CHAPTER LXXV

ALONE IN HIS GLORY

THE old age of the Duke of Wellington was an epic. He is (August 11, 1843) "the only great man."

March 22, 1835: A few nights ago Brougham was speaking in the House of Lords (upon Lord Radnor's motion about university oaths), and was attacking, or rather beginning to attack, the Duke of Wellington in that tone of insolent sarcasm which is so familiar to him, when in the midst of his harangue the Duke from the opposite side lifted up his finger, and said loud enough to be heard, "Now take care what you say next." As if panic-struck, Brougham broke off, and ran upon some other tack. The House is so narrow that Lords can almost whisper to each other across it, and the menacing action and words of the Duke reached Brougham at once.

Bowood, December 12, 1846: . . . Lord John also told Clarendon how cleverly he had managed to get the Duke of Wellington to do a gracious and popular act, which he has hitherto always roughly refused, the bestowal of decorations on the Peninsular soldiers. He advised the Queen to write to the Duke and express her own wish that it should be done. He replied with great alacrity, and expressed his readiness to carry her commands into execution. She then wrote again, and said she wished his name to be connected with the decoration in some way or other. He replied again in a very good letter that he hoped to be allowed to decline this distinction, that he had already been honoured and rewarded far beyond his deserts, and that he was only too happy to have been deemed to have rendered any service to his sovereigns and his country. Lord John, however, is resolved that his name and exploits shall in some way be introduced into the inscription, whatever it may be.

The Reformers had heaved bricks at Apsley House:

June 19, 1833: The King dined with the Duke at his Waterloo dinner yesterday, which does not look as if he had been so very

angry with him as the Government people say. The Duke had his windows mended for the occasion, whether in honour of his Majesty or in consequence of H. B.'s caricature I don't know.

May 19, 1833: . . . I was marvellously struck (we rode together through St. James's Park) with the profound respect with which the Duke was treated, everybody we met taking off their hats to him, everybody in the Park rising as he went by, and every appearance of his inspiring great reverence. I like this symptom, and it is the more remarkable because it is not *popularity*, but a much higher feeling toward him.

"The absolute Courts [of Europe]," wrote Greville on January 7, 1834, "have a great hankering after the Duke, though their Ministers here can hardly look for his return to office."

On June 10, 1834, he was installed as Chancellor of the University of Oxford:

June 15, 1834: . . . Many people kept away at Oxford, which seems to have been a complete Tory affair, and on the whole a very disgraceful exhibition of bigotry and party spirit; plenty of shouting and that sort of enthusiasm, which is of no value except to the foolish people who were the object of it, and who were quite enraptured. The reception of the Duke, however vociferous, can hardly on reflection have given him much pleasure when he saw Newcastle, Winchelsea, Wetherell, and *hoc genus omne* as much the objects of idolatry as himself. Peel very wisely would have nothing to do with the concern, and they are probably very angry with him for absenting himself. The resentment he must feel toward the University on account of their conduct to him [he had been defeated as member over Catholic Emancipation] must afford full scope to all the contempt these proceedings are calculated to excite. There was a vast mob of fine people, Mrs. Arbuthnot among the rest. The Duke made rather indifferent work of his Latin speeches. As usual he seemed quite unconcerned at the applause with which he was greeted; no man ever courted that sort of distinction less.

April 21, 1834: . . . I saw the Duke of Wellington march up at the head of the Doctors to present the Oxford petition, attired in his academical robes; and as I looked at him thus bedight, and then turned my eyes to his portraits in the pictures of his battles which adorn the walls, I thought how many and

various were the parts he had played. He made a great boggling of reading his petition, for it was on a long and broad parchment, and he required both hands to hold it and one to hold his glasses.

