thankfulness. How happy this connexion of Edward's ! I feel the kindness of Providence in giving me, in a new child, the very person I most like ; \* \* \* and then what confidence I have that it will be blessed ! I sat still and prayed, and a loving Providence arranged it all. Then I turn to A., and P., who is rich in the things her happiness requires. If dinner would but wait, I would tell you how happy I felt about the three younger ones.

But in none have I had a greater sense of comfort and of God's mercy, than in one who, though not here to cheer us, is in the regions of perfect bliss. I can contemplate his state, and the dealings of Providence with us, as concerns him, and be very thankful, and very sure, in feeling as well as in reason, that all is right. — There goes the bell."

In his often-repeated visits to Bellfield, he showed himself in quite a new character. His uncle, who was very fond of him, and towards whom he felt like a son, treated him, to the last, as quite a young man ; and it was amusing to observe the happy mixture of deference and decision, playfulness and respect, with which his uncle's continual admonitions, especially with regard to his health, were received by one who was generally somewhat impatient of the uncalled-for interference of others.

From his numerous letters to his uncle, the following may be given :—

*To Charles Buxton, Esq., Bellfield.*

“ Northrepps, December 31.  
Eleven o'clock at Night.

“ My dear Uncle,

“ In the first place, as the old year is just going, I must wish that the new one may be a really happy one to you and my aunt. I hope that you both will pass through it in health and comfort. No nephew had ever more reason for this sincere wish than myself, and few nephews have so truly desired it. The termination of one year and the beginning of another is always a time of much reflection with me. I look back to the past year, and see innumerable errors and sins ; and forward to the coming year, and consider that, before it terminates, I may be called to judgment. Eternity is at hand with us all. Happy they, and only they, who know that they have no merit which can save them, who look for mercy only through Christ, who repent of past sins, desire to do God's will while on earth, and believe on Christ, that he can and will save those who obey him, and trust in him. I know you are never offended by my

talking on such subjects, and they naturally spring up in my mind just as a new year is coming."

He was at all times deeply anxious for the religious interests of those with whom he was in any way connected, and occasionally he felt it his duty to express his opinions to them on the subject. The following letter was thus addressed to a friend, much his senior; and it is evident that nothing but strong conscientious feeling could have induced him to write it:—

"I am persuaded you will forgive me for saying to you what has been upon my mind for some time. I have very much wished to have some conversation with you on religious subjects, but from various causes, chiefly, perhaps, my own want of courage, I have hitherto left you without unburthening my mind of the few things I wished to say. As you were, however, so kind as to say that the hint I dropped was not lost upon you, and that you had of late read through the New Testament more than once, I must venture to add something to that hint. I trust, then, that the great and capital truth of Christianity is always before your mind, viz. that there is salvation in no other way than through the atonement of Christ. The whole New Testament is a declaration that in ourselves we are sinful, and deserving nothing but condemnation; but that the Son of God bore the punishment of our offences, and that, by his merits, those who believe on him are delivered. Faith, then, in Christ is all in all. With it, however guilty we may have been, we shall be safe; and without it, no virtue, no moral excellence, nothing in the shape of meritorious works, will suffice. You will find the New Testament full of these two simple but all-important doctrines, viz. our sinfulness, and salvation through Christ; and he who knows them, knows almost all that is essential. But then, those only who believe in Christ shall have the benefit of the pardon and reconciliation which he came from heaven to obtain for us. 'No man cometh unto the Father but by me.'—John xiv. 6. St. Paul has explained his faith in Philippians iii. 7, 8, 9; and in Titus ii. 11-14: 'There is none other name given among men, whereby we may be saved, but that of Christ alone.' 'What must I do to be saved?' said the

gaoler to the Apostles: Acts xvi. 30. The plain unequivocal answer is, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' It would be easy to multiply texts to the same effect, for Scripture is full of them. Faith in Christ, then, as the Son of God, and as delivering us from our sins, being essential, how is it to be obtained? It is to be obtained only through the influence of the Holy Spirit; and it is said, over and over again, that if we pray for the Holy Spirit, it will be given us; that is the promise: Luke xi. 13. Then comes the point which I venture to urge, prayer to God for the Holy Spirit to teach us all the truths essential to our salvation; to reveal Christ to our understandings, to impart to us that holiness which is required of his disciples, to give us true repentance, and to prepare us for the day of judgment. I am persuaded you will forgive me for thus unburthening my mind. It is some effort to me to do so, and I am sure you will ascribe it to its true motive."

As usual, the year was closed by him with an enumeration of the mercies received during its course. To his list of domestic blessings, he now adds his little grandson, who, he says, "is a source of delight, and infinite amusement."

He proceeds:—

"The accounts from the West Indies of the conduct of our negroes are gratifying in the last degree; so that that subject which for eleven years was a source of daily disquietude, is now the refreshment and solace to which I continually turn. The history of the past year is of favours heaped upon me and mine, on the right hand and on the left."

After expressing his earnest desire that the Lord might be with him in every public duty (enumerating "the Report about the Aborigines; all that relates to the negroes; the Apprenticeship Committee; the Mico fund; our speeches, and all our doings"), he adds:—

\* \* \* \* \*

"Guide me aright in all that I may say or do about the Church questions, and let me take no part which shall impair the real efficiency of that which I am sure I love and admire.



“Bless my little grandson, \* \* \* my brothers, sisters, and dear friends, and myself also, with the best of blessings, for Christ’s sake.

“‘Thou hast given me a goodly heritage,’ is the language which I ought continually to be using. In what respect have I not been bountifully dealt with? Especially in having pursuits in life so deeply interesting as they proceed, and so full of promise as to the vast importance of their results, that they may well satisfy my whole mind? I would not change objects with any man.”

