CHAPTER XLVII

1866–1900

LITERARY WORK — JUBILEE — QUEEN VICTORIA — NATURAL HISTORY—POETRY—CHARACTERISTICS

THE best-known of the Duke of Argyll's writings are, perhaps, the three volumes entitled 'The Reign of Law,' 'The Unity of Nature,' and 'The Philosophy of Belief,' the publication of which extended over a period of thirty years, the first having been published in 1866, and the last in 1896. Of this series, the author wrote in the preface to the last volume:

'Although each of these works may stand independently by itself, they are yet very closely connected. They represent, in the main, one line of thought on the greatest of all subjects—namely, the philosophy of religion in its relations with the philosophy of science.

'The first of these treatises, "The Reign of Law," deals with the question how far the idea is rational that physical laws are the supreme agencies in Nature, or whether, on the contrary, mind and will are seated on that universal throne.

'The second of the series, "The Unity of Nature," starting from a fresh point of view, deals mainly with the problem how far our human faculties are competent, on this matter, to give us any knowledge whatever, or whether they must leave us in conscious, yet helpless, and hopeless, ignorance on the whole of it, and on all that it involves.

'The third and last of the series, "The Philosophy of Belief," applies the reasonings and conclusions

which have been thus reached to an examination of the relation in which the great conception of natural law, when properly understood, stands to religion in general, and to Christian theology in particular.'

The system of thought which the Duke developed in these volumes extends over a very large area. The phenomena of the inorganic world, the structures and functions of organic life, human character and volition, the growth of civilization, history, and literature, social and political institutions—all come within the field of his vision, and serve to illustrate the main argument in countless ways, the fundamental idea being simply that of St. Paul's introduction to the Epistle to the Romans: 'The invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His Eternal Power and Godhead.'

The argument in 'The Reign of Law' is so close and consecutive that it is difficult to quote from the book without breaking the connection of thought; but a passage may be given indicative of the line of reasoning adopted by the author:

'The Reign of Law. Is this, then, the reign under which we live? Yes, in a sense it is. There is no denying it. The whole world around us, and the whole world within us, are ruled by law. Our very spirits are subject to it—those spirits which yet seem so spiritual, so subtle, so free. How often in the darkness do they feel the restraining walls—bounds within which they move, conditions out of which they cannot think! The perception of this is growing in the consciousness of men. It grows with the growth of knowledge; it is the delight, the reward, the goal of science. From science it passes into every domain of thought, and invades, amongst others, the theology

of the Church. And so we see the men of theology coming out to parley with the men of science, a white flag in their hands, and saying: "If you will let us alone, we will do the same by you. Keep to your own province; do not enter ours. The Reign of Law which you proclaim we admit—outside these walls, but not within them. Let there be peace between us." But this will never do. There can be no such treaty dividing the domain of Truth. Every one truth is connected with every other truth in this great universe of God. The connection may be one of infinite subtlety and apparent distance—running, as it were, underground for a long way—but always asserting itself at last, somewhere, and at some time. No bargaining, no fencing off the ground, no form of process, will avail to bar this right of way. Blessed right, enforced by blessed power! Every truth, which is truth indeed, is charged with its own consequences, its own analogies, its own suggestions. These will not be kept outside any artificial boundary; they will range over the whole field of thought; nor is there any corner of it from which they can be warned away.'

In the 'Philosophy of Belief,' which deals especially with law in theology, the following words occur, which harmonize with the thought expressed in the above passage:

'The correspondence between the intelligence of man and the structure of the universe could not stop where mechanical explanations ended. It must extend to higher things. The wings of thought must be as much an adjusted mechanism as the wings of flight. This was an idea which justified and encouraged some kinds of doubt, whilst it acted as a powerful solvent upon others. On the one hand, it encouraged and justified a reasonable scepticism on every dogma of the schools which is really obnoxious to the instructed reason or to the enlightened conscience; on the other hand, it

put an end to that bottomless distrust of all thought, and of all reasoning upon spiritual things, which is, as it were, a suicide of the soul.'

The summing up of this volume, the last philosophical work given by the Duke to the world, is added here, because it expresses so entirely his own assured belief, which could not in any other words be so well defined as in his own :

'Perhaps the greatest testimony of all to the supreme rank of Christian belief as a system of philosophy is in its evidently unexhausted reserve of power. The great things it has accomplished in the reform and elevation of human life and character are little, indeed, compared with the results which it would obviously accomplish if it were really understood, and if its dominion were thoroughly established. Christianity is infinitely greater than all Christians, and than all the Churches. Corruptions entered almost at the beginning. Persecuting doctrines and practices have defamed its history, and the most hideous cruelties have been esteemed duties enacted by its commands. Yet every abuse of this kind is now seen to have been condemned by some one or more of its fundamental principles. And so it will be with every other abuse which may come to be detected in the course of time. "O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken"*—these are the words recorded by the Apostles as addressed to two of the disciples by their risen Master. They are words which may well have to be repeated often to other disciples from age to age until that unexhausted teaching of His has come, slowly and gradually, to be better comprehended. Of no other teaching, of no other philosophy, can this be said. It, and it alone, among the many which have passed across the stage of human history, seems large enough to be capable of containing all the yet unknown

* Luke xxiv. 25.

treasures of wisdom and knowledge. Its whole spirit is the spirit of devotion to truth—to truth in conduct. It hates every form and shadow of untruth. It classes with the most hideous sins "whatsoever loveth and maketh a lie."* It loves knowledge, and it loves the love of it. It sets before its disciples, as the greatest of all their rewards, the hope of "knowing even as they are known."† It takes special note of the unsatisfied, and apparently unsatisfiable, desires of men as a significant fact in their mental constitution. Lucretius calls it "the thankless nature of the mind," and adds the beautifully plaintive line: "Nec tamen explemur vitai fructibus unquam." With irresistible reason Christian philosophy correlates that fact with the inexhaustibility of the Creator's works, and regards this unappeasable hunger of the human soul as the natural result of the correspondingly immense capabilities of a creature made in his image, and always, in proportion to the awakening of its faculties, finding intense delight in the appreciation and understanding of His mind and works. The practical use it makes of this correlation, and the practical inference it draws, is the thoroughly intelligible and rational assurance that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man to conceive, what God hath prepared for them that love Him." '

On Tuesday, the 30th of July, 1895, the Duke was married in the private chapel of The Palace at Ripon to Ina, youngest daughter of Archibald McNeill, of Colonsay, Argyllshire, and Private Secretary to Queen Victoria. A quotation from a letter, written by the Queen the day previous to the marriage, shows the kind interest Her Majesty felt on the occasion:

'DEAREST INA,

'I think of you much, and shall especially on Tuesday.'

