

EDWARD GOULBURN: A PRECOCIOUS AND ACCOMPLISHED ROMANTIC SATIRIST, REDISCOVERED

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In the course of cataloguing (from scratch) some 500 volumes of ‘Unusual Poetry in English of the British Romantic Period, 1789–1837’, my principal ambition and pleasure has been to turn up a few works of genuine merit, amongst a great body ranging from mediocrity or worse to significantly better, and to investigate their particulars in a responsible and (I hope) entertaining fashion. Start, if you will, with the following.

Edward Goulburn (1787–1869) was the second of three sons of the relatively affluent but latterly overspent Jamaica-born planters’ heir Munbee Goulburn (1756–1793).¹ As proprietor by descent of the Amity Hall Estate in Vere Parish, Jamaica, Munbee had attended Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, remained in England, and married in 1782, deriving his income from his somewhat compromised West Indian properties: for what is known of his self-indulgent life and tangled affairs, see Brian Jenkins’s thorough biography of his eldest son Henry.² Munbee died intestate in 1793, leaving his widow (Susannah Chetwynd, daughter of the fourth Viscount Chetwynd, of the Irish peerage – attractive and intelligent, but delicate in health) to cope with a debt-encumbered estate through a decade of appeals to the dilatory Court of Chancery, during which the children’s upbringing was beset with complications. Henry (born 19 March 1784), the future politician and Chancellor of the Exchequer under both Wellington (1828–30) and his long-term close friend Robert Peel (1841–46), suffered a childhood accident that permanently damaged his face and vision, but – after being withdrawn, with both of his siblings, from a costly elementary school at Sunbury – was able to prepare himself for admission to King’s College, Cambridge (BA 1805, MA 1808), followed by a glittering political career. Frederick, the youngest brother (born 5 May 1788) was committed early in youth to a Royal Army commission and fought in the Peninsular War and later at Waterloo, rising to Major of Dragoons; he served with his regiment in Canada in 1818, and while abroad visited the family estate in Jamaica (deploring the abuse of slaves there, a situation Henry set about correcting). By 1820 he was in New South Wales, as the first official colonial secretary, returning to the British Isles and private life in the late 1820s and dying prematurely at Southgate in 1837.³

Edward’s education, like Frederick’s, was haphazard at best: after their joint withdrawal from the Sunbury school, at some time before 1800, they were instructed at home by an inexpensive but less than competent tutor, who was dismissed after two years and replaced by Henry himself, at this juncture still aged fifteen. That this later training was more than

¹ No precise date for Edward’s birth has been established: several genealogical websites confuse him with another son of Munbee Goulburn, born at Paris (following the birth of Henry in Marylebone the family lived for approximately two years at Paris and Toulouse) and baptized 9 November 1785. If a true record, this must relate to a child who died in infancy, with the Christian name being reused two years later.

² *Henry Goulburn, 1784–1856: A Political Biography* (Montreal and Buffalo, 1996).

³ See Vivienne Parsons, ‘Goulburn, Frederick (1788–1837)’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography* (1966).

competent must be evident from young Edward's indisputable literary precocity, and his working command of both Latin and French, as well as an adequate knowledge of general history. But in this period of fatherless coming of age, one passion above all must have been developed, indulged in, and fostered from late childhood onward – whether at manorial Prinknash Park, Gloucestershire, where Munbee Goulburn resided grandly, or at rural Acton where Susannah found accommodation after 1793, or somehow at Sunbury – and that was *horses*, their acquisition, breeding, training, and trading, and, with experience, riding to hounds and competitive racing full tilt, backing with wagers, and judging of virtues and values. Just when this obsession, which he seems not to have shared with any close kindred, took root is a puzzle, yet it all but consumed his attention for a significant period of his young life – and then, as if through a moral decision, was as decisively abandoned.

But by now the decision had been made to 'place Edward in the Royal Navy as a midshipman' (Jenkins, p. 9), and his service began as a teenager, amongst a crew of some sixty on the *Latona*, a 36-gun frigate of some substantial repute in the late American wars (not after October 1802, when the vessel was laid up for repairs, having been just previously stationed in the Baltic and off St Petersburg). Presumably discharged or at liberty before that date, Edward was transferred (he says in *The Blueviad* of 1805) to the forty-gun frigate *Endymion*, which was sailing off Brest as part of a blockading squadron in 1803–05. But at some point before then Edward 'chang'd a SAILOR'S for a SOLDIER'S name' (*Blueviad*, II, line 428),⁴ for on 9 July 1803 he joined the Regiment of Royal Horse Guards (the famous 'Blues', an elite body of troops under the King's patronage since 1650), as a 'cornet' or commissioned recruit, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel John Dorrien (1758–1825). The minimum age for entry was at that time eighteen, but in this instance was clearly stretched (perhaps to just sixteen), considering Edward's lineage, prior service, and his considerable experience as a horseman.

By 15 December 1804 Goulburn had risen to the rank of lieutenant. He appears to have been quartered at Canterbury rather than the new barracks at Clewer Park, Windsor, but in both locations gambling was endemic in the liberal off-hours, with many gamesters running up huge debts; duelling, although forbidden by both military and civil statutes, was also both common and virtually impossible to prevent when 'honour' was reckoned at stake. Edward, 'being young and inconsiderate', soon contracted debts with several officers and citizens of Canterbury,⁵ which were – or so he testified in the Court of King's Bench in February 1806 – the subject of 'great insult' by Dorrien, who 'bestowed on [Edward] the appellation of a *swindler*', and 'had inserted in the Orderly-book of the regiment, some words alluding to his debts, for the purpose [again] of insulting him'.⁶ But Dorrien and one Captain Bird (who was also involved in 'the sale of some horses, into the particulars of which it is not necessary for us to enter' – but see below, pp. 7–8), together with others, 'had encouraged [Edward] to write [semi-libellous] verses', which 'he frequently repeated at the mess, at their request, and

⁴ Later he would claim to have 'lost part of a finger' in an engagement at the mouth of the Scheldt (on the Belgian-Dutch border), and to have received prize money for participation in that action 'after he was at the bar', i.e. after 1815 (Robert Walton, *Random Recollections of the Midland Circuit: Second Series* (London, 1873) p. 34), although Paul Morgan (1984; see note 31 below) thinks this may be an imaginary boast.

⁵ Amounting to more than £700, these were cleared in 1805 by his brother Henry, on attaining his majority. See Janet E. Mullin, *A Sixpence at Whist: Gaming and the English Middle Classes, 1680–1830* (Woodbridge, 2015), pp. 162–65, basing her account on the Goulburn papers at the Surrey History Centre.

⁶ *The Star* (London), 11 February 1806, reporting Goulburn's appearance at King's Bench on 3 February, where he received sentence after having been found guilty of 'writing and publishing a libel upon the Officers of his Majesty's Regiment of Royal Horse Guards Blue, contained in a publication called *The Blueviad*'.

to their apparent satisfaction'. The last assertion was corroborated in courtroom affidavits by one of the officers, as was the 'approbation' of his messmates.⁷

Here, however, the plot begins to thicken. In the very short dedication and preface to the commercially published *Blueviad* of 1805, both dated 31 March, Edward Goulburn acknowledges 'the few Friends, for whose private perusal and amusement, the following pages were alone intended', and describes his 112-page poem as 'ridiculous lines [that] contain the description of some characters that once formed a regiment of Volunteers', saying that 'a few copies were [previously] printed with a view to oblige some of my Friends', but 'were, however, never intended for the Public eye'. No such 'private printing' is now known, and almost certainly never existed (see below for later manuscripts of the text). But the publication now circulated⁸ remains, to my mind, and on several counts, one of the most curious social and personal satires of the Romantic era, well worth exhumation from the hitherto half-neglected abundance of such post-Popean literary cannonades – a tradition extending, in the period of its conception, from early Crabbe and Wordsworth through Byron, Moore, Shelley, Leigh Hunt, and William Gifford, to the likes of (later) James Hogg and Ebenezer Elliott.

