

Genoa. -

May 5th 1829..

My dear Holburne -

This will be presented to you by my friend
Capt. L. McLevin - who at my request - will in-
= troduce himself to you ^{as Member of the Greek Committee} and explain some plans that
he has formed with regard to office, his services
to the Greeks - a subject on which we are all in-
= terested. - I need not say more - than that my
attention to him will be appreciated by me as an
additional obligation ^{due to you} on the part of

Yours ever

To J. Holburne Esq.

M. H.

M. H. -

CONVERSATIONS,

&c.

LONDON :

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CONVERSATIONS

OF

LORD BYRON:

NOTED

DURING A RESIDENCE WITH HIS LORDSHIP

AT PISA,

IN THE YEARS 1821 AND 1822.

BY THOMAS MEDWIN, ESQ.

OF THE 24th LIGHT DRAGOONS,

AUTHOR OF "AHASUERUS THE WANDERER."

A NEW EDITION.

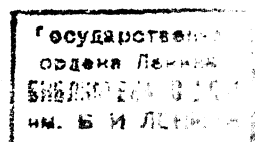
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1824.

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P R E F A C E.

“ A great poet belongs to no country his works are public property, and his Memoirs the inheritance of the public.” Such were the sentiments of Lord Byron; and have they been attended to? Has not a manifest injustice been done to the world, and an injury to his memory, by the destruction of his Memoirs? These are questions which it is now late, perhaps needless, to ask; but I will endeavour to lessen, if not to remedy, the evil.

I am aware that in publishing these reminiscences I shall have to contend with much obloquy from some parts of his

family,—that I shall incur the animosity of many of his friends. There are authors, too, who will not be pleased to find their names in print,—to hear his real opinion of themselves, or of their works. There are others——But I have the satisfaction of feeling that I have set about executing the task I have undertaken, conscientiously: I mean neither to throw a veil over his errors, nor a gloss over his virtues.

My sketch will be an imperfect and a rough one, it is true, but it will be from the life; and slight as it is, may prove more valuable, perhaps, than a finished drawing from memory. It will be any thing but a panegyric: my aim is to paint him as he was. That his passions were violent and impetuous, cannot be denied; but his feelings and affections were equally

strong. Both demanded continual employment; and he had an impatience of repose, a "restlessness of rest," that kept them in constant activity. It is satisfactory too, at least it is some consolation, to reflect, that the last energies of his nature were consumed in the cause of liberty, and for the benefit of mankind.

How I became acquainted with so many particulars of his history, so many incidents of his life, so many of his opinions, is easily explained. They were communicated during a period of many months' familiar intercourse, without any injunctions to secrecy, and committed to paper for the sake of reference only. They have not been shewn to any one individual, and but for the fate of his MS. would never have appeared before the public.

I despise mere writing for the sake of book-making, and have disdained to swell out my materials into volumes. I have given his ideas as I noted them down at the time,—in his own words, as far as my recollection served.

They are however, in many cases, the substance without the form. The brilliancy of his wit, the flow of his eloquence, the sallies of his imagination, who could do justice to? His voice, his manner, which gave a charm to the whole, who could forget?

“ His subtle talk would cheer the winter night,
And make me know myself; and the fire-light
Would flash upon our faces, till the day
Might dawn, and make me wonder at my stay.”

Shelley's *Julian and Maddalo*.

Geneva, 1st August, 1824.

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