* Rev. xxii. 15. † 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

On the occasion of his marriage, the tenantry on his estates in Kintyre presented an address to the Duke, which is quoted here, as showing his relations as a landowner to his tenantry in Argyll, and their appreciation of all he had done for the benefit and advancement of the people on his estates :

'*To His Grace the Duke of Argyll, K.G., K.T.*

'MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE,

'We, the undersigned tenants on the Kintyre estates, and others, hail the present auspicious occasion as a fitting opportunity for giving expression to our sincere appreciation of your worth. While we gladly honour your outstanding ability as a statesman, a litterateur, and a scientist, we desire to acknowledge your thoughtful generosity as a proprietor.

'We regard ourselves as fortunate in having as a landlord one who has been ever ready to note adverse influences and changing conditions in agriculture and to render assistance in the most helpful form. Through your favour the revaluation of your estate resulted in reductions of rent, in keeping with agricultural values; improvements in farm steadings, labourers' cottages, fencing, draining, etc., have, through your liberality, been carried out at great cost, and with the most satisfactory results.

'We are deeply grateful for the encouragement given by you to the breeding of Clydesdale horses, and the improvements in the methods of dairy farming; and we are not unmindful of the fact that we obtained, long before we were entitled to it, the benefit of the Ground Game Act.

'In conclusion, we trust that you and your Duchess may long be spared to enjoy every blessing.'

The address bears the signatures of about one hundred and eighty of the tenants in Kintyre.

The Duke, as a large land-owner, had given much attention from an early age to the study of land-tenure, and of questions affecting the security and prosperity of rural populations. As he stated in his autobiography, he was a 'land reformer,' and he derived the greatest pleasure from seeing the change effected on the appearance of tracts of country, where excellent farm-houses and steadings had replaced old thatched dwellings, and improved agriculture had given to the face of the land a smiling aspect. He truly fulfilled his part towards rendering the possessions of his forefathers, as he used to express it, 'a goodly heritage.'

In connection with his work and responsibilities as a proprietor of large estates, the fact may be mentioned, to which allusion is made in the autobiography, that during the period of fifty years—from the time of his succession to the Argyll estates in 1847 to the year 1897—he expended, out of income, a sum amounting to over £554,000* in the improvement of his properties; and, owing to his wise and far-seeing policy in the management of his estates, they were doubled in value during the period of his ownership.

The Duke's economic studies, which were first prompted by the duties of his position, were afterwards extended over the history of Scotland, as viewed from an economic standpoint, and the results were embodied in a volume entitled 'The Unseen Foundations of Society,' published in 1893. In the preface to this work, he wrote with regard to his interest in the science of political economy:

'My own education on the subject began with the circumstances which brought about the memorable

* This fact is quoted from a legally attested statement, drawn up by desire of the Duke in 1897.

conversion of Sir Robert Peel. I was a constant and attentive listener, under the gallery of the House of Commons, to the great debates which preceded and followed his attainment of power in 1821.'

A letter written by the Duke when he was between sixteen and seventeen years old, to Mr. John Campbell, gives a description of one of his early visits to the House of Commons:

'*February 27th*, 1840.

'I came to London in time to hear the two last nights of the debate upon Sir T. Bulwer's motion. On the first of these I heard Lord Stanley deliver the very fine speech which you have, of course, read. On the second I heard that splendid oration of Sir R. Peel. I waited from five o'clock in expectation of hearing him, and was gratified as soon as the great "Dan"* sat down, which was at twelve o'clock. The three hours he occupied with his speech passed like half an hour, and the moment he sat down, which was at three o'clock in the morning, I bolted, just turning my head enough to see that John Russell was on his legs. "Hech, sirs, it's time to be aff noo!" The character of the illustrious Duke† at the end of Peel's speech was really beautiful, and *so* impressively delivered.'

A few quotations from 'Unseen Foundations of Society' give an idea of the Duke's views on economic questions. In the preface to the book he states that 'the doctrine of Burke, often praised by Cobden, and since epitomized by Mr. Morley, seemed to me the only sound doctrine—namely, this: that it is a "futile and mischievous system to deal with agriculture as if it were different from any other branch of commerce."'

* Daniel O'Connell. † Duke of Wellington.

He further adds:

'I have never been in anything like complete sympathy with what was called the "Manchester School." Not a few of them seemed to me to be tainted with the narrow and erroneous teaching of Ricardo, and their language too often implied the curious delusion that Protectionism was the special and the evil device of land-owners. They seemed wholly forgetful of the fact that the trading and manufacturing classes had been the earliest, and for centuries continued to be the most vehement, supporters of Protection and monopolies. Again, the language of that school concerning war, and their complete oblivion of the great part it has played in the progress of mankind, always struck me as unnatural, and especially as unhistorical. Above all, the coldness, to say the least, with which they regarded the contest that ended in the passing of the Factory Acts convinced me that their views of political economy moved within a comparatively contracted circuit of ideas.'

The following passage, which occurs in the book itself, refers to the Duke's earlier study of political economy:

'In reading the old orthodox economists, with however little critical resistance, I had always been more or less conscious of a want—almost on every page—which, even to myself, I could hardly specify or define. They seemed to me like men always sounding in abysmal waters, always busy in recording depths, but wholly unconscious that their lead had never touched the bottom. I felt constantly as if, down below the short limit of their line, there were deep currents running of which they took no note whatever. "We start, for soul is wanting there," was a line of Byron which kept constantly repeating itself in my ear. Many superficial facts were admirably observed, and a tremendous superstructure was often built upon

them. Far more fundamental facts, strictly relevant and cognate, were left, because less gross and palpable, in obscurity and neglect.'