July 13, 1847: . . . The Cambridge installation went off with prodigious *éclat*, and the Queen was enchanted at the enthusiastic reception she met with; but the Duke of Wellington was if possible received with even more enthusiasm. It is incredible what popularity environs him in his latter days; he is followed like a show wherever he goes, and the feeling of the people *for him* seems to be the liveliest of all popular sentiments; yet he does nothing to excite it, and hardly appears to notice it. He is in wonderful vigour of body, but strangely altered in mind, which is in a fitful uncertain state, and there is no knowing in what mood he may be found; everybody is afraid of him, nobody dares to say anything to him; he is sometimes very amiable and good-humoured, sometimes very irritable and morose.

June 5, 1842: . . . Last night I went to Hullah's choral meeting at Exeter Hall, where the Queen Dowager appeared. It was fine to see, and fine and curious to hear; but the finest thing was when the Duke of Wellington came in, almost at the end. The piece they were singing stopped at once; the whole audience rose, and a burst of acclamation and waving of handkerchiefs saluted the great old man, who is now the idol of the people. It was grand and affecting, and seemed to move everybody but himself.

The Duke was a social force, witness his banquets at Apsley House (September 8, 1831) with "the Styrian Minstrels playing and singing all dinnertime, a thing I never saw before." Compared with Wellington, his heir Lord Douro, though "far from a dull man and not deficient in information," was only "*une lune bien pâle auprès de son père.*"

Belvoir Castle, January 4, 1838: . . . They said a thousand people were out [at Belvoir], many attracted by the expectation of the Duke of Wellington's appearing, but he was rheumatic and could not come out. He is incessantly employed in writing military statements and memoranda, having been consulted by the Government, or probably by Lord Hill on behalf of the

Government, both on this Canadian question, and on the general government of the army, and he will take as much pains to give useful advice to Melbourne's government as if he and Peel were in office. There never was a man who so entirely sank all party considerations in national objects, and he has had the glory of living to hear this universally acknowledged. Brougham said of him, "That man's first object is to serve his country, with a sword if necessary, or with a pickaxe." He also said of the Duke's despatches, "They will be remembered when I and others (mentioning some of the most eminent men) will be forgotten." Aberdeen told the Duke this, and he replied with the greatest simplicity, "It is very true: when I read them I was myself astonished, and I can't think how the devil I could have written them." This is very characteristic, very curious from a man who has not one grain of conceit in his disposition; but really great men are equally free from undue vanity or affected modesty, and know very well the value of what they do. . . .

Melton, January 7, 1838 (Lord Wilton's house): I came here to-day from Belvoir. Last night the Duke of Wellington narrated the battle of Toulouse and other Peninsular recollections. All the room collected round him, listening with eager curiosity, but I was playing at whist and lost it all.

London, January 28, 1838: . . . The Tories were in high dudgeon with the Duke at his speech in the House of Lords, which they showed in a sort of undergrowl and with rueful faces, for they stand in awe of the great man, and don't dare openly to remonstrate with him or blame his actions. There is no doubt that his speech was essentially serviceable to the Government, and upset one of the most promising topics of its opponents. Francis Egerton came up from the Carlton Club to his own home after it, and said with deep melancholy that "the Duke had floored the coach," and he described the consternation and mortification which were prevalent throughout that patriotic and disinterested society.

Against critics, the Duke defended himself (August, 1840) by saying to Greville, "I know that well enough and I don't care *one damn.* I was afraid that madman [Lord Stanhope] would have a majority and I *have not time not to do what is right.*"

At political crises, if only as a matter of form, the Duke was consulted:

March 2, 1851: . . . On Friday morning the Queen resolved to send for the Duke of Wellington, which, however, was in reality a mere farce, for the Duke can do nothing for her, and can give her no advice but to send for John Russell again. He was on Friday at Strathfieldsaye receiving the Judges and the County, so he only came to town yesterday.

December 14, 1845: . . . He [John Russell] advised her [the Queen] to ask the Duke of Wellington as from herself and before the new government was formed to continue at the Head of the Army as he said the Duke might not choose to remain if invited by John, but probably would if desired by her, and she said she would.