The following description of Mr. Buxton’s appearance and manner at this period of his life is from the pen of the Rev. John Richards, long a valued inmate of his family:—

“I shall never forget my first interview with your father. I had been passing the night at Ham House, where he was expected by an early coach from Norfolk. We were already seated at the breakfast-table, when his arrival was announced, and in he walked, stooping as he passed beneath the door-way, and then drawing himself up to the full height of his commanding form. My thoughts had been previously busy portraying the image of one with whom I was to be brought into such close contact, and that, as you may suppose, with an interest which excited me; but, as he stood dilated before me, though his frame was not so firmly knit together as to convey the idea of robust strength, the real impression was certainly one of *awe*. This feeling, however, soon subsided on witnessing the joyous hilarity with which he returned the greetings of his nieces, or if it recurred for a moment when, on being presented to him, he surveyed me with a somewhat scrutinising look, it was at once completely dispelled by the warmth of his welcome and the kindness of his manner; and I was not long in discovering, from the playful sallies and affectionate tones of his conversation, that within that manly form there glowed the sensitive heart of a child.”

## CHAPTER XXV.

1837, 1838.

ABORIGINES REPORT.—CORRESPONDENCE.—ELECTION.—DEFEAT AT WEYMOUTH.—LETTERS.—EFFORTS TO SHORTEN THE APPRENTICESHIP OF THE NEGROES.—MR. BUXTON'S HESITATION.—THE APPRENTICESHIP ABOLISHED.

WITH the session of 1836 had closed the sitting of the Aborigines Committee, and the drawing up of its report was entrusted to Mr. Buxton as its chairman. He was anxious to render this report a sort of manual for the future treatment of aboriginal nations in connection with our colonies. Accordingly, in January, 1837, he invited Dr. Philip to Northrepps, and commenced his work.

“Dr. Philip has been here three days,” he writes. “We are in the heart of the Report on Aborigines. Oh! for a spirit of wisdom poured down on our labours!”

The object of the report was to prove, first, the destructive cruelty to which the native tribes had generally been subjected; and, secondly, that, wherever they had received equitable and humane treatment, they had increased in numbers, acquired the arts of civilised life, and accepted the blessings of religion.

“April 2. 1837.

“The next few months are very important, as in them the Aborigines Report will be settled. Most earnestly I pray that it may stop the oppressor, and open the door for the admission of multitudes of heathens to the fold of Christ.

“Then there is the Apprenticeship Committee, which I bring forward on the 20th; and the slave trade question, and East

Indian slavery ; and other deep and various interests which will speedily be unfolded. Grant, O Lord of mercy, that in all I have to do I may be steered by thee ; that each event may be fraught with mercy ; that the influence of thy grace may operate more directly and more forcibly on my heart than it has hitherto done ; that thy blessing may reside with my family, my friends, and my fellow-workers ; with the Aborigines, the West Indies, Africa, India ; and if I have offended, forgive me, or at least shield me from the dreadful punishment. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me.

“ I must confess I look back without much sense of satisfaction to my course on the English Church-rate Bill. I did desire and pray to be guided aright ; but yet I have a lurking suspicion that secondary motives did, in some measure, bias my judgment. If it were so, I beseech thy forgiveness, O Lord, and pray that in future nothing may influence me, or turn me aside from what is my duty to thee.”

Many of his papers and letters at this period are full of expressions of those grateful feelings to which his heart had always been disposed, but which seem to have risen higher and higher after the great purpose of his life, the abolition of slavery, had been achieved. In this strain, he writes from Northrepps to one of his children : —

“ May 14. 1837.

“ \* \* \* I dwelt much yesterday, and still more to-day, on the mercy which has been showered upon me by a gracious and indulgent Lord. I feel that I cannot be grateful enough for the heaps and loads of mercies which have been my lot since my marriage thirty years ago. \* \* \* *That* may fairly stand among earthly blessings as number one.

“ Then my success in business, so good and so untroublesome, my seat in Parliament for nineteen years, and the objects which have been entrusted to me. \* \* \* My children, my brothers and sisters, my friends ; the success which has crowned my public labours. These are a few, and but a few, of my sources of grateful satisfaction.

“My cup runneth over: surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and (may it be!) I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits (and every clause in that catalogue of mercies, each of which has been offered for my acceptance). He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.

“Farewell! Farewell! I must go and hear the birds sing, and turn my eyes to the Wonderful Giver of such stores of mercies.”

During this session he was chiefly occupied in completing and carrying through the committee the report on the treatment of Aborigines, which had been drawn up with so much care at Northrepps. Before it was printed it was carefully revised by Sir George Grey, and it appears to have had considerable weight with the Government in promoting the equitable treatment of the natives in our colonial dominions.

It was with peculiar satisfaction that he saw this work completed, for it was very doubtful whether he would long have the opportunity of continuing his exertions in the House of Commons. The death of the King, on the 20th of June, produced an immediate dissolution of Parliament, and Mr. Buxton's return for Weymouth had never before appeared so insecure.

On account of his health he had felt serious doubts as to standing again, and he had been advised by many to withdraw, at least for a time; but he was not willing to take the responsibility of leaving his post. “I am of opinion,” he writes, “that I ought to remain in Parliament, even at a vast sacrifice.”

*To Charles Buxton, Esq., Bellfield.*

“My dear Uncle,

“Spitalfields, 1837.

“You must not be alarmed about the election. \* \* \* I really think I should not be happy, or feel that I had done my

duty, if I were to retire. I think (though, perhaps, it is absurd vanity to say so) that my being in Parliament is of some little consequence to the negroes in the West Indies, to the oppressed natives of our colonies, and to the inhabitants of Africa, exposed to the slave trade. As the first are nearly one million, the second three millions, and the third a great many millions, it would not be right to give up a chance, if it were only a chance, of being returned, merely because there may be some little humiliation to myself in being turned out.

“I don't care a straw about the disgrace. If I am turned out, I cannot help it: I have done my best, and I shall be satisfied. But if I were to go out of my own accord, I think my conscience would reproach me. Besides all which, I do not think they can turn me out quite so easily as they imagine.”