In the summing up of this work the Duke refers more directly to the great subject of Free Trade:

'We all know that in our own time the battle of economic science has been chiefly fought round the question of what are called Protective tariffs. This is only one of the many questions of policy upon which economic science has a special bearing. I do not seek to deny or to detract from the great importance attaching to that question. . . . Neither do I wish to compromise or conceal my own opinion that the argument in favour of Free Trade, or free exchange, between nations as between individuals, is as a general principle triumphant all along the line. But it is very far from the be-all and end-all of economic science. Even when considered in itself alone, there are some limitations on its universal applicability which, in general terms at least, are admitted by the most rigid members of the Cobden School, whilst there are a few of these limitations which I have found specially excepted by the same set of economists.'

In connection with this subject, the following letter to Lord Playfair is of interest, as in it the Duke discussed the question of Free Trade, regarding which he used to say 'the last word has not been spoken':

'INVERARAY,
'*March 9th*, 1888.

'MY DEAR PLAYFAIR,

'I have read your article on the depression with great interest, and I have no doubt your explanation is the right one.

'Free Trader as I have always been, I see that the whole theory has not yet been thought out.

'What do you make of the facts you quote about beet-sugar ? Are you sure that this great trade and great item of production would ever have been brought to what it has become if Napoleon had not pampered it by fiscal protection ?

'I doubt it. At all events, his measures have had this effect.

'Then, again, "depression" means cheapness. It won't do, then, to argue that *mere* cheapness is always and necessarily a benefit.

'Yet it must be always a benefit to those whose *means of purchase remain the same.* But this, again, is exactly the "Fair Traders'" argument that too great cheapness does diminish the purchasing power of large producing classes.

'And this is true, within certain limits, and to a certain extent. Then, again, Free Trade may and does extinguish productions at particular places. The "Free" reply is, "So much the better; the production will go on better elsewhere." Yes; but suppose India extinguishes the jute factories of Dundee ? The Dundeeites won't like it !'

The year 1897, which was memorable as the year of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria, was also the fiftieth year since the Duke's accession to the Argyll title and estates. In the month of May the Duke, at the request of his wife, wrote the following lines to be illuminated and framed for Her Majesty's birthday :

'Thou camest with the May—this month of flowers—
Thy birth a dower of blessings for thy land ;
May He who gave thee then now keep thee still
Safe in the hollow of His Holy Hand !'

Afterwards, thinking over his first meeting with the Queen, when he was a boy of fourteen, he added some verses, the first written forming the last verse of the

little poem which was sent to the Queen. Her Majesty in reply wrote :

'MY DEAR DUKE,

'Thank you so much for your charming lines for my old birthday.'

'TO THE QUEEN.

A Memory of 1837.

(1897.)

'Deep in the shade of Windsor's forest leaves,
When thy young steps had climbed this Island throne,
I saw thee passing with that aged friend*
Whose loyal counsels first inspired thine own.

'Thy Form to me seemed slender for the weight
It had to lift among the crowns of Earth ;
I could not know the sweetness and the strength
Enshrined in thee—as if by right of birth.

'One thing I saw, for as I bent my head
Thou gav'st the wand'ring boy a gracious smile ;
It seemed a radiance of the sun to him,
And lives in mem'ry though a long erewhile.

'And then, midst light and shade of many years,
I've seen thy Queenhood in a golden age,
Unfold the story of thy reign, and tell
Thy sorrows, too, in one pathetic page.

'But never have these sorrows dulled thine eye
For those who suffer pain in all thy realm ;
Few hearts have bled like thine, yet few have known
To speak as thou where troubles overwhelm.

'Thou camest with the May—this month of flowers—
Thy birth a dower of blessings for thy land :
May He who gave thee then now keep thee still
Safe in the hollow of His Holy Hand.'

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* Lord Melbourne.

The Queen's long friendship with the Duke was marked by an extensive correspondence, but, although Her Majesty graciously granted permission for some of those letters to be reproduced in the autobiography, many are of so private a nature that it is deemed advisable only to quote one or two, as evidences of the Queen's great regard for one who had so long served her with such single-minded devotion :

From the Queen (*February 6th*, 1884).

'Dear Duke,

'Pray accept my best thanks for your book,* which looks most interesting, and which I shall like to read when I am a little more quiet. I always admired all you wrote so much. The drawing of the little bird is very pretty. I always think of you when I see any of your favourite birds at Balmoral. . . .

'Believe me always,

'Your affectionate

'V. R. & I.'

'*July* 13*th*, 1893.

'My dear Duke,

'I feel so grateful to you for helping me in my difficult position, as I feel so utterly alone. And from your high position, your experience, your wisdom, and your near connection with me you are so suited to give me good advice and to help me. I thank you so much for your letter.

'Ever your affectionate

'V. R. &. I.'

In commemoration of the Diamond Jubilee of the Queen, the Duke restored a large hall at Inveraray, which had been built about the middle of the previous century, on the banks of the River Aray, at a short

* 'The Unity of Nature.'

distance from the castle. It was originally used as a riding-school and theatre, until it was partially destroyed by fire in 1817. It was now intended to be used for entertainments and lectures for the benefit of the tenantry. On the occasion of the opening of the hall, a ball was given, at which the county and tenantry were entertained. At the commencement of the proceedings, addresses of congratulation were presented to the Duke by the Provost and magistrates of the Royal Borough of Inveraray, by the tenantry, and by the Kirk Session. In these, allusion was made to the 'pride' with which his people, 'in common with the whole of Scotland,' had watched his 'brilliant career in statesmanship, philosophy, science, and literature' during his long public life, and they concluded with expressions of attachment, and grateful recognition of his 'many acts of generosity and kindness.'

In his reply, the Duke, while expressing his gratification at the touching addresses he had received, made a point of stating that the festivities were primarily in honour of the Diamond Jubilee of 'our beloved and incomparable Queen.'

A few weeks later, the Jubilee Hall was again in requisition on the occasion of the inauguration of a Literary Society at Inveraray, when the Duke delivered an address* on the subject, 'What is Science?' which was illustrated by diagrams painted by himself.

This lecture is alluded to in a letter to Lord Dufferin, who, with Lady Dufferin and one of his daughters, had left Inveraray a few days before:

'Your visit here was a great pleasure to me. It brought back old days so nearly and dearly, and at *our* age such repetitions are precarious. . . .

* This address was afterwards published.

'Last night I had a triumph very astonishing to myself. I had engaged to deliver a lecture, and expected to speak about an hour, when, lo! and behold, when I sat down I found I had spoken exactly two hours—a perfect torrent of talk, and my voice as strong as it ever was in my life! I could not have believed it possible beforehand. It is the longest speech I ever made in my life.'