July 22, 1839: I met the Duke yesterday at dinner and had much talk with him. He is very desponding about the state of the country and the condition in which the Government have placed it. He complains of its defenceless situation from their carrying on a war [Canada] with a peace establishment; consequently that the few troops we have are harassed to death with duty, and in case of a serious outbreak that there is no disposable force to quell it; that the Government are ruled by factions, political and religious.

The Duke (April 10, 1847) was "haunted" by anxiety for the "defence of the country" and had his own opinion of Lord John Russell's Enlistment Bill:

April 30, 1847: . . . "I said to him 'Pray, sir, what is the necessity for this bill?' And he said, 'I'll tell you: they have got a d——d good army, and they want to make it a d——d bad one.'"

It will always be a question whether the indifference of the Duke to applause was only a pose. He had his spells of modesty:

November 24, 1841: . . . They told me what had passed about the Duke's personal property, when a bill was brought in, upon Douro's marriage, to settle a jointure on Lady Douro. They urged him to take that opportunity to entail on the title all the curious and valuable things which had been given him by emperors and kings, and to have a clause inserted in the Bill

for that purpose. He consented, but when he saw it, he said he did not like it; he thought the enumeration *flashy*, and he would have it expunged. At last they hit on an expedient, and they introduced a clause to the effect that anything which he should appoint by deed within two years should be entailed on the title forever, and they prevailed on him to sign the deed on the very last day of the two years. The value of the property is said to amount to half a million, and a great number of things were brought to light which he did not know that he possessed.

But over his statue he was sensitive. It was an equestrian statue by Wyatt and the first in London to honour a subject of the Sovereign. The idea of Sir Frederick Trench was to set it on the top of the arch which faces Apsley House, but this doubtful taste was only approved as an experiment. Hence, the suggestion that, after all, the statue should be removed elsewhere. The Duke did not ask for the statue but, having got it, he did not want it to be treated with irreverence:

June 27, 1838: . . . It is a gross job of Sir Frederick Trench's, and has been so from the beginning, the Duke being a mere cat's-paw of that impudent Irish pretender. The Duke of Wellington himself thinks it a great job, and would be very glad to see it defeated; but he said that "his lips were sealed, he could take no part, the Duke of Rutland had been so personally kind to him, but that it was the damnedest job from the beginning."

June 15, 1843: I have taken up the cudgels again against the old Jobbers of the Wellington testimonial. They have applied to the city for the spare metal, Government having given metal to the City Committee, and more than they require. The Nelson Committee have applied likewise, and I have written a letter to the Lord Mayor, which I have put in the *Times*, showing up the Wellington Committee.

July 13, 1847: . . . About this affair of the statue, Croker and Trench contrived to work him up to a state of frenzy; he was as near as possible resigning upon it. When Lord John wrote to him the other day in consequence of what passed in the House of Commons, he wrote a long rigmarole of an answer, which Lord John did not read yesterday, but gave the substance of it. All this is very unlike him.

June 19, 1847: The other day I met John Russell in the Park

as he was going to Apsley House by appointment with the Duke. He said he was going on important business (it was about the Indian appointments), and he asked me if I thought he had better say anything to him or not about the statue. I said, "Better not." The Duke of Bedford told me that it was very fortunate advice I gave Lord John, for if he had said anything there would have been an explosion. The Duke said to Arbuthnot, when Lord John wrote to say he wished to see him, "What can he want? what can he be coming about? do you think it is about the statue?" and then he went off on that sore subject, and said he should place his resignation in Lord John's hands! However, Lord John said nothing about it, and the Duke was put into great good humour by being consulted about the Indian affairs; and he said afterward that he only wished they would get the pedestal made, put the statue up, and have done with it.

In 1884, the Duke's statue was trotted off to Aldershot.

Wellington (May 11, 1841) "does not talk as he used to do, and he struck me as miserably changed."

Amid what Greville calls (February 20, 1848) "the folly and bigotry of the titled tinselled mob" which fills the House of Lords, the Duke was a striking figure. Yet he was subject to using "imprudent or intemperate expressions."