The following letter was addressed to Mr. Joseph John Gurney, who was about to proceed to America, on a religious visit to the Society of Friends:—

“Upton, June 25. 1837.

“I think it is hardly possible for any one, at least of our harder sex, to feel more than I do in all that concerns your going to America. We have been bound together for not far short of forty years, in one cloudless friendship. As boy and man, I have been partner in all your fortunes, and you in mine. I do not believe you ever, by word or deed, gave me a momentary vexation. You, I dare say, are not aware how you have refreshed and encouraged me in my career; in truth, I look to you with almost boundless affection and gratitude. It is against the grain with me to let you go without seeing you again, but I fear it must be so. After much deliberation I have resolved to go down to Weymouth. The way in which Parliament affects my health has had great weight in the one scale, but in the other there are three great points—West India negroes, East India slavery, and the Brazilian slave trade. If it were the West India negroes alone, I believe I should retire, because nine-tenths of the work is done, and because there is feeling enough in the country to accomplish the remainder, and persons enough willing and able to call forth that feeling. I am steadfast in the belief, that that great experiment has been,

and will continue to be, crowned with more complete success than the most sanguine among us anticipated. I know very well that evil influences are working hard against it, and that thousands of the negroes are exposed to cruel injustice. Nevertheless I do rejoice, and will rejoice, in the extinction of slavery; and the more I see of the posthumous brood, the more I rejoice in the death of the old parent dragon.

“And now, my dear brother, if I do not see you before your departure, I take leave of you with a heart full of love, with the most pleasant and grateful remembrance of you, and with the most earnest prayers for your safety, comfort, and peace, for the full success of your mission, and for your fruition of all that is contained in these words — ‘Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.’”

On the day that the Queen dissolved Parliament, he writes to Mrs. S. Gurney, whose aged mother he had visited on the previous day: —

“My dear Elizabeth,

“July 17. 1837.

“I this day saw our youthful Queen surrounded by all the chiefs officers of state, herself wearing a crown of diamonds, and arrayed in royal robes, and the House of Lords filled with all the great ones of the country. She delivered an admirable address to the Parliament, with the utmost sweetness of voice, and the most exquisite grace of manner; and yet this spectacle has left a less pleasing, a less lively impression on my mind than the sight which I had yesterday the pleasure of witnessing, — of an aged Christian, refined and purified, her work completed, waiting in patient cheerfulness the will of her Lord. That is a sight full of instruction and consolation. So much must I say, my dear sister, and you may repeat it to her who is ready to depart and to be with Christ.”

In July he went down to the election at Weymouth. After mentioning to his eldest son the difficulties into which he had been thrown by the non-appearance of the other Whig candidate, he adds: —

“If Burdon does not stand, I think it all but certain I shall lose the election. After hearing, on my arrival last night, all the particulars I have given you, I felt so perfectly satisfied, and so devoid of a momentary feeling of regret, that I am confident I shall be very thankful if I am turned out. *Per contra*, I am equally confident I shall be very thankful if I am once more turned loose in the House against slavery, slave trade, and white men’s cruelties. So I am pretty sure to get a triumph. Love to C —, and my smiling namesake.”

*To Mrs. Buxton.*

“Bellfield, July 25. 1837.

“Here I am looking out on this splendid view; nothing can be more calm. I have passed a restless night, and have been awake for hours.

“This day will, I expect, make an entire revolution in my vocation. I have no expectation of being returned. When I look at some of the arts that have been employed, I am half ready to be provoked; but when I turn to the Creator of these fields, and those waters, and remember that all events are in His hands, that nothing occurs but at His bidding, I am restored to full peace. He ordereth all events, and that is reason enough for satisfaction; and though, for the moment, we are carried away by the current, it is not very difficult to perceive that we shall derive a hundred family benefits from my exclusion from Parliament. I look upon myself as an old horse turned out to grass, and it is folly to worry myself by supposing that other and better steeds will not be found to do the work.

“I must now get ready. I do not expect to be in any way disturbed by the events of the day; but before it closes I shall be a man of leisure; that is no mean blessing: a man not slaving himself to death, but with time to walk, to read, to sleep, to reflect,—and better than these, time to pray.

“One o’clock.—Well, my dearest wife, your wishes are realised: the troubles and worries of Parliament are over with me; and now we must be as happy, as healthy, and as long-lived as possible. I am perfectly well satisfied with the result, and view it as a release from a vast deal of labour.”

That the cause of this defeat was not any diminution

of personal attachment to him on the part of his constituents, was evident from the strong expressions of grief on all sides at his rejection. But the Tory party had for some years been increasing in local influence, and did not scruple to employ a degree of intimidation till then unknown in the borough. In Mr. Buxton's farewell address to the electors, he distinctly states: —

“During twenty years in elections, seven of which have been severely contested, I have had the opportunity of ascertaining the motives which actuate almost every individual in this borough, and I gladly state this fact, so honourable to the poorer electors of this town, viz. that I never paid any man one sixpence for his vote, and never, except in two instances, was asked to do so.”

An incident which occurred is recorded by one who was present at this election: —

“It strongly illustrates,” says the narrator, “the deep personal interest which Mr. Buxton had the power of exciting among those who knew him best. Captain Penny, R.N., had long been one of the active men on Mr. Buxton's committees: he was an old man, exceeding ninety-two. The contest was virtually over by one o'clock, though the poll remained open till four o'clock. Shortly before its close the gallant veteran inquired how it stood, and on hearing of the increasing majority against Mr. Buxton, he called for his hat, and declaring to his wife that ‘if it were to be the last act of his life it would be a good one,’ he proceeded to the polling booth, and voted for Mr. Buxton and Mr. G. Stephen. He then went home, but had been much fatigued by the exertion, and shortly after reaching home asked his wife to help him to bed. She assisted him up stairs, and began to undress him, as he was seated on the side of the bed. She took off one of his stockings, and told him, to raise his other foot, that she might draw off the other. He did not do so; and being on her knees, she looked up to him, to repeat her request, when, to her amazement, she perceived that he was actually sitting erect, but a corpse! So his voting for Mr. Buxton *was* the last act of his life.”