From his childhood, natural history had been a great interest in the Duke's life, as he relates in his autobiography. Perhaps no sensitive child, growing up to boyhood and youth in Argyllshire, could ever afterwards be altogether deaf to the voices of wind and water, or blind to the suggestions of mountain and mist and sea. The mystical emotion aroused by these influences was interwoven with his thoughts on all the varied questions of high import which so early engrossed his mind. It blended with his religious belief, and even tinged with poetry his speculations on those branches of science which seem to have the least affinity with the imaginative faculty. Gradually he was led to take up the study of the natural sciences one after another, and to follow their rapid development with unwearied zeal to the end of life. It is in some of his poems that his feeling for Nature finds its fullest expression. In one of his later poems he describes Glenshira, near Inveraray:

'I hear the sound of torrents, and the air
  Is full of liquid murmur from the hills;
I see delaying clouds on summits bare,
  The wand'ring fountains of a thousand rills.
Beneath my feet the low, soft music tones
  Of crystal waters from the dash and fall
Now rise from ripples over silver stones,
  Slow passing into pools which hush them all.

There, trembling for a while beneath the fern,
They glide beside fair banks of meadow-sweet,
Repay the patience of the watching hern
With crimson-spotted trout; and then they greet
Their own great father by the mountain-side
That looks for ever on his rhythmic tide.'

Of the song of the willow-wren he wrote:

'It hath some mystic power to raise
Dreams of a world unknown.'

And of the wind on the lonely moor:

'I know not whence it came
Nor how its accents fell;
But the blessed words it spake to me—
These I remember well.'

The Duke's close observation of Nature is illustrated by the following story, told in his own words, of his discovery of a very rare fungus in a fir-cone carried by a raven in flight:

'A raven flew over my head the other day at Inveraray with something in his bill. I shouted, and he dropped it. I found it was a fir-cone presenting an unusual appearance, from being covered on the inside of each scale with a small parasitical fungus. I know nothing of the fungi, but I guessed that if the raven thought it curious it probably was so. I sent it to Sir William Hooker, and he writes to me that it is the *Parichena strobilina*, of which *only one other specimen* has ever been found in Scotland, and that it is very rare anywhere! Had the raven a private museum?'

The study of ornithology always possessed a great attraction for the Duke. He looked on birds as almost human in their alert intelligence. 'I am satisfied,'

he wrote to Professor Palgrave, 'that the lower animals, and especially birds, do enjoy immensely the "aspect of Nature," though they don't write poems thereupon.'

His observation of bird life began very early. At the age of thirteen he wrote the following letter to Sir James Stewart of Allanbank:

'ARDENCAPLE,
'*January* 17*th*, 1837.

'MY DEAR SIR JAMES,

'I received the other night by Sir James Riddell the valuable box which you have been so kind as to send to me, and know not how to thank you for so handsome a present. Your etchings and the plates of Jenmark are the most beautiful things I ever saw, but it will be a long time before I can copy the latter, though I have begun painting birds from nature. The accuracy with which each pattern of the birds is delineated surprises me a good deal, and makes me long to be able to do the same. I think the stuffed specimens you sent me very beautiful, especially the shrike, which is really a very beautiful bird. The other day I had the falcons out at Rosneath, and had the pleasure of seeing one flight at a partridge, but it got into cover too soon to give the hawk much chance. He happened to pass close to me, and the noise he made in the air was like a rifle-bullet. It was really a beautiful sight, and I wish you had been there to see it. The flight of the trained eagle which you describe must have been very grand, though the sport must have been rather a dangerous one. This severe weather has sent away all the woodcocks from us, and I think they have gone further west, where the weather is in all probability more open; however, it has brought more divers into the loch, and yesterday, whilst crossing over to Rosneath, the head of a great Northern diver appeared close to the boat, but I could not get a shot at it. It kept an amazing

time under water, and then put its head above, and then down again immediately. I have sent the gamekeeper to-day to Rosneath along the shore to see if he can get anything new for my pencil, the plates of Jenmark having made me ten times more anxious to be able to paint birds well. Sir James Riddell is going to give me a beautiful specimen of the wild swan, which will arrive, I hope, to-day ; I am very anxious to see it. You mention in your letter that Adelaide* seems determined to go to Canada with Lord Arthur, but I hope that either the *suppression* or *suspension* of Papineau and his companions in rebellion will dispense with the necessity of sending out any more troops, and release poor Adelaide from such an ordeal.

'With kindest remembrances to Lady Stewart, and many thanks for her kindness,

'I am, dear Sir James,
'Yours sincerely,
'GEORGE D. CAMPBELL.

'P.S.—I have painted the blue-tit, the cole-tit, the longtailed-tit, the green linnet, and yellow-hammer with pretty good success.

'G. D. CAMPBELL.'

In 1839, at the age of sixteen, he wrote again to Sir James Stewart:

'MY DEAR SIR JAMES,

'I have given up drawing landscape, and have turned my attention more successfully, and much more to my taste, to the drawing and painting of birds. To do this well I have a great ambition, as ornithology has ever been my favourite study, and in this I am glad to think that I am writing to a sympathizer. I have really succeeded beyond my expectations in this way, and hope you will agree with me when you have an opportunity of seeing some specimens of my powers.

* Lady Arthur Lennox, cousin to the Duke.

AILSA CRAIG FROM MACHARIOCH.

From a picture by The Duke of Argyll.

Only think of my arrogance when I tell you that I am contemplating having a lithograph taken of a drawing and painting I have made of a peregrine falcon, one of those which a gamekeeper near us has trained to hunt in the old style of falconry! I have taken a regular ornithological drawing of this magnificent bird, having delineated each feather, and with what success I hope soon to enable you to judge.

'The cross-bills have now left us—at least, I have not seen or heard of any for a long time. I was amused with your description of the frigate bird, but you have drawn a deduction from the length of its wings and smallness of its body which I am afraid will not hold good. You seem to think that its flight must in consequence be very quick or, to use your own word, "prodigious." Now a bird's flight is in the inverse ratio to the size of its wing in proportion to the weight of its body, as you may see by comparing the flight of the heron (whose wings are enormous in proportion to the weight of her body) with that of the red-throated diver (whose wings are so small that it requires the bird to make them go like a fly-wheel to keep her up at all). You will find that the latter goes at a tremendous rate, while the former goes in a slow and laboured manner; the greater the bird's downward tendency in proportion to its supporting power, the quicker the bird flies, because the greater is the impetus which the wings have merely to direct and support.'