December 3, 1841: . . . Nothing but the extreme forbearance of Brougham, and his good-nature, had prevented some disagreeable results of this kind; and it was now the more serious, when the Duke was to be the organ of the Government, and from his habits and his deafness it would be impossible for anybody to check or restrain him, Lyndhurst placed afar off on the woolsack and the Duke sitting with his head buried in his chest, and neither consulting with, nor attending to, anyone.

On one occasion, "all by bad management," the Government was defeated by three votes. The Duke (February 20, 1848) "with his deafness [had] got into a complete confusion and at the last moment voted against" his friends.

The Duke did not suffer fools gladly, and this always causes trouble in a Cabinet. When Peel was forming his government (September 1, 1841), he confessed "that he had not had a

single application for office from anybody who was fit for it."

There was Haddington, "a man so unimportant, so destitute not only of shining but of plausible qualities, without interest or influence," who yet—

September 22, 1841: . . . by a mere combination of accidental circumstances [had] had at his disposal three of the greatest and most important offices under the Crown, having actually occupied two of them, and rejected the greatest and most brilliant of all. He has been Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, he refuses to be Governor General of India, and he is First Lord of the Admiralty.

February 11, 1844: Yesterday Algy showed me the Duke's correspondence with Haddington [First Lord of the Admiralty] which is a terrible rigmarole, lengthy, angry, mistaken, and altogether sadly demonstrative of a falling off in his great mind. The subject is so insignificant that it would be waste of time to say a word on it, if it were not for the interest which attaches to the great man to whom it relates.

"It is clear enough," wrote Greville on November 30, 1841, "that they [Haddington and the rest] would be very glad to be without him."

February 9, 1844: . . . Lord Wharncliffe had said to me that it was pleasant to see the extraordinary deference and attention which are shown to him by his colleagues at the Cabinet. He always sits in the same place, and each person who has anything to say or any subject to bring forward invariably goes and sits next to him, to enable him to hear better the material part of what is going forward, and the greatest respect is evinced to his opinions on all subjects. He told me that this was also very apparent in the correspondence of his colleagues, who addressed him in the most deferential manner, and often expressed their readiness to give up propositions which did not meet with his concurrence. But he said that he grew more and more irritable, and often expressed himself even to his colleagues with an asperity which was matter of great regret to him (Algernon Greville), and that frequently he felt the strongest desire to alter and soften the tone of his letters, but that this was quite impossible: nobody ever dared say anything to him, *he* could not, and it would be useless if he did, as it was not an accidental

ebullition, but proceeded from the increased and increasing irritability of his mind.

It was because he was a Tory and opposed to Melbourne that the Queen began by disliking the Duke. Nor was she at all appeased by his attitude toward Prince Albert's emoluments and dignities. Yet it was the Duke who, during Melbourne's later administration, held the Tories in leash. Clarendon (August 19, 1840) "did not think [he] had ever rendered greater service in his whole life than he had done this session in moderating violence and keeping his own party together."

The Queen was slow to recognize her obligation:

February 21, 1840: . . . Melbourne told me the Queen was well satisfied with my pamphlet [on precedure at Court] but "she remarked that there was a very high compliment to the Duke of Wellington at the end of it." I asked if she had said it was a *just one*. He said, "No, she did not say that."

It was the ill health of the Duke that compelled the Queen to be courteous:

May 11, 1838: . . . I was struck last night for the first time with the great change in the Duke of Wellington's looks; others have noted it before. He is no longer so straight and upright, and old age is taking possession of his features in a way that is distressing to see. He has lived long enough for his own renown, but he cannot live long enough for the good of his country, let what will happen and when it may. It is a fine sight to regard the noble manner in which he is playing the last act of his glorious life.

September 17, 1839: . . . The more I see of the Duke the more am I struck with the impression that he is declining; that he is not what he was a year or two ago. He is vigorous and hearty, cheerful, lively; his memory does not seem to be impaired; he talks with sense and energy.