*To Joseph John Gurney, Esq., in America,*

“ My dear Brother,

“ Upton, July 30. 1837.

“ We have gone so much hand-in-hand together all our days, that I greatly miss you now that a change has taken place with me. I am reprieved from death, and emancipated from slavery; and both these blessings came under the form of a dismissal from Weymouth on Tuesday last. But you shall have my history for the last fortnight, at least as much of it as I can remember.

“ You know, I believe, that a few days before the session closed I presented our report on the Aborigines. It is a fair compendium of the evidence given before the committee during three years, and as I had but a small portion of the merit of drawing it up, I may be allowed to call it an admirable document; and I have little doubt it will go far to check that desperate and wide-spreading villany which has rendered the intercourse of the civilised and Christian man with the savage little else than one uniform system of cruelty, rapacity, and murder. In short, I am well satisfied, and have little more to say on that subject. Two or three days before the session closed, I brought before the House briefly the questions of the slave trade, East India slavery, and the transportation of the Coolies from India to the Mauritius and the West Indies.

“ But now for my personal history. On Monday, the 17th of July, the Queen dissolved the Parliament. Before her messenger gave his three taps at our door I gave notice of a motion on East Indian slavery for next session. We were then called before her Majesty. She looked well and quite composed; in delivering her speech her voice was sweet and clear almost to perfection. In that great room, with the multitude of people and some bustle, every syllable was so distinctly articulated as to be perfectly heard; and her voice rose into suitable emphasis when she said, that her reign was auspiciously begun by giving her assent to the mitigation of the Criminal Law.

“ Thus, a second time, I have been drawn away from my history, but these things may interest you, and I shall not have anything to tell you of queens and parliaments for one while. But now to my history in earnest.

“ Before I went down to Weymouth, I began to fear; for one of my supporters told me that, if I wished to secure the election,

it would be necessary to open public houses and to lend money (a gentle name for bribery), to the extent of 1000*l*. I of course declined. It might or it might not be my duty to get into Parliament, but it could not be my duty to corrupt the electors by beer and bank notes.

“At ten o'clock on the day of nomination, out came Burdon's address resigning the contest. George Stephen happened to arrive by the mail at half-past ten,—unshaven, unbreakfasted, we converted him into a candidate. The Tories had hired a stout mob from the adjacent country, and as they kept the beer going, our audience was rather of the noisiest. It seemed to me that I could not be heard; but I find I was distinctly. \* \* \* On the 25th the polling began awkwardly. My friends were desperately intimidated. One of them spoke out the real state of the case. When asked at the booth how he voted, he replied, 'One for Buxton on principle; one for Villiers on interest.' In the middle of the day I found the affair was hopeless, and ceased to press my voters to come forward,

“\* \* \* As to my worthy colleague, Mr. Burdon, I cannot prove that he sold me; but I am sure that if he had done so, he could not have taken more skilful measures to effect my expulsion.

“At the close of the poll I went with Edward to the booth, where my opponents and their friends were collected, shook hands with them, wished them joy, walked about the town for half an hour with Barlow and Edward to cheer up my friends, who were sadly out of spirits, and then went to Bellfield, where we passed a very cheerful evening; and, up to this moment, not one shade of regret on my own account, however slight, however transient, has passed over my mind, at the memory of my departed honours.

“The next morning, about eighty of my constituents came up. I ran to the balcony and began a cheerful speech; but I soon found I was entirely out of tune. I went down amongst them, and then made them an oration. It could not help being a feeling one; certainly I never saw a greater appearance of regret. \* \* \* I have not half described the manifestation of feeling which took place in the town. The children set themselves to work to collect subscriptions to give me a piece of plate. The men are also doing the same thing on their part. The very

Tories, they say, are disconsolate! In the evening, several of the working men who had not joined the procession in the morning, came up to bid me farewell; and at six o'clock the next morning, when I got into the coach, there was an assemblage of them looking sadly downcast. Spite of all this lamentation, I have been in great glee the whole time. I am right glad that I stood — right glad that I have got a holiday. My own impression is, that I could not have stood the fatigues of Parliament many sessions more; and perhaps this turning out to grass may, in the long run, enable me to do more work, if I should have the privilege of being called to it. I saw ——, who said more about the regret of Government, than I should like to repeat. On the other hand, Dr. Holland has sent me a message by Samuel Hoare, of warm congratulation.

“I had fully resolved, had I continued in Parliament, to have sent you a kind of journal of notable events; but in my present non-effective condition, I am not likely to have any thing more interesting to tell you, than the history of the pigs and poultry at Northrepps. As I leave Parliament for health, I do not by any means intend to defeat that end by dedicating myself to any other objects. I mean, for conscience' sake, to ride, shoot, amuse myself, and grow fat and flourishing.”

He soon afterwards went to Weymouth, to receive from his friends there two pieces of plate; the one, a candelabrum from his late constituents; the other, which, as he said, pleased him, if possible, still more, a silver snuff-box from their children. He was exceedingly gratified by these testimonials of regard from the place with which he had so long been connected, and few of his possessions were valued so highly.

From no less than twenty-seven different places were proposals made to Mr. Buxton to stand as a candidate; but he felt at liberty to take advantage of the opportune repose afforded him, and accordingly declined them all.

On returning from a short visit to Scotland, he writes to Mrs. Johnston at Rennyhill.

“Northrepps Hall, Oct. 7. 1837.

“I have just been debating on this difficult question — shall I write to Rennyhill, or stretch myself on the sofa? — you see how I have decided.