First of my 'counts' is simply the extreme youth of the author, and his remarkably sophisticated command of diction and dialect, a wide-ranging vocabulary, metre (manipulation of caesuras notably, and control of parallel clauses), and rhyme (the latter astoundingly varied, for a construct potentially repetitive in remonstrance and censure). Second is the relatively atypical and refreshing moderation and the abrupt qualification and backtracking that allow the poet to apologize for excesses of near-slander (while of course glorying in it first), and more than once turn the glare of his lamp on himself, with admissions of irresponsible behaviour, immaturity, and provocation of his enemies' ire. Third is the mysterious undercurrent throughout of semi-suppressed intrigues and rivalries among the company, which at this remote distance may be impossible to sort out, but which seem in their day to have had significant repercussions far deeper than the satire itself, with its alleged offence and its punishment, would suggest. Fourth, though perhaps only of lexicographical interest, but repeatedly addressed by the poet, the explication of unusual locutions or usages, i.e. contemporary slang or cant, duly footnoted as such for bemused readers. Finally, the poem – unlike the great majority of verse by essentially non-professional writers in a new era of easy access to print – is (simply again) eminently *readable* line by line, almost never tempting the modern reader to skim or skip. One can hardly ask more.

To sum up the content at some length: Goulburn's conventional incipit claims independence from his published contemporaries, as so often a beginner's first plea, but singles out not (yet) the young Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, or Lamb, or even Rogers and Moore, but (unusually) 'great' [William] Roscoe of Liverpool, for his poetic treatment of 'sacred liberty', Thomas Campbell for 'hope's enchantments', William Cowper for 'just and witty rhymes', Samuel Johnson, Goldsmith, and John Wolcot ('Peter Pindar'), the last for his personal satire of celebrities, declaredly not comparable to Edward's own, but in fact – one might think – a principal recent precedent. Without further ado, Goulburn opens his rogue's gallery of fellow Guardsmen with their appointed leader, Lieutenant-Colonel John Dorrien, here nicknamed

⁷ Recitals of (often satirical) verse about fox-hunting exploits and other sport were in this period a near-conventional practice at communal dinners among young hunt participants, and guardsmen were surely familiar with such voluntary performances; see Paul Morgan (note 31 below), p. vi.

⁸ THE / BLUEVIAD, / A SATYRICAL POEM / BY / EDWARD GOULBURN, ESQ. / *Royal Horse Guards.* / LONDON: / PRINTED FOR J. MAYNARD, PANTON-STREET, / HAY-MARKET. / 1805. / By Barker and Son, Great Russell-Street, Covent-Garden.

‘Timotheus’ or ‘Snuff’⁹ (‘from a most curious convulsion in his nasal promontory’), whose principal affectation was his claim to a dedicated concern with, and study of, contemporary mathematics:

Behold with hands uplifted, deep in thought,
His busy mind with MATHEMATICS fraught;
The chief reclines, in Euclid’s mazes lost.
His skull with POSTULATES and AXIOMS crost.
Thro’ QUERIES, LEMMAS, propositions passes,
And boldly seeks the fatal BRIDGE OF ASSES.¹⁰
In vain, with malice, some provoke the sage,
And swear he never looks beyond the page;
In vain, the learned man, some few provoke,
And call his wisdom feign’d, his skill a JOKE.

At regimental dances, Edward continues, Snuff’s ‘courteous manners next demand thy praise’, although ‘fops ridicule the chief’s extended chin’, or aforementioned ‘nasal promontory’,

well worthy of a poet’s rhyme,
Which with HIM mov’d, and with his legs kept TIME:
Just so, I’ve seen, and with the self-same shuffle,
A weathercock, which winds or tempests ruffle.
Wreathing in various shapes, its tortur’d form;
Now here, now there, at mercy of the storm.

Passing on to ‘next the chief’, the epicurean gourmet ‘Sir Talkative Pomposo’ (Lieutenant-Colonel Charles Armand Dashwood (1764–1812),¹¹ who employs his own Gallic chef M. Denis, and has laid in ‘a cursed store / Of season’d viands, and French-made dishes, / To gratify his own voluptuous wishes’), is given a nine-page entry in *The Blueviad*, mostly lampooning his bibulous gluttony, table manners, and boorishness (‘a beast by nature, and in grain a br[u]te’),

Born for himself, and for himself alone;
His god his belly, and a feast his throne.
Good eating occupies his inmost soul;
Of nought but THAT he thinks, save of the BOWL.
The art of cooking, sole employs his parts,
In stews a connoisseur, a judge in tarts.

Pomposo’s table-talk and manners are hardly more inspiring: at mess he

Talks often, yet to the purpose little;
Squirts into both neighbour’s plate his spittle;
Looks pleas’d at something, then commands your ear,
And gives a dissertation on ... SMALL BEER!

⁹ I have followed the MS identifications in the British Library copy of *The Blueviad* (BL 11641.a.26), which give only rank and surname, and have augmented this information with details from *The London Gazette*, contemporary newspaper reports, and other sources when possible.

¹⁰ i.e. the isosceles triangle theorem, Proposition 5 in Book I of Euclid.

¹¹ Acting Commander of the Horse Guards May 1803 – November 1804; he retired in December 1804, and in July 1807 was appointed an ‘inspecting field officer of yeomanry and volunteer corps’, retaining the rank of lieutenant-colonel.

And

Should you the glutton e'er by chance confute,
Or prove him stupid in his best dispute,
With haughty air, and almost choak'd with rage,
Loud he reminds you of his rank and age:
Rank we respect, when join'd with worth and sense;
But rank without it, is a FOOLS pretence.
Age we have ever honor'd and rever'd,
But thirty-three makes not a man grey-hair'd.

A riotous dinner at which the Horse Guards and the Life Guards 'joined in bottl'd fight', with drunken Pomposo urging the combined companies to throw their brittle decanters at 'yon waiter's head', before sallying out into St James's, where 'the madden'd crew ... resolv'd each harmless stranger [including the civilly-appointed night watchmen] to mal-treat', may have had something to do with Colonel Dashwood's subsequent 'retirement' from the Blues. For Goulburn ends his farcical episode with what seems genuine regret for Dashwood's grim 'fate' and evident betrayal by his enemies, exhibiting sympathy for him as the victim of a 'Satanic' or 'diabolical scheme', set in motion by none other than his immediate superior John Dorrien, who 'feigning friendship proved the worst of foes', a 'base accuser', 'a man without a soul, a headless trunk', and

Whose mind, insensible to nature's rays,
Wrapt in itself – drags out it's cheerless days,
Wretched; alone in crowds, without a friend,
Too OLD to learn, too OBSTINATE to mend.

Going on to the third in command, 'Argus' (Warden Sergison (1765–1811, lieutenant-colonel in November 1804, retired March 1806), a notorious stickler for discipline in dress and decorum – both on parade and within the Wincheap (Canterbury) barracks, where he would 'stalk',

With cautious eye, examining each nook,
And peeping into boots with vary [*sic*, for wary] look:
So have I seen a MAGPIE in the street,
A feather'd chatterer we often meet,
A bird for curiosity, well known,
With eye important peep into a bone.
Nor other utensils escape, which shame¹²
Forbids my ever bashful muse to name.

'Argus' is particularly remembered for having once interrupted a royal inspection of the Canterbury squadron with his insistent complaint that one Cornet Rutton 'has really dar'd t'undo ... his BREECHES BUTTON!', before being silenced by an annoyed Dorrien. Next we are asked to view 'great Whiskerandos' (Major William Miller, 1770–1837),¹³ once deemed a highly courageous Scot, 'fond of wars alarms', but whose dreams of military grandeur had been derailed by the matrimonial ambitions of a 'Mrs. Waugh', described as the horse-trading

¹² A rare metrical blip, unless 'utensils' was once so pronounced.