March 14, 1840: . . . Fell in with the Duke of Wellington, who took my arm, told his cabriolet to follow, and walked the whole way back to Apsley House, quite firm and strong. He looks very old and worn, and speaks very slowly, but quite distinctly; talked about the China question and other things, and seemed clear enough. He was pleased with his reception at Court, and

told me particularly how civil Prince Albert had been to him, and indeed to everybody else; said he never saw better manners, or anybody more generally attentive. The Duchess of Kent talked to him, and in a strain of satisfaction, so that there is something like sunshine in the Palace just now.

March 18, 1840: The first symptom of a failure in the Duke of Wellington's memory came under my notice the day before yesterday.

February 15, 1840 (*Saturday*)*:* The Duke of Wellington had a serious seizure on Thursday. He dines early, and he rode out after dinner. The first symptom of something wrong was, that he could not make out the numbers on the doors of the houses he wanted to call at. He went to Lady Burghersh, and when he came away, the footman told his groom he was sure his Grace was not well, and advised him to be very attentive to him, Many people were struck with the odd way he sat on his horse. As he went home this got more apparent. When not far from Apsley House he dropped the reins out of his left hand, but took them up with the other, and when he got to his own door, he found he could not get off his horse. He felt his hand chilled. This has been the first symptom in each of his three attacks. He was helped off. Hume was sent for, came directly, and got him to bed. He had a succession of violent convulsions, was speechless, and his arm was affected. They thought he would have died in the night. The doctors came, physicked but did not bleed him, and yesterday morning he was better. He has continued to mend ever since, but it was a desperate blow and offers a sad prospect. He will probably again rally, but these things must be always impending, and his mind must be affected, and will be thought to be so. Lyndhurst asked me last night what could be done. He said, "The Duke ought now to retire from public life, and not expose himself to any appearance of an enfeebled understanding. Above all things to be deprecated is, that he should ever become a dotard like Marlborough, or a driveller like Swift." "How," he said, "would Aberdeen do?" He owned that nobody could replace the Duke or keep the [Tory] party in order, and he said that the consequence would be it would break up, that "*there are many who would be glad of an opportunity to leave it.*" This I told him I did not believe, but it certainly is impossible to calculate on the

consequences of the Duke's death, or, what is nearly the same thing, his withdrawal from the lead of the party.

February 16, 1840: The Duke of Wellington, although his life was in such danger on Thursday night, that the chances were he would die, has thrown off his attack in a marvellous manner, and is now rapidly approaching to convalescence, all dangerous symptoms subsiding. The doctors, both Astley Cooper and Chambers, declare that they have never seen such an extraordinary power of rallying in anybody before in the whole course of their practice, and they expect that he will be quite well again as he was before. It is remarkable that he has an accurate recollection of all the steps of his illness from the first perception of uneasy sensations to the moment of being seized with convulsions. He first felt a chillness in his hand, and he was surprised to find himself passing and repassing Lady Burghersh's house without knowing which it was. He called, however, and went up; and to her enquiry—for she was struck with his manner—he replied that he was quite well. Going home he dropped the rein, but caught it up with the other hand. When he arrived at his door, the servants saw he could not get off his horse, and helped him, and one of them ran off instantly to get Hume. The Duke walked into his sitting room, where Hume found him groaning, and standing by the chimneypiece. He got him to bed directly, and soon after the convulsions came on.

February 19, 1840: Went yesterday morning to Apsley House, Duke going on well, but his people indignant that, while all the Royal Family have been sending continually to enquire after him, all London has been at his door, the Queen alone has never taken the slightest notice of him. This afflicted me, and I resolved to speak to Melbourne. Accordingly I wrote him a note, begging for God's sake he would get the Queen to send and enquire, and representing the injury it was to herself not to do so. I took it to the Palace where I knew he would be (for the addresses) and sent it up to him. I then went to my office where I had not been five minutes before he sent for me. He began by saying he thought she *had* sent, but he had seen a paragraph in the *Morning Post* (which I had not), stating that she had not, on which he had asked her, and she owned it was true; but it appeared he had not then himself suggested it, nor would have

done, but for my note. He asked if it would not then be late. I said certainly it would, but it was better late than not at all, as it enabled one to say, when she was accused of not sending, that she had sent. He sat down, wrote her a note, and sent it off directly. I said:

"I suppose she will send now."