Painting continued to be one of the Duke's favourite recreations in later days. He preferred oil to water-colour as a medium, and as he was a very rapid worker, he possessed many records of beautiful scenes which had impressed and delighted him. Of his pictures it may be said that they showed truthful observation of Nature, both in colour and form. His sketches were not only portraits of the places depicted, but even the

special character of the passing clouds was noticed and portrayed. His geological drawings were remarkable for their accuracy and reliability for scientific purposes, and his knowledge of geology caused him sometimes to criticise the works of artists, in which, however beautifully executed, rocks were depicted of a formation unknown in the locality represented.

The study of birds, which was his first intellectual interest, possessed the same fascination for the Duke all his life. On March 2nd, 1896, he wrote to Lord Lilford:

'I hope you will allow a very old friend as an ornithologist to introduce himself to you as a friend also in that personal acquaintance which I have long desired, for I wish to congratulate you on the beautiful and charming book on the birds of Northamptonshire which I have been reading with delight for several days, having read also all you have written for many years on that branch of natural science which has been my great attraction since I was a child.

'There are many points in your book which have interested me greatly; one especially—namely, your success in establishing or increasing the little owl. It is a most difficult thing to do, to establish any species in a new habitat. I made a gallant attempt some twenty years ago to introduce the nut-hatch (a great favourite of mine) in Argyllshire. I have there woods of oak, beech, and pine of great age and size, and very extensive in range. I bought at Brighton some dozen or more nut-hatches, let them out in May, when the insect life was becoming abundant, but not one was ever seen again! Yet they must have traversed miles and miles of open mountainous land in order to escape southward. Is it possible that they can all have been of one sex? I don't think so, although I do not know very well how far the sexes are different in plumage in that species.

'Anent the dipper, I need not say how I agree with you in loving them. I have three salmon streams in my estates which they haunt. I never allow one to be shot. We have many pairs, but they never seem to increase much. As to their propensities, I have had ocular demonstration that they eat fish, and that greedily. Twice I have seen a dipper with a fish in his bill—one was a trout or salmon fry, the other was a small flounder. This was in the sea-pool of the river Aray below my house. The flounder was, of course, a small one, but it was as broad as the white waistcoat of its devourer. I had a good glass, and saw the dipper emerge with the little flounder in his bill. He then took it to a large boulder-stone near the bank, and began beating it to death against the stone. Twice it slipped off into the stream, and each time it was firmly pursued and brought back to the block! All aquatic piscivorous birds seem to have a way of doubling and folding up the flat fishes they catch so as to get them down, but I did not see the feat performed in the present case. Do you think the little owl would live if simply turned out at Inveraray? I have some fear lest, though we have plenty of mice, the comparative scarcity of the larger Coleoptera, such as cockchafers, would make living difficult for them in Scotland. You seem to have supplied food to them for a considerable time. I bought two "civette" in Rome, and took them in a cage with me home. We travelled with Gladstone. He was immensely captivated by the brilliant yellow eyes of the birds. They fastened them on Gladstone's brown eyes with a fixed stare, and he took it into his head to try if he could stare them out of countenance. He continued to joke all the way from Rome to near Perugia, and at last the owls gave it up and looked away. He seemed as delighted as if he had won a great Parliamentary triumph. The Italian "civetta" is not, I think, the same species as our "little bird," but I have never seen this bird in "the flesh." I did not know

till last year that we possessed the long-eared owl in Argyllshire, but one was caught last spring in a trap set to guard some young pheasant chicks.'

To Lord Lilford.

'I send you a little volume of poems* I published a few years ago, for the sake of some verses on birds which you will find in it. You will see what a favourite of mine is the dipper. The story of the swallow at Danbury is literally true.

* * * * *

'Is it not true that the rattle of woodpeckers on rotten trees is the only instance of instrumental music in nature?'

From the volume above referred to, the following poem is quoted:

'SONG OF THE WATER-OUSEL (DIPPER).

'My home is on the rivers
That run among the hills,
Through all the sloping valleys,
Down all the moorland rills.

'But clear must be the waters
As they glide and rush along,
And the woodlands must be lonely
That harken to my song.

'For there my rhythmic numbers
Are spread among the stones,
And the listening water answereth
In its own low murmuring tones.

'And thus we keep such melody
As the world has never known,
For the river never ceaseth
To love me as its own.

---

* 'Burdens of Belief and other Poems,' published January, 1894.

'I love it for the gladness
It speaketh in my ear,
In all its wayward windings
Through the cycle of the year.

'For in the months of summer,
When its gentlest currents run
In streams of liquid amber
All golden in the sun;

'And in the months of winter,
When every stone is set
In fretted sheets of silver
That have not melted yet,

'We keep our music sounding
When other birds are still,
Singing, singing, evermore
At our own sweet will.

'And when the primrose opens
Its soft and steady eye,
We then begin our nesting,
My merry wife and I.

'We choose some bank o'erhanging,
And weave a wondrous dome,
Where she can hear the waters
And watch the specks of foam

'That come from all the breakings,
Though they be miles away,
Yet never miss the eddies
That bring them by her way.

'And all the days of summer
We dive into its breast;
And we rout among the pebbles,
And feed the teeming nest.

'And we love to see the shimmer
As it rushes overhead,
And we flutter in the noises
That gurgle from its bed;

'And we scatter little cataracts
That tumble through our wings
When we shake the drops from off us
In a shower of silver rings.

'And when we see the movings
Of little wings that strive,
We never need to teach them
Or how to swim or dive.

'For the music of the river
Has taught them ere we know,
As came their glossy feathers,
As came their breasts of snow.

'For the pleasant river loved them
Before they left the nest;
It laves them in its ripples,
It bears them on its breast.

'And from its banks of blaeberry
The tall, white stalks of grass
Bend down their plumes to watch us
And cheer us as we pass.

'Then we hunt the golden shallows,
We sound the crystal deeps,
And rest where round some boulder stone
The languid current sleeps.

'At last, a merry family,
We face the autumn weather,
And spread all up the mountain rills,
By banks of fern and heather.'

From Lord Lilford (*March* 13*th*, 1896).