“Our return home is vastly pleasant, and I hope we feel something of true thankfulness at being permitted to reassemble — none missing, none injured, and many benefited. \* \* \* My week in London was anything but idle. I got through my fifty-six memoranda. We resolved that Mr. Trew should, without delay, provide thirty-four first-rate teachers for the colonies. Only think of sending forth such a troop! Is it not cheering? Whilst I was in London, three separate deputations called upon me on the same morning, to urge me to go into Parliament. They were very philosophic on the subject of my health, and said *in substance* that it was good economy for them to work me up now, and that when I was fairly dead, they dared to say they should find some other agent; but I was steadfast against this kind of argument.”

*To Charles Buxton, Esq., at Bellfield.*

“October, 1837.

“I take shooting very easy this year, having always a shooting pony with me; he is a wonder, has as good action as your old leader, and is as handsome; as quiet as a lamb, and strong enough to carry, and sometimes does carry, Mr. Hoare and myself together, eats bread and cheese, drinks beer, is a particularly good judge of porter, and prefers ours.”

*To Edward N. Buxton, Esq.*

“November, 1837.

“I have again made an alteration in my gun-stock, contrary to your advice. I have shot execrably all the year, and could stand it no longer, so I employed a Holt carpenter to hew me a stock, according to my own fancy, out of the trunk of a tree. It is in its primitive simplicity, and is so wide as to ‘contrive the double debt to pay,’ of stock while shooting, and table at luncheon; but rough and awkward as it is, I shall, I trust, take the conceit out of the young men with it.

“I have been calculating that since Parliament closed I have ridden 500 miles, and walked 1500.

“ ‘ Better to hunt in fields for health unbought,  
 Than fee the doctor for a nauseous draught ;  
 The wise, for cure, on exercise depend.’ ”

“ So sings Dryden, and what he preached I practise.

“ I shall send you a basket to-night, as proof that my log of a gun-stock can do execution. \* \* \* We are very happy here. If you catch the influenza, lie up at once — *principiis obsta.*”

At the end of 1837 a work was published by Messrs. Sturge and Scoble, who had visited the West Indies, describing the condition of the negro apprentices, and such general indignation was excited by their narrative, that from all parts of the country were delegates sent to London in the beginning of 1838, to urge the discontinuance of the apprenticeship system. Mr. Buxton, for some time, refused to join them, and he thus states his reasons in a letter to G. W. Alexander, Esq. : —

“ February 5. 1838.

“ I have received your very kind letter, and have given the subject of it my very best consideration. The result is that my opinions, as expressed in my letter to the delegates, yet remain unchanged. I thought, and continue to think, that the attempt to overthrow the apprenticeship will be fruitless, while there is another object to be accomplished, viz. that of securing to the negro the full and entire liberty of a British subject in 1840, which is at once more important, and far more practicable.

“ I am afraid that this main and capital object should in some degree be lost sight of, by the peculiar prominence that is given to the abolition of the apprenticeship, and I could not attend any meeting without stating my doubts as to the policy of the present movement. I am, however, far from wishing to give circulation to these doubts. It is very possible that I may be altogether mistaken in the views I entertain ; and I should be extremely sorry to weaken the probability, small as I consider it, of Parliament consenting to the immediate abolition of the apprenticeship. I apprehend, therefore, that I should best serve the cause of the negro by abstaining from attending your meeting. It is needless for me to add, that it is with hearty regret I cannot on this

occasion altogether unite with those good and zealous men with whom I have so long acted."

His refusal to attend the meeting excited great displeasure among those who were bent on breaking down the apprenticeship. After alluding to the severe censures to which he had been exposed, he proceeds:—

"Well, after all this, I am in excellent health and spirits, not the least chagrined. I do not repent of any step I have taken in this business."

He writes, during a short visit to London, to Mrs. Johnston:—

"It only wants a few minutes to breakfast, but there is time for a scrap of a letter to you. First, be it known to you, and to all the Northrepps party, that I am quite well, and in excellent spirits, and instead of being worried by my adventures, only amused and interested by them. I left Northrepps on Monday at four o'clock in the morning, and as it was too dark to read, I occupied a good part of the way in composing a mighty grand oration, intended for the delegates. The horses flew; but the time flew still faster, and I was almost surprised to find, after two hours, that the town I entered was not Aylsham, but Norwich; full half an hour too soon for the coach. Conceive me then in the kitchen, writing down my notes on the dresser. Off I was taken before I had half done, and had to finish my notations in the coach. I then had to read a budget of letters from Floresi, and to make sundry resolutions on them. Then Lord Bacon, in the Edinburgh Review; have you read it? Pray do, though it is very sad. After doing so, you must, when quoting the line—

'The greatest, wisest, meanest of mankind,'

lay all the emphasis on the last epithet. With this, varied by other books, and stages given up to a kind of meditation, I cheated the journey of everything like tediousness, and reached Ham House to dinner. S. Gurney soon told me that perhaps it would be as well that I should attend the public meeting, as he found that the current ran strongly against me, and that pains had been taken to poison the minds of simple-hearted Friends, with the suspicion that I had become a kind of enemy

to the anti-slavery cause. I called a meeting of our society on Tuesday, which I attended, and I asked their opinion of the propriety of my going to Exeter Hall. The general opinion was against it; and I decided not to go. Soon afterwards I was called out of the room by Dr. Philip and Josiah Forster, to tell me that a reaction had taken place; that a public breakfast had been given the day before by the delegates to the anti-slaveryites in the neighbourhood of town, where my conduct was the chief subject of discussion. At length my old friend Capt. Stewart proposed a resolution, condemning, though in gentle terms, more in sorrow than in anger, my letter. For some time no seconder could be found, but when at last one appeared, Dr. Philip made them a speech. He first said he owed everything to me; but for me he would have been trampled to the earth, would have been tried as a traitor, and convicted; that but for me the whole of Caffreland would have been Adelaide country, and the whole Caffre nation exterminated; but for me not one missionary left in all South Africa: that they owed all anti-slavery success, including the present force of public opinion, the very groundwork on which they stood, to me. This oration was received with great applause; the seconder vowed he would second no such nonsense as Stewart proposed. Stewart would move no such motion, and these three curiosities occurred:—First, instead of a lecture, they unanimously voted me thanks; secondly, G. Thompson offered to draw it up; thirdly, Sturge begged that he might be allowed to present it. He did so the following day, and we parted the best of friends. \* \* \* I long now to return to the ‘fairy land of snowdrops.’ I am very well, but I cannot sleep. As Milton says—

‘What has night to do with sleep?’