"Oh, yes, she will send now," he replied.

He then talked about her, said she was very resentful, but that people pressed her too much, did not give her time. They complained of *him* for being dilatory, and not urging things, but there was everything in not being urgent, and in giving time. I did not quite make out to what his allusions were especially directed, but I said time would not wait, nor people either, it was just what it was not reasonable to expect. I then told him that it really was lamentable that she did the things she does, and that I had no scruple in saying so to him, as I knew he did his utmost to keep her straight.

"By God," he said, "I am morning, noon, and night at it."

To which I answered that it was not to be endured that he should exert himself in vain, that she must know he had only her good at heart, and that his experience and knowledge of the world entitled him to attention, and that there was no use in his occupying the station he did, if he could not persuade her against the suggestion of her own fancies, or the weak people about her.

He said she was very resentful.

I said: "She will get into a great scrape. The people of England will not endure that she should treat the Duke of Wellington with disrespect, and it is not the mere act of sending or not that will make an impression of itself, but the whole of her conduct will and does produce an impression of the badness of her heart and disposition."

However, the Queen relented:

March 12, 1840: He [the Duke of Wellington] dined at the Palace on Monday and was treated with the greatest civility by the Queen. Indeed, ever since the omission to enquire she has endeavoured to repair it by every sort of attention and graciousness, to which he is by no means insensible.

Yet Victoria had not forgiven:

June 23, 1841: . . . Prince Albert would not go to the Duke's Waterloo dinner. The Duke invited him when they met at Oxford, and the Prince said he would send an answer. He sent an excuse, which was a mistake, for the invitation was a great compliment, and this is a sort of national commemoration at which he might have felt a pride at being present. But the enthusiasm which is universally felt for the Duke and the deep veneration with which he is regarded everywhere else have no existence in the Palace, and the Queen (for there can be no doubt it was her doing) chose that he should send some trumpery excuse, rather than accept as he ought to have done with alacrity the invitation.

It was only later that Victoria became entirely gracious:

June 19, 1847: . . . The Queen is excessively kind to him. On Monday his granddaughter was christened at the Palace, and the Queen dined with him in the evening. She had written him a very pretty letter expressing her wish to be godmother to the child, saying she wished her to be called Victoria, which name was so peculiarly appropriate to a granddaughter of his. All these attentions marvellously please him.

February 9, 1841: The Duke of Wellington had an attack the other night in the House of Lords, and was taken home speechless, but not senseless. It was severe, but short, and after the stomach was relieved, he rapidly recovered, and in a day or two *pronounced* himself as well as ever. Of course the alarm was very great. He is very eager about politics.

August 12, 1841: . . . Yesterday I went to Windsor for a Council, and there I found the Duke of Bedford. After the Council I went into his room to have a talk. He gave me an account of the Queen's visit to Woburn, which went off exceedingly well in all ways. She was received everywhere with the greatest enthusiasm, and an extraordinary curiosity to see her was manifested by the people, which proves that the Sovereign as such is revered by the people. I asked him if she was attentive to the Duke of Wellington, but he said that the Duke kept very much in the background, and his deafness, he thought, deterred the Queen from trying to converse much with him. However, though it is clear that she showed him no particular attention, the Duke was

highly satisfied, for he told the Duke of Bedford so, and said he thought this progress a very good thing. The Duke had no conversation on politics with Melbourne.

May 26, 1840: . . . Yesterday I met the Duke of Wellington. He was walking in the garden or the park adjoining his own, promenading two young ladies—Lord Salisbury's daughters—arm in arm. He left them and took me to walk with him to Lansdowne House.