¹³ Miller was the son of the banker and inventor – and patron of Robert Burns – Patrick Miller (1731–1815; see *ODNB*); he was married twice, to Janet or Jessie Staig (d.1801) and then to Frances Every, youngest daughter of Sir Edward Every, and retired from the Blues in November 1805.

daughter of an unnamed ‘General’, both of whom seem habitually to deal in unsound steeds, thereby swindling neophyte buyers.¹⁴ Edward, who has clearly come up against ‘Mrs. Waugh’ or Miller in an unsatisfactory transaction of his own, reserves his first truly actionable opprobrium for this detested female antagonist, Satan’s ‘worldly agent’, who ‘nails’ Miller in ‘her curs’d hymeneal schemes’ – until, ‘fast in her fetters bound, the hero views too late, / His ruin’d hopes and sadly alter’d state’. ‘The consequence of [Miller’s] most unfortunate marriage must be known to every one’, Goulburn adds, footnoting his characterization of ‘Mrs Waugh’ as a ‘shameless HARRIDAN’,

Fram’d in DECEIT, in FALSEHOOD nurs’d from youth,
Champion of LIES, foul enemy to TRUTH,

and particularizing her ‘skill in getting rid of *patched-up mares*’ as being ‘as great as her worthy colleagues in vending *patched-up horses*’, of which ‘one of the former still remains on hand’, presumably in Goulburn’s own stud. ‘For this fashionable vice, Mrs. Waugh was most celebrated, and even exceeded her beloved sire.’

But while lamenting Major Miller’s entrapment as ‘a perfect Benedict [as in *Much Ado about Nothing*] – a married man!’, the often misogynistic Goulburn also sees fit to record Miller’s earlier affairs with ‘wanton Mary [Twyman]’, a local girl whom he left with a ‘bairn’, she having replaced him with the attentions of one ‘Johnson’ (‘a man commonly called a “rough-rider”’, who ‘though less noble, gives her equal pleasure’, while ‘Whiskerandos’ has gone on to court ‘Lisle’s fair Countess’. This excursion into amatory gossip takes us to ‘Lothario’ (Captain John Elley).¹⁵ ‘Of form majestic, and enormous height’, his ‘invulnerable staff’ is at this period deemed the bane of ‘sweet chastity’ – for

Wife, maid, or virgin, are to him the same,
And each at his desires must yield their fame.
Yon hapless Phoebe, once the maidens boast,
Bewails her innocence, her virtue lost!

...

Yon matron,¹⁶ who once innocence enjoy’d,
Demands from thee, her hopes, her joys destroy’d,
Whilst her fond lord drags out a wretched life,
And weeps the lost affections of his wife,
Cursing that hour, when from suspicion free,
He hospitably ask’d thee into TEA.
That hour, when on the DEAN-JOHNS’ public walk,¹⁷
At ev’nings close, he mark’d thy cautious stalk;
Each look, each glance, replete with am’rous fire,
Panting to gain thy wanton souls’ desire;

¹⁴ Goulburn’s claim that the wife of ‘Whiskerandos’ was ‘Mrs. Waugh’, later described as married to another of his targets, ‘John Waugh’, is puzzling, to say the least, but clearly intentional: some twenty pages later, in his lengthy treatment of ‘Waugh’ (Captain Joseph Bird), he explicitly states that ‘Mrs. Waugh has already been described in part – her spouse will be found well worthy of her’ (footnote, p. 50).

¹⁵ Elley (d. 1839) rose from humble origins to a Lieutenant Colonelcy by 1806, and subsequently, as a Major General in the Life Guards, to heroic exploits at the battles of Talavera (1809) and Waterloo (1815). He was named a Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath in 1815, and later served as governor of Galway and MP for Windsor.

¹⁶ ‘The wife of a noted Canterbury sacerdos’ (Goulburn’s footnote, p. 41).

¹⁷ Leading from Canterbury Cathedral, where the seduced matron’s husband preached.

Just so, sly Reynard, at the close of day,
With looks sagacious, eyes his destin'd prey;
Marks for his supper some unconscious hen,
And waits but night, to drag her to his den.

Next 'Fortunatus' (Robert Chambre Hill, 1778–1860, then a major but later commander of the Blues and made a Companion of the Order of the Bath for his stand at Waterloo) is pitied for his uxorious submission to his own handsome but 'despotic' wife, who refuses even to feed him at home, though 'all laws, divine or human, say / Man is to rule, and woman to obey'. By contrast, 'Silenus' (Thomas Athorpe, a lieutenant-colonel by 1813, retired 1820), a great drinker with a broad Yorkshire accent and a penchant for unbridled hilarity – "a maun munt lauf", cries he – 'suffers not his [wife] Moll to prate', or dispute his authority. 'Tom Slang'¹⁸ is another loud-mouthed horse and dog fancier, whose 'rude uncultivated mind' finds 'to learn too slothful, to apply too idle', and tends to seek out low company ('Horses his study, dogs his only friends, / With grooms, or FARRIER QUACKS his time he spends'). In mess-time conversation Slang

With rhymes absurd, annoys your tired ear,
Or paints the tortures of his GONORRH-A.
Or else, (what yields him most SUPREME DELIGHT,)
By shewing PARTS OBSCENE disgusts your sight;
Those parts (forgive my friends A POET'S DUTY)
Which so fame says, compose his chiefest BEAUTY.

And this rare if flagrant resort to unsavoury detail may prepare us for the nastiest passage of all in *The Blueviad*, which concludes Part One: no fewer than eleven pages, or 140 lines, of abuse heaped on 'John Waugh' (Captain Joseph Bird) and his wife.¹⁹ Beginning with blanket contempt,

Of manners vulgar, and illib'ral mind,
No thought, or no idea, in him you find;
Save the great love of SELF; whilst FRAUD grown bold,
Stamps on his forehead 'to be bought or sold':
Gold o'er his heart presides in sov'reign sway,
And five poor pounds would turn him either way!

we then view 'yon heedless stripling' – presumably young Edward Goulburn himself, with the 'fav'rite passion of his soul / His love for Horses' – who 'bemoans too late / His plunder'd coffers and unpitied fate', for Waugh's 'livelihood consisted in purchasing horses for nothing considerable, and selling them at treble their value to people less experienced than himself in that *diabolical profession*, at what is called *tick*' (footnote, p. 52). The young victim hesitates, but Waugh, 'in fraud refin'd', remarked the 'dubious workings of the striplings mind':

¹⁸ A captain named in the BL copy as 'Slingsby' and described by Goulburn as the son of a baronet, although having 'not the least particle of family pride'. The most obvious candidate would be Sir Thomas Slingsby of Scriven, 9th Baronet (1775–1835), but I have found no evidence that he was ever associated with the Guards.

¹⁹ See above, pp. 5–6. Bird was promoted from cornet to lieutenant in 1799; to captain-lieutenant in April 1803; and to captain in June 1803. In May 1805 he was appointed 'a Major of Brigade upon the Staff of Great Britain', under the Command of the Duke of Cumberland, and attached to Brigadier General John Slade (1762–1859) at Salisbury; he died at Salisbury on 15 June 1806, in his thirty-first year, and is buried in the cathedral there (James Harris, *Copies of the Epitaphs in Salisbury Cathedral, Cloisters, and Cemetery* (1825), p. 122, making no mention of a wife or other family).