'DEAR DUKE OF ARGYLL,

'Thank you most cordially for your letter of the 11th about the "Burdėns of Belief and Other Poems" just received. I have only as yet had time to dip into your preface, which requires close attention and careful thought; but I may say that your "Dipper's Song," the "Danbury Swallow," and most of all "Selborne," have given me most pure delight.

* * * * *

'I should say that, unless you admit feathers as instruments, the woodpecker's rattle *is* the only instance of mechanical bird music, in this country at all events. I trust that you are better, and remain

'Yours most truly obliged,

'LILFORD.'

The correspondence with such an eminent ornithologist was a great pleasure to the Duke, as their tastes were in such perfect sympathy, and he deeply regretted the death of Lord Lilford, which took place only a few weeks after the letter quoted above was written.

On June 24th, 1896, Lady Lilford wrote:

'I feel I owe a debt of gratitude to you; your letters were a great pleasure to him, and your book of poems. The one to Gilbert White delighted him. He said there was "refreshment" in it to him. He read it often to me, and only two days before his sudden illness.'

A letter from the late Lord Selborne (September 21, 1893) refers to the same poems:

'I am very glad that you are taking steps for the publication of your poems. They are well worthy of

it, and will be widely read. I am not prepared at present to say which I like best. "Selborne" is very good, but I am not sure that it is *best.*'

The first verse of the poem on the 'Selborne' of Gilbert White, which has been specially alluded to, is here quoted:

'SELBORNE.

'How oft in sickness, when the languid brain
 Longed for the freshness of a summer wood,
And the tired reason could not bear the strain
 Of ordered thinking which before it stood,
Have I, so longing, just re-read the page
 Of him who wrote of Selborne and its birds,
To whom through years of slow and peaceful age
 Did kindly Nature whisper all her words,
Of spring and summer and of autumn sheaves,
 Of strange soft days in winter out of place,
When wakened swallows flew without the leaves,
 And stranger wings had lit in Wolmer chace.'

The Duke was an ardent lover of poetry, and, as his published poems show, he was himself practised in the art of verse, with which he sometimes beguiled spare moments in his busy life. His poems express chiefly the thoughts of a student of Nature, but some are tributes to friends. In choice of subject, as in attitude of mind, the Duke was a pupil of Wordsworth, as he mentions in a letter to Professor Palgrave, to whose criticism he frequently submitted his verses:

'You are quite right,' he wrote, 'as to the early source of any poetry I may have in me. All the earlier part of my life I was a Wordsworthian.'

At a later date, when the star of the great poet Tennyson had risen on the world, the Duke placed

him far before all other poets in his estimation. They met first in the house of Lord John Russell, on the evening of March 3rd, 1851, and the acquaintance then made ripened into a warm and close friendship, of which a record is preserved in the many letters which passed between them, some of which have already been published in the memoirs of Lord Tennyson, written by his son. Some hitherto unpublished letters are given here :

'*September 23rd*, 1859.

'MY DEAR MR. TENNYSON,

'I meant to have written to you some days ago, when, to us, an inscrutable paragraph appeared in the papers, to the effect that a Lisbon steamer had brought a lot of bullion *and* the Poet Laureate. As we had not heard you speak of going either to Portugal or elsewhere abroad, and as just before we left town I had heard from you, on your way to London, I was greatly puzzled, and write to ask what you have been doing and seeing, if you will tell us.

'Meanwhile, how have your idylls flourished ? I found before I left town that Gladstone carried them in his pocket, and I rather think you will be responsible for a spoilt Budget ! Beautiful as I thought them at first, I find new beauties every time I read them. By-the-by, Macaulay, when I last saw him, was in great hopes that you would pursue the subject, and particularly mentioned the legend of the Sangreal as one capable of being made much of in your hands, as also the latter days and death of Lancelot. Do give us more, when you can. One's greed is insatiable. . . .

'Yours most sincerely,

'ARGYLL.'

To Mr. Tennyson (January 20th, 1860).

'. . . We have mourned over Macaulay's death. He had dined with us on December 6th, and I never saw him in greater force, or with more abundance of knowledge and anecdote. I have been allowed to choose a book from his library as a remembrance. I wonder which you would have chosen. I "swithered" —do you know that Scottish word for hesitated?—between two—an edition of Crabbe's "Tales of the Hall" and of Sarpi's "History of the Council of Trent," both full of his pencil notes.

'At last I chose the latter, as most interesting and historical. Your "Sea Dreams" have beautiful descriptions, although I do not quite like, as I told you, the frame of the picture. By all means let us have in such form of publication, or any other, such bits as you may have beside you; but I want you to go on with the larger design and the cycle of subjects on which you must have thought so long and much. In the last note you wrote to me you said you had, long ago, done what Macaulay suggested—written on the Sangreal — and had lost what you had written. Do not leave the subject, pray. There are many vacant places yet at your Round Table. Fill them up, do.

'Sumner was delighted with his visit to you.

'Ever yours,

'ARGYLL.'

To Mr. Tennyson (October 28th, 1861).

'It seems a very long time since we have heard of or from you. What have you been doing? And what are you doing? And how is your wife?

'We did hear a report about "Boadicea" as forthcoming, but we did not believe it, though I should be glad to hear it was all true. We have had such a season as never was, even in this country. Rain, rain, rain—sixteen inches of it in one month! But now

that we are about to leave, the weather is superb, but cold. The Duchess was so ill last winter that we intend to pass December on the shores of the Mediterranean this year. We go southward in a few days, and if you are disposed to be good and charitable, you may give us a little account of yourself addressed to Clieveden, Maidenhead, about the 10th November. Have you seen *Auvergne?* I always wish to go there. It must be beautiful—granite craters, and chestnut-woods on lava streams. Do you care much about America just now? We are far more Northern than most of our friends. Poor Motley had to flee the country. He thought its Southern "proclivities" so irksome. . . .

'Will you give your wife our kindest regards. I hope she is well, and your two boys.

'Ever yours,

'ARGYLL.'