November 30, 1841: . . . We are painfully struck with the great change that has come over his noble spirit, and it becomes impossible not to regret that in his seventy-third year, and after three epileptic fits, he was not permitted to hold himself free from the trammels, cares, and duties of Executive Government.

September 7, 1841: I fell in with the Duke of Wellington yesterday coming from the Cabinet, and walked home with him. He seemed very well, but totters in his walk. The great difference in him is his irritability, and the asperity with which he speaks of people. Everybody looks at him, all take off their hats to him, and one woman came up and spoke to him. He did not seem to hear what she was saying, but assuming as a matter of course that she wanted something, he said, "Do me the favour, Ma'am, to write to me," and then moved on as quickly as he could. Not that by her writing she would get much, for he has answers lithographed, to be sent to his numerous applicants, which is rather comical because characteristic.

March 19, 1843: . . . Nothing is more extraordinary than the complete restoration of that vigour of mind which for the last two or three years was visibly impaired. His speeches this session have been as good, if not better than any he ever made. In the House of Commons the Opposition had the best of the speaking, and Macaulay in particular distinguished himself.

He had his periods of recovery—for instance, the spring of 1843 when he "was looking remarkably well, strong, hearty, and of a good colour. He was in very good spirits and humour."

February 7, 1843: . . . The Duke of Wellington spoke [in the House of Lords] with extraordinary vigour, and surprised everybody. He is certainly a much better man in all respects this year than he was two years ago, mind and body more firm.

April 2, 1851: . . . All would have ended . . . well, if Grey had

not unwisely got up and made a bitter speech . . . in the course of which he said something about martial law, and the Duke of Wellington's administration of it in Spain; on which the old Duke rose in a fury, and delivered a speech in a towering passion, which it would have been far better for Torrington to have avoided. The Duke was quite wrong, and Grey made a proper explanation, but the incident was disagreeable.

November 24, 1841: . . . He has now a morbid aversion to seeing people, which nearly amounts to madness. Nobody can get access to him, not even his nearest relations. When anybody applies for an interview, he flies into a passion, and the answers which he dictates to letters asking for audiences, or asking for anything, are so brutally uncivil and harsh that my brother Algy constantly modifies or alters them. The Duke fancies he is so engaged that he cannot spare time to see anybody. This peculiarity is the more remarkable, because formerly his weakness was a love of being consulted by everybody, and mixed up with everything. Nobody was ever in a difficulty without applying to him; innumerable were the quarrels, *tracasseries*, scandals, intrigues, and scrapes which he had to arrange and compose.

July 13, 1847: . . . Then he is astonishing the world by a strange intimacy he has struck up with Miss Burdett Coutts, with whom he passes his life, and all sorts of reports have been rife of his intention to marry her. Such are the lamentable appearances of decay in his vigorous mind, which are the more to be regretted because he is in most enviable circumstances, without any political responsibility, yet associated with public affairs, and surrounded with every sort of respect and consideration on every side—at Court, in Parliament, in society, and in the country.

London, July 25, 1851: The only thing I have heard worth recording is a strange matter enough regarding the Duke of Wellington. He has got himself (at eighty-two years of age) into, if not a scrape, an embarrassment with Lady Georgiana Fane, who is half cracked. It seems that he has for some years past carried on a sort of flirtation with her, and a constant correspondence, writing her what might be called love letters, and woefully committing himself. He has now broken with her, and she persecutes him to death. She is troublesome, and he is

brutal. He will not see her, or have anything to do with her. She tries to get at him, which it seems she can only do as he comes out of church (early service) at St. James's and she made a scene there not long ago. She says all she wants is that he should behave *kindly* to her, which is just what he will not do. Meanwhile she has placed his letters in the hands of her solicitor, Mr. Frere (an outrageous thing), who tells her they are sufficient to establish a case against him for a breach of promise of marriage. Nothing of this queer but lamentable affair seems to have got out, and for the credit of the Duke it is to be hoped it may not. It would be painful to see him an object of ridicule and contempt in the last days of his illustrious life.