I affronted E. W——, by not calling her at three o’clock this morning to read to me, but I could not do anything so barbarous. I have less pity on poor Andrew, who is most useful to me in various ways.”

As the spring advanced, he found that he had been in error, and that public feeling was less torpid than he had expected. He writes, on the 12th of March, to one of his old Anti-slavery coadjutors:—“It seems just pos-

sible that the delegates may succeed, and if so I am sure we shall both say, 'thank God that other people had more courage and more discernment than ourselves.'"

On the 23rd of March he received a letter from Dr. Lushington, urging him to come to town and meet the delegates, and he accordingly left Northrepps for London, and after much deliberation he determined to join them.

"I went," he says, "to the meeting of the delegates; they were very cordial. I told them freely my mind, and some of it was not much to their liking, I dare say. Among the rest, that I praised Glenelg."

After mentioning the charge of inconsistency which he might occur, he adds,—

"No matter. The sin unpardonable in my eyes would be, to do anything for any consideration whatever, the result of which was likely to injure the sacred cause. So long as I retain the assurance, that I am acting with a single eye to that, you may be sure I shall not be dejected."

"You ask, what will the world say?" he writes to another friend. "Let the world say what it pleases:

'Tis not the babbling of a busy world,  
Where praise and censure are at random hurled,  
Which can the meanest of my thoughts control,  
Or shake one settled purpose of my soul:—  
Free and at large, may their wild censures roam,  
While all,—while all, I know, is right at home.'"

On the 30th of March, Sir George Strickland brought forward a motion for the abolition of the apprenticeship, but it was lost by a majority of 64. Mr. Buxton thus describes the evening, having been present under the gallery:—

"London, March 31. 1838.

"I am alive, after having been in the detestable position of having to sit for ten hours, last night, in the House of Commons, to be shot at by everybody, without the possibility of firing one



round in return. I would have given something to be allowed to speak, and I literally was two or three times upon the point of springing up. Gladstone, Lord John Russell, Grey, &c., would have it that I was a friend to the apprenticeship, because I sold an unavailing division on it, in Committee, for the solid profit of getting them to insert a clause for unqualified freedom, when the apprenticeship should cease."

In consequence of what had been stated in this debate, Mr. Buxton addressed a letter to Lord John Russell, in which he proved that he had been throughout a steady opponent of the apprenticeship system.

He went, about the same time, to see Mr. Macaulay, whom he found very ill. "God bless you and yours," said his aged friend. "I sympathise in all your trials, I concur in all your opinions, and your visits to me are as water to the thirsty soul." It was his impression that he should not see Mr. Buxton again; nor did he. He died in May, just before the complete consummation of all his labours, for, in the same month, Sir Eardley Wilmot gained, by a majority of three, a motion against the Apprenticeship; and the planters afterwards agreed to surrender it on the 1st of August, 1838. "The Apprenticeship is abolished," writes Mr. Buxton; "thank God for that."

"I bless God for the event," he says in a letter to Mr. Sturge: "I bless God, that He, who has always raised up agents such as the crisis required, sent you to the West Indies. I bless God that, during the Apprenticeship, not one act of violence against the person of a white man has, as I believe, been perpetrated by a negro; and I cannot express my grateful exultation, that those whom the colonial law so recently reckoned as brute beasts, 'the fee simple absolute whereof resided in their owners,' will so soon be invested with the full rights of man. \* \* \* Let none of us forget that those who are emancipated will be assailed with many an attempt to curb and crush their liberty; nor that two millions of human chattels

in the East Indies require our protection; nor that the slave trade, of all evils the monster evil, still defiles and darkens one quarter of the globe. May that same public voice, which has now been so happily exerted, and under the influence of that same gracious Lord, who has wrought its present victory, never be hushed while a taint of slavery remains!"

*To the Hon. Mrs. Upcher.*

"Athenæum, May 23. 1838.

"I must write a line to tell you that Sturge and that party, whom we thought all in the wrong, are proved to be all in the right. A resolution for the immediate abolition of the Apprenticeship was carried by a majority of three last night. The intelligence was received with such a shout by the Quakers, (myself among the number,) that we strangers were all turned out for rioting! I am right pleased."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

1838.

NEW PLAN FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF THE SLAVE TRADE.—LABORIOUS INVESTIGATIONS.—COLLECTION OF EVIDENCE.—LETTER TO LORD MELBOURNE.—COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE GOVERNMENT.—ABSTRACT OF HIS VIEWS.—HORRORS OF THE TRADE.—CAPABILITIES OF AFRICA.

ON quitting Parliament, Mr. Buxton had looked forward to a period of repose; but this expectation was not realised. Even before that time, an idea had suggested itself to his mind, the development of which proved more than sufficient occupation for all his remaining years.

“I well remember,” writes one of his sons, “the commencement of that long train of toils, anxieties, and sorrows. While my father and I were staying at Earlham, in the beginning of the summer of 1837, he walked into my room one morning, at an early hour, and sitting down on my bedside, told me that he had been lying awake the whole night, reflecting on the subject of the slave trade, and that he believed he had hit upon the true remedy for that portentous evil.”