The Poet Laureate read to the Duke, at Argyll Lodge, in 1857, the proof-sheets of the 'Idylls of the King,' before they had been given to the world. The Duke, who was greatly impressed by the splendour of the poems, afterwards composed a few lines, which are inserted here, and which were included in a little volume which he dedicated to Lady Tennyson:

'I hear the voice whose organ tones
Will sound through Time for ever,
While mourning hearts still live in love
That Death has failed to sever;—
Strong human voice, deep, tender, true
To every mood of sorrow,
To broken accents round the grave,
And to the calmer morrow;
To blessed memories of the dead:
To converse pure and high
In fruitful gardens of the soul
'Mid blooms that cannot die;

To clouds that gather in the dark,
Then break with flash and thunder
In rending strokes that leave us mute;
The mystery and the wonder
That wait on death. All chords are thine:
They tremble under thee.
Oh! sound again to soothe and bless
Sad souls that are to be.'

The Duke's poem on 'The Burial of Alfred, Lord Tennyson, in Westminster Abbey, October 12th, 1892,' was written, as he stated in the preface to a small volume of verses* in which it was afterwards included, 'under a painful impression of the total omission, or the very inadequate recognition, in many other obituary verses, of the noble religious and ethical character—the "splendid purpose"—of the great Laureate's writings.' The Duke added that he would hardly have ventured to present these verses to the public, as even an approach to the tribute due to Tennyson on the most majestic aspects of his poetry, had they not been kindly accepted as such by Lady Tennyson.

From this poem the following verses are quoted:

'Prophet and Bard, whose every word
Will be the home, through coming years,
Of all who speak this English tongue
In life and joy, in death and tears.

'We lay thee in our sorrow down,
Remembering all that thou hast said
Of those who hold, in seeming sleep,
The vaster knowledge of the dead.

'In daring, yet in reverent thought,
Unbound by forms which others need,
Thine eyes were fixed with longing gaze
On Him who is the "Life indeed."

* 'Burdens of Belief and Other Poems,' published 1894.

'"Strong Son of God, Immortal Love,"
Are words which came from out thine heart.
We feel them breathing through thy song
In all its melodies of Art.

'The mysteries of the world to thee
In all its present, all its past,
Dissolved in one undying faith
That "Love will conquer at the last."

* * * * *

'No voice so strong to spread your fame,
Heroic deeds, recorded here,
No voice so tender or so true
For those who stand around the bier.

'And when the gate of science throws
Too wide her door to guesses wild,
No tones like thine may call them back
"To wisdom as the elder child."

* * * * *

'And all to perfect music set,
In tones as sweet as silver bells,
Or those dear notes in which the thrush
His love to quiet woodland tells.'

* * * * *

Regarding this poem, Lady Tennyson wrote (December 9th, 1892):

'My dear Duke of Argyll,

'I cannot say how grateful we are for the beautiful poem, nor how still more deeply grateful for the love and insight which it breathes.'

On hearing from the Duke that he proposed to publish these lines in the *National Review* for January, 1893, Lady Tennyson wrote (December 29th, 1892):

'Best thanks for telling me of your intention. We are delighted, as you will know when I say that we

were questioning whether we might make bold to ask you if Hallam might put your poem into his memoir, if you had no other destiny for it.'

To Professor Palgrave, the Duke expressed his enthusiastic admiration for the great Laureate in the following words (November 27th, 1892):

'One feels now, already, how great Tennyson was! Nobody to come within a thousand miles of him.'

The Duke frequently corresponded with Professor Palgrave upon literary subjects, chiefly in connection with poetry, and with regard to the little volume of poems by the Duke, dedicated to Lady Tennyson, Mr. Palgrave wrote as follows (February 9th, 1894):

'Very many thanks for the very interesting and valuable book. It is perhaps little to say that it is a much worthier publication than nineteen out of twenty books of poetry brought out now that the great voices are silent. If I may say so, its merits both in thought and in art amply justify its appearance.'

To Professor Palgrave (*September* 21*st*, 1894).

'Many thanks for your very kind letter about my book.* I am much pleased that you regard it so favourably, for, though you do not call yourself a man of science, you are enough of a philosopher to form a sound judgment on the *bearing* of any argument on the greater questions which lie behind and beyond all the natural sciences.'

To Professor Palgrave (*June* 11*th*, 1892).

'As Wordsworth says, rhymes should seem as *inevitable* as possible. But the most inevitable-seeming rhymes I know are, very often, Pope's; and this in

* 'The Unity of Nature.'

numberless passages in which they simply put the bells on good *common-sense*—vigorous expression of thought, comparatively *un*-poetic !

'But I am not a critic by nature, nor by habit. I know what I admire, yet often find it hard to answer, "Why ?" '

In Professor Palgrave's second series of the 'Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics,' he included a small poem by the Duke of Argyll.

The following poems by the Duke are given as examples of his style :

'TO TRUTH.

'Amidst the tongues and noises of the way
Loud sounds of passion and the thoughtless cries
That fill this world, confounding all our day,
I cannot hear the wisdom of the wise,
Nor that small voice that comes to those who love
To catch the lowest whispers of the Truth,
With strong desire that cometh from above,
And was my Master in my days of youth;
My Master still; for still I long to see
Th' eternal laws on which the worlds repose,
Statutes ordained that cannot cease to be,
Wreaking their silent vengeance on His foes
Whose Will they are, and which He blesseth so,
That crowns of Life they wear who find and know.'

The Duke was a great admirer of the poems of Mr. William Watson. He did not, however, agree with the sentiment expressed by the poet in the following lines :

'Forget not, brother singer ! that though Prose
Can never be too truthful or too wise,
Song is not Truth, not Wisdom, but the rose
Upon Truth's lips, the light in Wisdom's eyes.

'William Watson.'

In reply to these lines, the Duke wrote :

'Ah no! my brother singer, thou dost wrong
The Poet's empire and the fount of song.
It is not aught that lightly comes and goes;
It lieth not in perfume of the rose,
Passing, evanescent, like the hues that play
On fall of waters in the blaze of day.
No surface smile on lip, no glance in eyes
Can wield the tender spell in verse that lies,
Verse that doth live, sweet-sounding down the years,
For those who joy, for those who move in tears,
For all whose sense is tuned to catch the beats
That come from pulses in the high retreats
Where spirit meets with spirit in the lone,
And hears the music of th' Eternal Throne;
Then pours it out again, because its strings
Still shake with impulse from the heart of things.