My mother told me this story. She had it from Lady Georgiana Bathurst, to whom Lady Georgiana Fane herself told it and showed her the Duke's letters, wanting her to get the Duchess of Gloucester to read them, who however declined to do so. He has always had one or more women whom he liked to talk to and got to be intimate with, and often very odd women too, but the strangest of all his fancies was this tiresome, troublesome, crazy old maid.

Greville hated funerals, as then conducted. His sister-in-law, Mrs. Algernon Greville, had died:

May 2, 1841: . . . I went down to the funeral, and was unutterably disgusted with the ceremony, with the bustling business of the undertaker, mixing so irreverently with the profound grief of the brothers and other relations who attended, the decking us out in the paraphernalia of woe, and thus dragging us in mourning coaches through crowds of curious people, by a circuitous route, that as much of us as possible might be exhibited to vulgar curiosity. These are things monstrous in themselves, but to which all-reconciling custom makes us submit.

November 14, 1843: I broke off to go and attend my poor aunt's funeral, who was buried in the most private way possible at Kensal Green. I never saw the place before, and liked the appearance of it, for I have never seen any reason why none but gloomy images and symbols should be accumulated round the graves of our departed friends. I am not surprised that people who go to visit this spot, and see the cheerfulness and the beauty it exhibits, feel a longing to take their last rest in it.

May 16, 1843: I attended Lady William Bentinck's funeral this morning, which was conducted in the plainest manner possible, without any crowd or any show, just as all funerals should be in my opinion, for of all disgusting exhibitions the most so to me is the hired pomp of a costly funeral with all the businesslike bustle of the undertaker and his men.

On Wellington's funeral, he wrote:

November 16, 1852: I went yesterday to the lying in state of the Duke of Wellington; it was fine and well done, but too gaudy and theatrical, though this is unavoidable. Afterward to St. Paul's to see it lit up. The effect was very good, but it was like a great rout; all London was there strolling and staring about in the midst of a thousand workmen going on with their business all the same, and all the fine ladies scrambling over vast masses of timber, or ducking to avoid the great beams that were constantly sweeping along. These public funerals are very disgusting *meâ sententiâ*. On Saturday several people were killed and wounded at Chelsea; yesterday everything was orderly and well conducted, and I heard of no accidents.

November 21, 1852: I saw the Duke's funeral from Devonshire House. Rather a fine sight, and all well done, except the car, which was tawdry, cumbrous, and vulgar. It was contrived by a German artist attached to the School of Design, and under Prince Albert's direction—no proof of his good taste. The whole ceremony within St. Paul's and without went off admirably, and without mistakes, mishaps, or accidents; but as all the newspapers overflow with the details, I may very well omit them here.

The French Ambassador did not appreciate these obsequies. But it was "creditable to Louis Napoleon to have ordered Walewski to attend the funeral." Baron Brunnow said to Walewski, "If this ceremony were intended to bring the Duke to life again, I can conceive your reluctance to appear at it. But as it is only to bury him, I don't see you have anything to complain of."

November 21, 1852: . . . An incident occurred the other night in the House of Commons, which exposed Disraeli to much ridicule and severe criticism. He pronounced a pompous funeral oration

on the Duke of Wellington, and the next day the *Globe* showed that half of it was taken word for word from a panegyric of Thiers on Marshal Gouvion de St. Cyr, published in some French periodical. Disraeli has been unmercifully pelted ever since, and well deserves it for such a piece of folly and bad taste. His excuse is that he was struck by the passage, wrote it down, and, when he referred to it recently, forgot what it was, and thought it was his own composition. But this poor apology does not save him. Derby spoke very well on the same subject a few nights after in the House of Lords, complimenting the authorities, the people, and foreign nations, particularly France.

October 22, 1852: . . . Since the Duke's death I have had nothing to write about. The distribution of his offices and honours has not given satisfaction. The Prince has shown little judgment in making himself the heir of his military appointments, and there is something ridiculous as well as odious in his doing so.