Determin'd not to lose, so fine a prey,
 With care he smooths each obstacle away.
 'Aus for the munny mauke yourself at ease,
 The saame to me,' he cries, 'paa when you please;
 Lauk! only look how praud a little creter,
 I nivir seed a fainer one in natur –
 Souch hid, souch taale, souch legs! Nou, 'pon mai laife,
 I lose faive ginnis bai them, don't ai, WAIIFE?'
 With words like these he fires the headstrong boy,
 Who sees each wish fulfill'd with secret joy;
 With frantic haste, regardless of the trick,
 The nags are his, and at the proffer'd TICK.
 Unhappy youth! destin'd, alas! too soon,
 To feel thy fate and curse the treach'rous boon:
 For scarce thy groom has time, with bow profound,
 T' inform thee that thy stud is ALL UNSOUND!
 Or scarce has reason flown her seat to find,
 Or flash'd conviction o'er thy youthful mind,
 When at thy door with voice and face uncouth
 JOHN WAUGH, himself, confirms the dreaded truth:
 Urges the payment on, from day to day,
 And asks from thee his cash without delay.

The victim (described as 'an intimate acquaintance of mine') in despair yields to the 'daily duns', and makes over to Waugh his own entire stud for resale, which the villain gleefully superintends at no more than half their real value, and presents his additional bill for such services (fully reproduced on p. 56), including 3s. for 'bed' and 1s. 6d. for breakfast while 'in town'. Seven pages of 'Reflections on Waugh' hammer home Goulburn's indignation that such a miscreant should be allowed to represent England's loyal army, the tradition of the great Marlborough, and the recent heroic sacrifices of Generals Wolfe at Montreal and James Abercrombie at Boston's Bunker Hill. So much for the Royal Regiment of Guardsmen in 1805!

Part Two of *The Blueviad* proceeds to caricature at least sixteen more former messmates, recommencing with 'Sir Pepper Absolute' (Captain William George Cherry, ?1777–1858), whose altercation with 'Bluster' – Captain John Horsley, of whom more will be heard – has hospitalized the latter, a man 'of gross and pamper'd hide', in truth 'the bloated remnants – of a DEBAUCHEE'. He is succeeded by 'Lewellin' (Captain William Cludde, who joined the Guards in 1799 and died aged twenty-four in 1809), 'Tom Tit', one Lieutenant Brown, renowned for his massive vegetarian appetite (platefuls of cabbage, greens, cauliflower, and 'broc'la' disappearing 'down his capacious maw'), and 'Sir Jeffrey Fox-Face' (Captain Robert Christopher Packe, 1783–1815, killed at Waterloo), that 'prince of cooks', equally faithful to Frenchified 'hashes, fricassees, and stews'. 'Jacky Touchstone' of Berkshire (Lieutenant John Thoyts, 1771–1849; retired in 1820 as a lieutenant-colonel), over-sensitive to his own 'Lilliputian form' among Guardsmen traditionally majestic, attracts Edward's admiration, however, as a 'finish'd gentleman', as does Lieutenant 'Rinaldo' (identified simply as 'Wood') for his 'manly firmness' and his scorn of Colonel Dorrien's proffers of praise and friendship. But with Lieutenant 'Numscull' of the 'enormous' though empty head (William Wotton Abney of Measham Hall, Derbyshire (1780–1822; later a captain, but retired 1807) we are back to casual censure, if only for profound dullness:

In vain for sense we look, the search is vain;
 DUNCE wert thou born, and DUNCE wilt thou remain!
 No dawn of reason, or no ray of light
 Breaks thro' the darkness, and dispels the night;
 No views of future sapience there are plac'd,
 No hope illuminates the dreary waste;
 Dark, and more dark, the cheerless mansion grows;
 New faults, new vices at each step disclose:
 No sentiments ingenuous there we see,
 A soul of which, WINE only keeps the key!
 But when intoxication's fumes command,
 Forth from their prison rush th' unruly band;
 Satanic passions wing abroad their flight,
 And nature's UGLINESS appears in sight.

Numskull's attempts at singing are particularly offensive to the musically educated ear:

Shall then HARMONIA, offspring of the muses,
 Be plagu'd whene'er a CLOWN to BELLOW chooses;
 Or 'cause a BUMPKIN likes to raise his throat,
 Mangling each line, and murd'ring ev'ry note:
 Shall she attend obedient to his call,
 Or e'en with patience hear the horrid squall?
 Forbid it, Heav'n! with me and Shakespeare too,
 She vows 'she'd sooner hear a CAT cry MEW!'²⁰
 Paint, reader, if thou canst, this PRINCE of APES,
 Screwing his TORTUR'D MOUTH in various shapes!
 Murd'ring, devoid of ear, the best of things;
 And fancying, the while, he REALLY SINGS!!!

Again by sympathetic contrast, however, Edward devotes eight pages of mild personal encomium to 'Schwaum',²¹ the son of a Wandsworth apothecary, who has abandoned that family profession for a martial career in the Guards, but now (our satirist warmly advises) ought to return to his former calling, 'for nature, spite of thee, will play her part'. This is followed by nine lines praising 'Augustus' (Robert Orde Fenwick), an accomplished fellow satirist:²²

Augustus next provokes a ready smile;
 Child of good nature, he, whose hum'rous brain,
 At once can please, instruct, and entertain:

²⁰ Hotspur's jibe in *I Henry IV*.

²¹ Identified in MS as 'Hurst', but probably John Hirst (promoted from cornet to lieutenant in 1804, and to captain in 1806).

²² In 1809 Fenwick (c. 1786–1855) published *The Goblin Groom: A Tale of Dunse*, a parody of Scott's *Marmion* involving a fox hunt that takes place on Flodden Field. He purchased a cornetship in the Blues in 1808 and was a lieutenant by October 1809, when on the occasion of the Golden Jubilee of George III he donated an ox to be roasted for the benefit of the Windsor poor. Unusually, Goulburn mentions Fenwick by name in a note on p. 87, when speaking of 'Numskull': 'With my friend Fenwick, I may say, "... his whole plodding scull, / A mist of sense would hold, if it were full!'"

Can make the jar of clashing faction cease,
And bid contending parties be at peace.
Pause here, my muse, and think how few 'mongst men,
Can, like Augustus, brandish satyr's pen;
Like him, know when to JOKE, and when to END;
A gen'ral fav'rite, and a gen'ral friend.

Another company misfit is 'Fribble' (one Feild or Field), a superannuated lieutenant with a paranoid 'horror of ... being thought old or stupid ... which in fact he was not', although

With fancies, Fribble thus torments his brain,
And groans beneath a self-inflicted pain.
But tho' his mind this childishness displays,
Let not his MANY virtues want their praise.
Nor think too far t'abuse his gen'rous heart,
For trust me, he can act a MANLY part!

– or at least in amorous 'combat', where his exploits have rendered him famous in Canterbury, among inexpensive females. Brief praise for independence and good nature is accorded the cornets 'John Bull' (William Terry, promoted to lieutenant on Goulburn's retirement in April 1805),²³ 'Son of Mutton' (Frederick James Lamb, younger brother of the future prime minister Viscount Melbourne),²⁴ and jocular 'Momus' (one Farrar, untraced); but hardly for Dorrien's obedient adjutant John Taylor ('Slipslop'), who only exists

With zeal [to] anticipate his LORD's command:
Sit, when HE sits; and when he rises, stands,

and wins no respect. Nor does the contemptuously named, but in fact truly distinguished army surgeon, James [later Sir James, Bart.] McGrigor (1771–1858), nor his assistant 'George' (George Peach, 1778/9–1856), a 'loblollaboy' with a well-tied cravat and ill-concealed 'stamp of med'cine' upon him. The former, under the *alias* 'Macsycophant', whose CHEVIOT accent soon declares him SCOT', is reckoned no more than a hack prose writer:

Behold an AUTHOR; clad in GRUB-STREET vest,
He writes a treatise on th' EGYPTIAN pest;²⁵
With nonsense fills each dull and prolix page,
And tells what all mankind has known an age.