No links of reason are too strong for thee
To weld in thy great light, divinest Poesy!
'Tis thine to image all the gains of truth
In the clear glass of thine immortal youth;
Thy blessèd Bards are moved from age to age
To sing thy tones in some illumined page:
Thy servant, Knowledge, all that she can find
Is word and counsel of great Nature's mind,
The harmonies unbounded, and the roll
Of notes that sound the triumphs of the soul.
Sometimes in thunder and in trembling Earth
Thou hear'st the powers that gave the planets birth.
Nor less thy measured numbers tell the hours
That shape the bud and open all the flowers.
The tuneful lines that fret the ocean-shell,
But chime the years that it has heard the swell
In silent stillness, list'ning to the roar
Of stormy waters breaking on the shore.
Lift up your heads, ye Poets, for in you
Shines forth the truth that Beauty is The True.

'ARGYLL.'

Two stanzas of a poem entitled 'An Island Home' are added, as they describe so vividly the islands of the West, which he loved:

II.

'Blow, blow, ye winds of ocean, waft to me
The gleaming vapours from your fields of foam,
The boundless conversation of the sea,
The glorious voices of my early home;
And you, ye clouds of heaven, roll for aye
The gorgeous pageant of your eve and morn;
Build up your mighty mountains in the sky,
And with great lines of battlement adorn
The wondrous masonry ye work on high:
Nor less come ye, descending from your throne,
Come down and dwell on these fair hills of earth,—
On capes of ancient fire that were your own,
When smoke and bellowing flame proclaimed their birth.
Come, too, and drift where now the summer smiles
On fragments of a land—these blessèd isles.

III.

'To-day—in this dark passage of my years
I come to greet your rocks and heath again,
Not free, alas! from trouble and the tears
Which follow hard on all the ways of men.
The seabird skims along its rifted shores;
I hear the plover from the sandy dune;
The seal floats calmly on her silent oars;
Blue ocean shimmers as in suns of June;
Great Nature takes no heeding of our pains
In her calm footsteps to eternal day;
She recks not of our losses or our gains—
Hears now no voices calling me away.
Fain could I hide this sad and burdened breast
Beneath these golden sands where Vikings rest.

'ARGYLL.'

Many have spoken of the great charm of the Duke's conversation, the spell of which was felt by all who were included in the circle of his friends. The happy manner in which he could converse on the deepest subjects, clothing them with the simplicity of language in which his thoughts were habitually so clearly conveyed to others — the flow of anecdotes culled from a wide and interesting experience, enhanced by the quickness of observation which characterized him—the liveliness of his character, and his keen sense of humour —traits which were, perhaps, only known to those who were intimately acquainted with him—all combined to render true of him the words, 'Thy converse drew us with delight.'* The youthfulness of his spirit and his power of enjoyment were lasting possessions. In later years he used to say that he supposed he ought to feel old, but that he never could realize it; only physically did he feel the effect of the years. His was 'the receptive soul for whom the river of life pauseth not, nor is diminished.'† Every hour of his life was full of work, of fresh interest, of added knowledge. He was a learner all his days, an eager listener to all who could impart interesting information, from the wisdom of stored minds, or the practical experience gained by the exercise of mechanical skill. In a memorial speech, the Sheriff of Argyll (Mr. Ferguson of Kinmundy) applied to the Duke lines which were felt to express so well the undimmed ardour of his spirit:

> 'Who knew no touch of Winter in his Soul,
> But kept the Greek gift yet in mind and tongue,
> And who, though having passed life's goal,
> Loved of the gods, died young.'

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* 'In Memoriam,' Tennyson. † George Eliot.

The Bishop of Ripon, alluding in a letter to a visit to Inveraray, writes:

'It is a pleasure to recall those dear days of refreshment and exhilaration, when we sat at the feet of one who could speak so well and so fluently out of the abundance of knowledge and out of the enthusiasm of soul. It was a real pleasure to meet the Duke and to hold converse with him. His quick and well-stored mind, his long experience of men and affairs, his strong and virile gift of utterance, lifted conversation out of the languid and conventional groove. To talk with him was a mental tonic; it refreshed and invigorated thought. As for subjects, there were few which did not interest him. He watched the currents of thought, and he marked the bearing of scientific methods upon ancient beliefs, and felt that he could be true to knowledge and, faith. When he spoke, you knew that he lived in a world which was always wonderful and beautiful to him, and which never ceased to bring its messages of hope and love.

'He delighted in Nature. Whether we drove through the forests aglow with autumn tints, or steamed down the loch and watched the birds skimming over the placid waters, or sat with him in a garden-shelter looking out upon soft-spreading lawn or purple hills, his conversation was full of information or suggestive thought. The age and height of trees, the structure of a bird's wing as an instrument for flying, the story of the rocks, or the deposit carried down by rivers, the romance of growth and change and progress, all formed themes for acute comment or brilliant exposition.

'He was a happy and gifted interpreter, and under his guidance Earth's many voices became articulate—full of music and meaning.'

The following letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury, who visited Inveraray in 1897, when he was

Bishop of Winchester, gives his impression on becoming more intimately acquainted with the Duke :

'My dear Duchess,

'I do not know when I have more keenly enjoyed a visit, and my wife is on that point wholly of one mind with me.

'It has been a very real privilege to have the opportunity of hearing and learning so much from the Duke. Surely there is no other of our contemporaries (I do not except even the master of Hawarden) who is at once so able and willing to give to ordinary folk of the wealth of his knowledge and thoughts on all things in heaven and earth and under the earth.

'I can assure you that I, for one, have got no small profit from the intercourse of this last week, and your own untiring kindness made all things bright save the occasional skies.'

The Duke was particularly well and strong during the autumn of 1899, and the friends who visited Inveraray remarked on his vigour ; but in the month of December he had an attack of gout, which lingered for many weeks and resisted all remedies. He made a gallant fight with failing strength ; life held so much for him, and his life was of great importance to many. There was useful work to be done for his fellow-men ; there was his keen interest in the growth of scientific knowledge, in which he took his part ; there was his wise administration of his great estates, on which the welfare of his people depended, and—he was happy. For all these reasons he would fain have stayed here a little longer, but the steadfast faith which had never failed him all his days made rebellion against the Divine Will an impossibility. He recognised with the old French Saint that 'Quand le bon Dieu nous appelle, nous n'avons rien à dire que "Me voici,"'

and at the call he laid down his arms, after a well-fought field—April 24th, 1900. The impression of the revelation which so strangely came to the child of ten years old had abided with him to the end: 'What do they mean when they speak of death? There is no such thing as death!'