Two years before this time, he had moved an address for making our treaties on this subject with foreign powers more stringent, and the penalties of the crime more severe. The idea that now struck him so forcibly was this—that “though strong external measures ought still to be resorted to, the deliverance of Africa was to be effected, *by calling out her own resources.*”

For some months he was compelled to defer the following up of this new train of thought; but on reaching

home at the fall of the year, he addressed himself to the pursuit with all his heart and mind, and never was his character shown more clearly than in his conduct of this great affair. The exquisite sympathy with suffering, the long investigations and deep thought before action, the intense and untiring energy when the work had once begun, the largeness of his plan, the care bestowed upon its smallest details, the hearty trust in Providence, joined with the solicitous choice of means, the patient faith with which disappointment and calamity were borne; — all these qualities had been apparent in his previous undertakings, — all now stood forth in still bolder relief. Nor was there less of the same ardent and exclusive devotion to the one work before him, which had characterised his earlier years. The idea did not flash upon him, and then slowly fade away again, like the visions of less effective men. Nor was he content merely to lay his views before the public, satisfying himself with an undefined hope that some one else would carry them into practice. He at once applied himself to the subject, and throughout the winter he was incessantly revolving it in his mind, reading every book that could assist him, and inquiring wherever information could be gained, until at length the whole idea was fully developed in his mind.

His task was twofold: — on the one hand he had to prove the magnitude of the evils now existing, in the human traffic, and consequent condition of Africa: — on the other, he had to point out the capabilities of Africa, and thence to deduce the possibility of her becoming peaceful, flourishing, and productive, by the force of legitimate commerce.

While he himself was occupied in elaborate calculations drawn from official documents, respecting the

extent and desolating effect of the trade, he set others to work in collecting proofs of the productiveness and commercial resources of Africa.

*To Edward N. Buxton, Esq.*

“Northrepps Hall, 1838.

“Andrew Johnston and I are working like dragons at the slave trade—a task as interesting in its prosecution, and promising to be as important in its results, as any that I ever had the honour to be engaged in. I only wish that the number of the hours in each day were doubled, and the number of minutes in every hour quadrupled.”

*To John Jeremie, Esq., in Ceylon.*

“My dear Jeremie,                      “Northrepps Hall, February 27.

“I wonder that I have not written to you long ere this, and especially that I have not answered your very welcome letter of the 14th of August last. But procrastination, always an insidious enemy, makes foreign letters its especial prey. They may perhaps sail as soon, if written next week, as if sent off to-day, and therefore are postponed; and I have no lack of good excuses. Though perhaps I ought to be at leisure, now that I am released from the harness of Parliament, I still find every day more than supplied with its work. Your long letter I have not now before me, as I left it with Dr. Lushington. He has promised to read it attentively, although as usual overwhelmed with business.

“My principal occupation is the consideration of the slave trade. I am quite convinced we are all on a wrong tack about it, and that we never shall do good, or at least effectual good, by pursuing only our present plan. The scheme therefore that I am now meditating is, to represent to all powers the immense field for commerce, which is closed by the slave trade. When I am thoroughly master of the subject, I shall lay it before the Government.

“You will not doubt, my dear friend, that all you tell me about yourself and your own state of mind is very interesting to me. I do indeed trust that you may more and more taste of the knowledge of that which can, above all else, *satisfy the mind and heart*, and lead into the way of peace. What I have learnt of this, has been at the price of heavy sorrow; but I can say it

is worth its price, and it is my chief and settled desire for myself, and all who are most dear to me, that, above all prosperity, all knowledge, all success or honour, we may know and partake of the riches of Christianity. By this I do not merely mean morality, even of the highest tone; I mean the knowledge of Christ as a Saviour, which knowledge brings the heart to humility, love, gratitude, and all that is good, as well as all that is happy. I can desire nothing better for you, my dear friend, than that you and yours may be led on and taught the fulness of these things, of which we may all know more and more!"

*To a Friend, a Member of Parliament.*

"Northrepps Hall, February, 1838.

"I was much pleased with your warm invitation to St. Stephen's, but you must, if you please, excuse me. In the first place, I have no wish to come in till 1840, when I should like to see what you are after; and, in the second, there is no constituency in the world that I should dislike so much as that of Marylebone, as I have not even a morsel of Radicalism about me. I should, I confess, like to be in Parliament on the 6th of March, in order to state my opinion about Lord Glenelg. Could I say that he wanted energy? The delivery of the Caffres and their territory from the hands of their enemies, was a measure which required as much good principle, as much steady determination and as much wise foresight, as any other in my memory. I ought to know something of colonial secretaries, for I have worried each of them in succession, for twenty years. I have a very high opinion of Sir George Murray, Lord Goderich, Spring Rice, and Lord Aberdeen, and for some of them I feel the most grateful affection; but there is not one of them who, in my estimation, has acted more conscientiously, or of whose anxiety to do justice to negroes, Caffres, Hottentots, and Indians, I feel more assurance, than Lord Glenelg. Of course you will not consider me as approving of the whole of his policy; nevertheless, for the sake of the weak and the oppressed, I earnestly hope that he may long continue colonial minister."

*To Miss Gurney, Northrepps Cottage.*

"Hampstead, April 28.

"I can't say how mean I appear to myself for not having acknowledged the paper on African commerce. Acknowledged

it I have a hundred times, but never in a letter to you. You do not know, nor did I till two days ago, how important it is. I now find that either the observations, which I made in a conversation with Lord Palmerston some time ago, or which is much more likely to be the case, his own wit, has led him to the same conclusion as my own, viz. that the slave trade is to be abolished by legitimate trade. If this be so, our commercial speculations come just at the right time. They will exactly hit the mark, and they will operate upon the Government at large; and I do believe that your labours could not have been better employed. I am more hard run than I used to be, even in Parliament."