But finally, and most autobiographical of all of Edward Goulburn's extended thumbnails, is that for the terminal 'John Larmour', i.e. *himself*, whose post-nautical activities – during or before his enlistment in the Blues – once more involve equestrian pursuits:

²³ As reported in the London *Sun* of 10 April: 'Royal Regiment of Horse Guards, Cornet William Terry to be Lieutenant, by purchase, vice Goulburn, who retires.'

²⁴ Goulburn gives him only two lines: 'SPRIG of nobility – thrice honor'd knight / the CHILD OF MUTTON next appears in sight.' Lamb (1783–1853) was described as the Hon. Frederick James Lamb when he briefly joined the Blues in April 1804; he had moved on to the diplomatic service by 1811, and succeeded his brother as third viscount in 1848 (see *ODNB*).

²⁵ *Medical Sketches of the Expedition to Egypt from India* (1804), by no means a 'nonsensical' report by the Superintending Surgeon and head of the British Army's medical team in the Egyptian campaign (see *ODNB*). Goulburn's casual dismissal of him is clearly ignorant and unworthy.

Snatch'd from a cockpit's rude, unpolish'd shade,
 And plac'd where pleasure all her joys display'd,
 Behold th' unthinking; stranger he to care,
 As wind unsteady, volatile as air.
 Behold him on the turf impetuous rush,
 Mark him 'mongst hounds contending for the brush.
 View him in VELVET CAP, and PEA-GREEN VEST,
 The wise-mans' pity, and the sportsmans' jest:
 In silken garbs array'd, and jockey'd state!
 Mark the fleet race-horse groan beneath his weight,
 Or see him perch'd behind two harness'd bays,
 Striving t'outshine a rival pair of GREYS.
 The WHIP affecting, not his least pretence,
 And scourging animals – with TWICE HIS SENSE!
 Blacklegs and sharpers, round in busy groups,
 With joy Satanic, mark this DUPE of DUPES!
 Insidious flatt'ers around him crowd,
 His skill, his horsemanship, by all allow'd,
 Urge him to faults, by nature not his own,
 And lavish HEAPS, which they enjoy alone.
 At length Timotheus [= Dorrien] frowns; the slaves of pow'r,
 With joy remark that long expected hour;
 Where now his flatt'ers, or where now his friends;
 His dreams are finish'd and his vision ends.

Ostracism follows debt, brought on, no doubt, by his own 'young and inconsiderate' commitments:

The friendly Shwaum, now stiffens to a bow,
 And aged Fribble looks HE KNOWS NOT HOW!
 Argus now shuns him, with averted face,
 And WAUGH walks by him at a quicken'd pace:
 Now drops at once his pride, his darling stud,
 His HACKS, his HUNTERS of ennobled blood!
 The HARNESS'D steeds, the LIV'RIED SERVANTS' horse,
 The well-stock'd cover, and the level'd course.
 By BAILIFFS, DUNS, annoy'd, by Lawyers teaz'd,
 His carriages are sold, his stables seiz'd;
 He falls: remember'd folly stings his end,
 Ruin'd, forgotten, and without a friend.
 All righteous Heav'n! is thy promis'd bliss,
 Shall youthful follies bring mankind to this?
 Are thus thy creatures robb'd of ev'ry joy,
 And is the MAN thus punish'd for the boy!
 Shall then experience always come too late,
 Or only shew to man, his certain fate?

But at this lowest depth of (we may say deserved) remorse and self-flagellation, our poet is miraculously rescued by the intervention of true 'friendship':

Friendship! that word proves all my rant unjust;
That word at once consigns it all to dust.

The ensuing details are confusing, but they seem to involve a voluntary loan from 'gen'rous Hougham', extending to 'his purse, his counsels; nay his house' for refuge, and a back-up gesture from 'Radnor's son' (described in a note as 'my worthy and generous friend Bell'), who has seen fit to wager a thousand guineas, apparently on Edward himself as jockey in some kind of challenge between headstrong rival sportsmen (I leave verification of this event to racing historians).

Somewhat anticlimactically, *The Blueviad* ends here, with 'Larmour'/Goulburn finally castigating himself for his own essentially frivolous complaints, when those far less fortunate surround him, and urge self-reform:

Darst thou, (a stranger yet to REAL ills,
Refuse the chastisement, th'Omniscient wills!
Deign round the universe to cast thine eyes,
And if thou canst, unthinking boy, be wise:
There learn that misery is MANS' decree:
For WHO from care, from sorrow, there is free?
Behold the wretch condemn'd for life to toil,
To tug the oar, or dig a thankless soil:
Say! with what murmurs would thy breast have throbb'd,
Hadst thou of liberty like him been robb'd.
Behold yon tortured offspring of disease,
Who WORLDS would give to gain thy envied ease.
Declare then, Sceptic! what wouldst thou have said,
Hadst thou e'er felt his agonizing bed?
Then weep not GOLD, lament not squander'd wealth,
Be thankful for thy liberty, thy health:
Pursue the path that still will lead to fame,
Renounce a COXCOMBS' – gain a SOLDIERS' name.

But such a terminal resolution, intentionally brave or merely anticipatory of future military service, was to prove far from Edward Goulburn's destiny. Whether or not he ever circulated drafts of his satire among 'those few friends, for whose private perusal and amusement [they] were alone intended', the fact is that he published it, and was indeed substantially damned. Although still declaring himself on the title-page of *The Blueviad* 'Edward Goulburn Esq., Royal Horse Guards', he had in fact resigned his lieutenantancy by 9 April 1805, possibly to avoid court martial.²⁶ Following the appearance of the book three separate charges of libel were brought against him by Lieutenant-Colonel Dorrien, Captain and Mrs Bird, and Captain

²⁶ See note 23 above. Describing 'the injuries which I consider myself to have suffered' in having been dismissed from the military service in 1804, following his unsuccessful attempt to have his commanding officer court martialed, Nathaniel Jekyll alluded to Goulburn's retirement: 'It appears ... that a Mr. Goulburn had been guilty of misconduct, for which he thought fit to retire from the Blues, to avoid the ignominious consequences he apprehended from the sentence of a court martial; the particulars of that misconduct are not detailed, but we are led to suppose it must have been of a most disgraceful nature, by the circumstance of the commanding officer (Lieutenant Colonel Dorien [sic]) having gone to such a length as to propose publicly, in the mess room, a bet that Mr. Goulburn would "come to the gallows"' (*The Case of Nathaniel Jekyll, Esquire, Late a Captain in the Forty-Third Regiment of Foot; also Abstracts of the Cases of Several other Officers* (London, 1810), p. 115.

Abney ('Numscull'), and Goulburn was taken into custody and eventually found guilty of 'inveterate malice' against his complainants – although in his sentencing of 10 February 1806 Justice Nash Grose, while acknowledging the libels in the relevant text, censured the 'unwarrantable and harsh conduct of those who, conversant with the ways of the world, first led you, by flattering your slanderous publications, to commit an offence against the laws of the country, and then brought you before this Court, to render you amenable to those laws'. Taking into consideration 'the time you have already been confined' (Jenkins says only one week), Edward was fined a total of £50 (£30 to the Birds, £10 to each of the others), which he (or his brother Henry) 'immediately discharged'. As far as I can discover, no legal action was taken against the publisher, John Maynard (trading 1799–1835 in Pantons Street, Haymarket), or the printer, James Barker of Great Russell Street, active 1799–1817.

But that was not the end of the matter, by any means. At some point after Edward's resignation from the regiment, but before the King's Bench hearing, Captain John Horsley ('Bluster' above) accidentally encountered the satirist and a companion on horseback in Rotten Row, where Horsley shook his whip at Goulburn, and when 'questioned', gave further offence.²⁷ Three days later, Goulburn sent a challenge to Horsley at the Hyde Park barracks, which Major Miller ('Whiskerandos') received in Horsley's absence, and on the latter's return from newly-married leave 'declared to him that it was his full opinion [that Horsley] could not meet Mr. Goulburn, under the particular circumstances which had obliged [Goulburn] to quit the army, without giving an unpardonable affront to the whole regiment' – i.e. as Goulburn was no longer a fitting opponent, he was not worth so 'honouring'. Captain Horsley then consulted 'all of his brother officers on duty with that division of his regiment [apparently about five], who unanimously supported the decision of Major Miller', and so he duly refused the challenge.

Goulburn himself, however, never at a loss for literary revenge, on 15 June 'posted' his former fellow Guardsman as 'a coward', affixing signs to that effect on appropriate public walls in the neighbourhood, and rather than ignore that ignominy, Horsley prepared a letter 'for the newspapers', defending his conduct as regimentally endorsed. But Lieutenant-Colonel Dorrien, now brought into the brouhaha, declared Horsley 'criminally remiss' in *not* fighting Goulburn, and some officers hitherto supportive of Miller's position turned tail, and co-signed a report to the Duke of Richmond, as Commander of the Blues, deploring the situation. Even more devastatingly, the ultimate authority King George III, happening to see one of Goulburn's postings, is reported to have weighed in with indignation at having one of his household troop proclaimed cowardly, and the outcome was inevitable: Captain Horsley was immediately cashiered.

Politically adept Dorrien escaped blame for all the commotion, and Goulburn, after 10 February 1806, seems to have suffered no repercussions. But *The Blueviad* itself was never reprinted, no doubt reflecting fear of further prosecution by other victims of the author's 'malice', and very possibly it was withdrawn from public sale.²⁸ Instead, despite the demands of re-rendering print into manuscript, several full transcripts of the 1805 octavo were prepared – presumably to supply curious readers without access to the printed text – complete with title-page and index as printed, but with the text pages renumbered. At least fourteen copies of the original 1805 *Blueviad* are now recorded in institutional libraries (four in the UK,

²⁷ Quotations here and below are from *The Case of Nathaniel Jeckyll, etc.* (1810), pp. 115–20, based at least in part on Horsley's own *The Case of John Horsley, Esq., Late a Captain in the Royal Regiment of Horse Guards Blue* (London, 1805).

²⁸ The extraordinary price of a copy in the White Knights sale of 1819 (£3 10s.) certainly suggests its rarity: see below.

ten in the USA), plus two now before me (one sold by Addison & Sarova to James Cummins in 2022, the other from Jarndyce, once auctioned at White Knights (1819) and bought by Richard Heber (his sale, 1834, Part IV, lot 910, ‘very rare’, but lacking Robert Dighton’s plate of ‘Larmour’, i.e. Goulburn, on horseback, and making just one shilling). A few of the surviving printed octavos have manuscript keys to the terminal two-column ‘Index to the Characters’, listing rank and surname identifications for twenty-seven of the pseudonyms in the main text: notable among these is the Sussex copy, now at the British Library, with several of the officers marked as subsequently promoted in rank, and five (Dashwood, Miller, Slingsby, Horsley, and Brown) confirmed as ‘Out’, i.e. resigned or retired at the time the key was added.²⁹

Of the four known manuscript copies, at least two (including our own) are in the same relatively crude but conscientiously accurate hand, that of William Richardson, a cornet in the Horse Guards as of 27 February 1806 who served with the regiment in the Peninsular War and, as colonel, commanded the regiment from 1837 to 1845. Both are copied into quarto vellum-bound blank books with paper stock watermarked 1802; a third copy in ‘original vellum’, signed by the soldier, sportsman, author, and diarist Captain Peter Hawker (1786–1853, the son of a Royal Horse Guardsman, commissioned at seventeen as a cornet in the Royal Dragoons, retired in 1809 after a severe wound at Talavera) was catalogued by Maggs in 1922 for £2 10s.³⁰ A fourth transcript at Princeton is described as bound in contemporary roan. On at least one occasion (Book I, line 232, ‘wary’ for ‘vary’) our manuscript corrects a not at all obvious misreading in the printed text, but on another (a mistaken line-count near the end) it follows print faithfully, so Richardson’s source for his copies (two or three or all four) was unquestionably the 1805 octavo.



Just what eventuated for Edward Goulburn immediately after 10 February 1806 we cannot be sure, but by late 1807 he had returned to literary satire – far milder than before, although again provoking a legal complaint from one target. The much shorter new poem, titled *The Epwell Hunt; or, Black Collars in the Rear*, was printed at Warwick by William Perry of the Market Place (anonymous and undated, but on paper watermarked 1807, and with a caption title dating the hunt itself at ‘Epwell, Dec. 7th, 1807’); the subtitle ‘Black Collars in the Rear’ is explained by Paul Morgan as a reference to the dress of the Stratford Hunt Club, contrasted with the white collars adopted by the Pytchley club, founded in 1750). Copies survive at Yale, the Warwick County Record Office, and Bodley (Vet. A6 d.987 (2)), probably the copy formerly belonging to Morgan, who reprinted it in 1984 with a valuable introduction and notes.³¹

The verse of *The Epwell Hunt* (194 lines, rhyming couplets in dactylic tetrameter) may not merit as much extraction as *The Blueviad*, but again is highly competent and intermittently delightful, if perhaps overspecialized satire.³² Goulburn narrates his own participation, among ‘two hundred crack sportsman’ on Epwell Heath on a frosty December morning, in

²⁹ BL 11641.a.26, available online. Others so annotated include copies at Bodley, Lilly, Stanford, and Huntington (the last by George Baker, 1806), possibly reflecting a common source or sources.

³⁰ A further manuscript copy signed by Richardson was sold at Bearnas Hampton & Littlewood, Devon auctioneers, in 2013; it resurfaced in a listing by Unsworths, and then in an Antiquates catalogue (no. 6, item 49), but is unlocated by us.

³¹ *The Epwell Hunt or Black Collars in the Rear* (the title-page unfortunately misdating the event itself to ‘7th September 1807’), published by P. Drinkwater, Shipton-on-Stour, Warwickshire, 1984.

³² The following quotations follow Morgan’s edition, although misspellings of personal and place names have been corrected (e.g. ‘Kynaston’ rather than ‘Kynnaston’); important variants are noted below, and see Morgan for a complete list.

what turned out to be a memorably epic ‘run’, the first quarry killed soon after breaking cover, but the ‘rare splitting pace / O’er a pretty stiff country’ exhausted many horses and their less ‘keen’ mounts, including

Squire KYNASTON, tho’ upon Whalebone the tough [his horse],
Found he’d lost a fore shoe, that’s to say, – *had enough*,

while the second fox, flushed shortly afterward, led the pack and its stalwarts on a chase of some thirty zigzagging miles from Epwell to Swalcliffe to Swerford and Heythorp, when,

Having filled the whole country with falls and disasters,
Nearly *killed* all the nags, and well *pickled* their masters,
He was *killed* in the park whilst just going to ground,
Above *twenty-three miles* from the place he was found!

Goulburn ends his survey of the final ‘comical scene’ –

Here, a buck in his *shirt* covered over with *mud*,
There, a groom *sticking fast* on a slim bit of blood,
Here a farmer *gives in*, there a nobleman *lags*,
Alike anxious to make an *excuse* for their nags.
Not a field you pass through, but appears some *sad face*,
Groaning over a fall, or *lamenting* its case;

and goes on, over the last hundred lines, to offer snapshots of his fellow huntsmen, ranging from laudatory to slightly satirical to (in one instance) familiarly accusatory, as we shall see. Edward Morant Gale of Edge Hill, an intrepid habitual front-runner among the riders, ‘regardless of bumps, scratches, or knocks’,

concluded by *dreadfully laming* his horse,
But contrived, on *three* legs still to keep up the fun
And went *hobbling* along to the end of the run,

while Lord Alvanley (William Arden, second Baron) rode his ‘clodhopper’ Ploughboy so slowly that the horse ‘learned by this run the *right meaning* of spurs’:

But, *spurred* as *he* was, it’s my duty to say,
He kept with the hounds through the *whole* of the day.