Having come to London prepared with all his statistical details, he spent the spring, assisted by Mr. Johnston, in verifying them by evidence of first-rate authority, both naval and mercantile. When he had done this, he laid an epitome of his plans before different members of the Cabinet, by several of whom a disposition was evinced to investigate the subject further; and he was requested to prepare his views in a more developed form by the beginning of the recess. Accordingly, at the end of May, he went to Leamington, where he was joined by Mr. Scoble, an able and hearty fellow-labourer; and by Mr. MacQueen, who was intimately acquainted with the geography and productions of Africa, and who had some years before declared his conviction, that the true way to abolish the slave trade would be to supplant it by lawful commerce. Aided by these gentlemen, he devoted himself sedulously to the task, frequently working at it about twelve hours a day.

This "Letter to Lord Melbourne" was intended exclusively for the members of the Government, and, accordingly, but twenty copies were printed.

"The book is fairly launched," he tells Mr. Johnston (who, when the work was finished, had left him for Scotland), "and

I am for the present a gentleman of leisure, and begin to think vehemently about Northrepps, Felthorpe, shooting, and such things; and in a fortnight's time I expect to be as much occupied in labours by day, and in dreams by night about rabbits and partridges, as I have been about negroes and Fernando Po. Our plans are fixed, and I go to Poles on Thursday; to Earlham, Friday; to Northrepps, by Felthorpe, Saturday; and all sorts of people are summoned to meet us at Northrepps on Monday.

“And now how does my little Andrew do? He's just the lad I should like to see at this moment. My little Tommy chatters away most fluently, and is exceedingly improved.”

*To his Sister, Miss S. M. Buxton, Northrepps Cottage.*

“August 14.

“Now I must tell you a little about my adventures. Yesterday I saw almost all the ministers, and almost all their secretaries; and held the same language with them all. ‘I have put my views in print, in order to tempt you to read them. While Parliament is sitting I expect nothing of you; but, promise me this, that, as soon as the recess begins, you will read my book before you take up any other subject. Give me an unequivocal yes or no; and, if you say “Yes,” act with vigour.’ I have got a specific promise from each, that, without delay, they will read, consider, and decide. I saw yesterday Lords Melbourne, Glenelg, Palmerston, and Howick; Hobhouse, Spring Rice, Grey, Stanley, Wood, Porter, Anson, Stephen. The last sent me word that he was very busy, so our interview must be very short. I walked into his room, put the book into his hand, and, without saying a word, walked out again. He called out, ‘What does this mean?’ ‘The shortest interview you ever had with any body,’ said I. ‘Ah,’ said he, ‘the head is short enough, but there's a terrible long tail to it.’ \* \* \* In short, I was remarkably well pleased with my day's work. Got home near twelve o'clock. The waves of the day too agitated for easy getting to sleep.”

*To J. J. Gurney, Esq.*

“August 18.

“To begin with that which has chiefly occupied my attention for many months past: last November I started on a pilgrimage



through all the books and parliamentary documents connected with the slave trade. I began from the very beginning, and, partly in person, still more by deputy, I traversed the whole subject; and such a scene of diabolism, and such an excess of misery, as I had to survey, never, I am persuaded, before fell to the lot of an unhappy investigator. Will you believe it, the slave trade, though England has relinquished it, is now double what it was when Wilberforce first began; and its horrors not only aggravated by the increase of the total, but in each particular case more intense than they were in 1788? Will you believe it, again, that it requires at the rate of a thousand human beings per diem, in order to satisfy its enormous maw? \* \* \* How glad have I been to have escaped from the turmoils of Parliament, and to have my mind and my time my own, that I might bestow them without interruption on this vast mass of misery and crime!"

A sentence in this letter may give the false impression that Mr. Wilberforce's exertions in putting down the slave trade had proved a failure; whereas his main attack was directed against the *British* slave trade, and this had been effectually stopped. That which Mr. Buxton attacked, and which, unhappily, still exists, is the trade carried on by the Spanish, Portuguese, and Brazilians.

The following is an outline of Mr. Buxton's plans as suggested in the first instance in the letter to Lord Melbourne, and afterwards more fully detailed in the work called "The Slave Trade and its Remedy."

The first part of these works was devoted to the examination of the actual state of the slave trade: and startling indeed were the facts unfolded. Mr. Buxton demonstrated from *official* evidence, that, at the very least, 150,000 negroes are annually imported into Brazil and Cuba alone! He drew also from a vast number of sources, a description of the horrors attendant on the trade, which, he says, "has made Africa one universal

den of desolation, misery, and crime." He showed what a waste of human life is incurred in the seizure of the slaves for the merchant ; in the hurried march through the desert to the coast, with scarce a pittance of water, under the broiling sun ; in the detention at the ports, where hunger and misery carry off numberless wretches, whose fate might yet be envied by the miserable beings that survive. These, pressed down for weeks together between the decks of the slave ship, have to endure torments which cannot be described. Scarcely can the mind realise the horrors of that dreadful charnel-house ; the sea-sickness—the suffocation—the terrible thirst—the living chained to the putrid dead—the filth—the stench—the fury of despair. Even after landing, multitudes more perish in what is called "the seasoning on the coast ;" and the remnant who have lived through all this misery, are then sold to endure as slaves the abominable cruelties of Spanish and Portuguese masters. He showed that, at the very least, two negroes perish for every one who is sold into slavery. "In no species of merchandise," he exclaims, "is there such waste of the raw material, as in the merchandise of man. In what other trade do two-thirds of the goods perish, in order that one-third may reach the market ?"

He recommended the adoption of two preliminary measures :—one, the concentration upon the coast of Africa of a more efficient naval force ; the other, the formation of a chain of treaties with the native chiefs of the interior. These two measures were not brought forward as the remedy itself, but merely as clearing the way for its operation.

"The real remedy, the true ransom for Africa, will be found," says Mr. Buxton, "in her fertile soil : " and he drew up, from a vast variety of authorities, an ac-