Equally prominent as a leader ‘at the end’ was Robert Canning of Houndshill, near Stratford, although at six foot four inches he weighed sixteen stone – nonetheless lighter than his elder brother Frank, who

On the *General* was mounted, and what’s very queer,
Like *some* of that tribe, *he* preferred *not the rear*,
...
Still he lasted it out, though much wearied and spent,
And no doubt felt *great pleasure* at reaching his *tent*.

As for Goulburn himself, qualified as ‘the *bard*’, here as in *The Blueviad* he is wittily self-critical, ‘in a style very different’

Over fences and ditches kept *thoughtlessly* fanning,
Resolved at all *hazards* to follow Bob Canning,
To accomplish which end he kept on at a *score*
That his *five years old* nag thought a *terrible bore*;

So at Swerford, unable to *climb* up the hill,
At a nasty *oak stile* stood *obligingly* still.
There they left him in *plight*, not a little distressing,
The *breed* of Arabians most *fervently blessing*.

Other well known riders – Lord Clonmell of Allesley Park (‘a mile in the rear / Perspiring and puffing’), Will Barrow (nicknamed ‘Jack Ketch’, after the legendary hangman), the metal and glass manufacturer Thomas Pemberton of Birmingham, Walter Stubbs of Rumour Hill near Stratford, and an unidentified ‘little Gillibrand’ – come in for separate stanza-long treatment, some of it whimsical, but the treatment of Reginald Wynniatt of Gloucestershire (lines 143–56) merits quotation in full:

Nor let us, my friends, in this place overlook
The *fate* of poor Wynniatt, who *fell in the brook*,
And who, had it not been for that *woeful disaster*,
Must have seen *all* the sport, had they gone *even* faster.
A *lesson* to sportsmen: take *warning* from hence
How much safer to *ride*, than *turn* over a fence,
For the chesnut, indignant at being *led* over,
Threw him flat on his face, not exactly in *clover*:
Nay, to *tread* on his master, the *rascal* made bold,
And gave him a bath most bewitchingly cold;
And, what’s worse, after playing this *devilish rig*,
Of the water he took such a terrible swig
That though Reginald mounted as soon as released,
He could never *get up*, ‘till the fun had all ceased.

None of the above sallies seems to have upset Goulburn’s hunting companions perceptibly – their common passion was after all an avocation, not a professional commitment like service in the British military. But one exception, curiously akin to what tainted *The Blueviad*, proved enduringly awkward, although in this instance the result was mercifully less punitive for Goulburn. Richard Bayzand, a dedicated young enthusiast from a family in the Buckland and Childswickham area, who kept four horses at Stratford so that he could hunt four days a week and resided there for that purpose during ‘the season’, was treated with contumely, if not outright contempt, in lines 123–34:

‘Well! I *never did see ne’er a run like this here*
Cried D[ick] B[ayzand] to day most unusually near;
To see him so *forward* surprized a great many
Who knew not the *rigs* of this *Worcestershire zany*,
But his friends passed it by as a matter of course,
Well knowing he wished to *dispose* of his *horse*:
Now *creeping* through gaps, and now *trotting* down lanes,
When noticed he *jumps*, but when not *slyly cranes*,³³
Now concealing a *stumble*, now hiding a *trip*,
Like a horse-dealer’s man paid to shew off a rip;
In short (if allowed I may be the expression),
What we deem a pleasure, he makes a profession.

³³ i.e. ‘looks before he leaps’, a display of caution thought shameful.

The final charge – that of seeking to profit financially from a deceitful display of a horse’s exaggerated merits – is a throwback to those in *The Blueviad* against ‘John Waugh’ and his wife, and if not as criminally deliberate (‘patched up’, ‘unsound’ horses sold to incautious innocents), at least dishonourable among fellow club traders or sellers of mounts – and Dick Bayzand understandably took exception to Goulburn’s slurs on his riding conduct, and ‘professional’ resort toward ‘disposing’ of unwanted beasts. Moreover, he felt he discerned a motive behind Goulburn’s evident malice, for when seeking an opinion from a Stratford law firm (who on 1 January 1808 consulted in turn a London contact, William Reader of The Temple), Bayzand alleged that he had been ‘particularly kind’ to young Goulburn, had ‘lent him money when no other person would’ and ‘never asked to be repaid, and when Mr. Goulburn gave him a draft for the money which he borrowed, it was returned to Mr. Bayzand dishonoured’. Whereupon in November 1807 Goulburn challenged his creditor to a race at Warwick for a stake of one hundred guineas – and lost easily, being ‘nearly distanced’. ‘This circumstance’, Bayzand believed, ‘induced [Goulburn] to treat [him] with unmerited sarcasm and gross abuse in the *Epwell Hunt*.’ He particularly objected to the words ‘rigs’ (‘meaning tricks by which he cheats persons in the sale of horses’), and ‘zany’, and the illiterate ‘cry’, and calls the charges in four lines (129–32, beginning ‘Now creeping through gaps’) simply ‘not true’. Counsel was asked if this ‘libel’ would qualify for redress in the Court of King’s Bench – the applicants of course knew about the *Blueviad* case and decision – but replied that the Court would probably not find it important enough to consider, and no further action, evidently, ensued.³⁴

But the Warwick-printed squib issued by W. Perry remains formidably rare, with only three copies now known, and like *The Blueviad* it soon generated contemporary transcripts, perhaps indicating suppression early on. Paul Morgan possessed one (now at the Bodleian, MS. Don. d. 207), ‘copied in the hand of Michael Russell, steward to Sir Thomas Phillipps’ and once owned by Phillipps (MS 16645; Sotheby’s, 26 June 1974, lot 2922), who printed it with some variant readings in 1847 (see below); another, once owned by a Robert Harding (‘possibly of Baraset’ – Morgan), is now at Yale, and a third one is now before me, a small octavo on paper watermarked 1805. They seem to be independent copies, those at Yale and Bodley (collated by Morgan in 1984) with slightly varying readings, especially in spelling out given names, while ours, which bears the contemporary signature of T[homas] W[ebb] Edge (of Strelley Hall, Notts., b. 1746), follows the 1807 printed text meticulously when the others vary. On a note once pinned to its front flyleaf it also correctly identifies Bayzand as the ‘Worcestershire Zany’ who ‘purchased Mr Davenports House on Stratford Place’, although the surname here is spelled ‘Beasant’ – a variant like that (‘Dick Bassant’) adopted by William Daniel in 1813.³⁵

And indeed the little satire was no more forgotten in its time than the unreprinted *Blueviad*, being revived with explanatory notes by W. B. Daniel in the supplement to his *Rural Sports* (1813), a somewhat free version next reprinted, with most names omitted, by ‘Venator’ (the Warwick printer John Cooper) in his *The Warwickshire Hunt from 1795 to 1836* (1837). About three years later another reprint appeared, by S. C. Harper of Cheltenham, in which the entire passage about Bayzand was left out, as if this were still a sensitive issue, but that omission was duly restored, with the original identification ‘D. B.’ spelt out as ‘DICK BAYZAND’, by Sir Thomas Phillipps in 1847 in a Middle Hill Press publication of three hunting texts. Titled *The Epwell Hunt. The Raby Hunt. The Melton Hunt*, this was imposed in both folio

³⁴ See Morgan, pp. 16–18.

³⁵ This is possibly the manuscript mentioned by Morgan, p. viii, as having been in 1946 ‘in the possession of Mr. H. M. Woodward of Welford-on -Avon’, but unseen by him.

and small octavo formats from the same setting of type,³⁶ and Sir Thomas was perhaps not altogether motivated by literary piety: he had earlier quarrelled with the Bayzand family over the tenancy of a farm at Buckland, and (Paul Morgan guesses) saw fit not only to preserve the arguably slanderous charges against Richard Bayzand, but to give his name, rather than ‘D. B.’, in full and – for once – correctly spelled.

Later editions or extracts of 1873, 1891, and 1896 need not detain us, nor a Derrydale Press edition of the Phillipps trio (1926), and none of the reprints, so far as we know, involved the author directly. The original composition, first printing, and initial circulation, however limited, of *The Epwell Hunt* must have occupied less than three weeks of Goulburn’s otherwise undemanding leisure time: the hunt itself took place on Saturday, 7 December 1807, and the inquiry sent by Bayzand’s Stratford representatives to William Reader in London is dated Friday, 1 January 1808.



What precisely Edward had done, after his release from brief custody on 10 February 1806, beside fox-hunting, socializing in town and country, and – as we learn – recklessly wagering on horse races and elsewhere, is now unknown. His horses – Epsom Lass, Grimaldi, Romeo – continued to compete at the major tracks, at least until 1809, and the equally precocious Lord Byron recalled being ‘at supper ... after the Opera’ in 1808 with Scrope Berdmore Davies and possibly John Cam Hobhouse, when ‘young Goulburne (of the Blues and of the Blueviad) came in full of the praise of his horse Grimaldi – who had just won a race at Newmarket. – “Did he win easy?” said Scrope – “Sir” – replied Goulburne – “he did not even condescend to *puff* at coming in” – “No – (said Scrope) and so *you puff* for him”’.³⁷ But literary ambitions did not desert him, for by 14 October 1809 his next (and as it turned out, his final) excursion into literary verse, *The Pursuits of Fashion, a Satirical Poem*, was readied for the press of John Ebers of Old Bond Street,³⁸ and went on to achieve some measure of popularity in its own time, for once escaping censure or protest – by the obvious expedient, no doubt insisted upon by the experienced Eberses, of thoroughly disguising its main targets with indecipherable aliases. Unlike both the ‘specialized’ *Blueviad* and *Epwell Hunt*, the far longer *Pursuits of Fashion* is a general satire on contemporary British society and its ills – the identification, censure, and correction of which Goulburn takes as his remit – although his true talent, like Pope’s, is ever the skewering caricature. As a literary composition, moreover, it leaves Edward’s prior publications (I think) far behind, and may be read today with amusement and pleasure, which the extracts below – admittedly prolix – will (I hope) illustrate.

Still just twenty-three, but at this date again in deep trouble over gambling debts (see below), Goulburn quoted Byron’s just-issued *English Bards* alongside Persius on his title-page, and introduced the text of some 120 pages of heroic couplets and tetrameter anapests

³⁶ See Eric Holzenberg, *The Middle Hill Press: A Checklist of the Horblit Collection ... Now in the Library of the Grolier Club* (New York, 1997), nos 466 (the octavo edition, pp. [2], 24, with a title-leaf naming ‘..... Goulburn’ as the first author (Phillipps’s manuscript copy preserving no Christian name), and having the imprint ‘Typis Medio-Montanis / excudit / Jacobus Rogers / 1847’); 467 (the folio edition, pp. [2], 6); and 468, an 1849 reissue of the folio. *The Raby Hunt* is by the politician Martin Bladen Edward Hawkes, first published in 1804, and *The Melton Hunt* is by Phillipps himself – his only published poem? – written in 1830.

³⁷ Leslie A. Marchand, ed., *Byron’s Letters and Journals*, ix:19 (‘Detached Thoughts’, no. 20). Byron was writing in late 1821 and may have misremembered the date, but Grimaldi certainly did win the one hundred guinea sweepstakes at Newmarket on 1 May 1809 (*Morning Post*, 3 May).

³⁸ A well-known and successful father/son bookselling firm: John II would go on to manage the King’s Theatre as a grand opera house from 1821–26; on his return to books, he published the first works of William Harrison Ainsworth, later his son-in-law and business partner.

with two prefaces, the first claiming (as before) that he wrote only for his friends, and craved ‘clemency’ from others, denying any personal targets (although many are obvious), and apologizing, in a supplementary note, for the fact ‘that illness, *and no small portion of mental anxiety*’ (my italics) may explain his failure to have corrected ‘some errors that appear in the printing throughout this work ... which he should have done’. And indeed, his text as published by Ebers in 1810 – three ‘editions’, but just one printing, the three title-pages differing only in the words ‘The Second Edition’ and ‘The Third Edition’ above the imprint³⁹ – seems entirely fluent and ‘finished’ as is; nonetheless, when the stock had sold out after less than two years, Ebers (as he relates in an ‘Advertisement to the Fourth Edition’, dated 8 October 1812), ‘applied to the author to prepare a fourth [edition] for the press; or for permission to avail myself, in that undertaking, of certain corrections he had formerly placed in my hands, but of which little or no use had been made, from the hurry with which the antecedent impressions had been struck off’.

‘In answer to this application’, Ebers continued, ‘he informed me that many weighty considerations induced him to wish that no new edition of the work should take place; adding, that he considered a production bearing such evident marks of haste and incorrectness, as little calculated to meet the eye of the Critic. Admitting, however, my indisputed privilege, as purchaser of the copy-right, to republish it, he gave me full permission to employ any corrections which might render it more worthy of public attention.’ The result, then, of Ebers’s adoption of what he had already possessed from Goulburn even before 14 October 1809, but printed only after 8 October 1812, was the true text as Goulburn had intended, almost certainly by the former date, while the 1810 printing(s) constitute in effect an uncorrected draft of the satire, which a modern reader might compare for a few alternate readings, omissions, or lines/passages deemed superfluous and eliminated. For the ‘revised’ state of the text, with its title-page claim to ‘alterations and corrections’, virtually replaces that issued in 1810, almost always for the far better, and extends it by some twenty pages and roughly 250 lines, the majority of the added lineage in the last two sections. All extracts that follow are taken from that revised rendering, unless signalled otherwise.

1810’s modest claim to the propriety of his satire (‘Twere surely no unfit or useless task, / In times so dread and perilous, to ask’) gives way to a more robust statement of purpose:

In times thus perilous, what fitter task,
 What of more ‘pith and moment’, than to ask
 If those resources which we yet retain,
 Which yet entrench the Mistress of the Main, –
 On which her fame, her vital hopes depend,
 Be aptly wielded to acquire their end? –
 ...
 To roam o’er this extended, open tract,
 Muse, be it ours! To ascertain the fact;
 Explore and find the source of that decay,
 Which gathers rancour each revolving day;
 Ask whence its cause, its origin, and why
 Thus verges Britain tow’rd nonentity? –

In pursuit of such moral failure, Goulburn permits his critical attention to wander freely from the initial image of the host nation’s endangered exposure to Napoleon’s hostility, to the aberrations of government (‘her Statesmen on inglorious *pelf* intent’), fashion-besotted ‘modern

³⁹ The first was advertised on 29 January and 8 February, the ‘second’ (at 6s. 6d.) on 28 February.

youth', the corrupt and self-serving church, and even the once-proud military, 'her veteran troops by boys and dotards led' (1810, a charge cancelled in revision). But let us denounce the offenders *seriatim*, pausing however for a salvo against anticipated reaction:

Critics! whom none escape, however pure
The heart or pen, 'Pour on! I will endure!'
If yield I must, and writhe me on the rack,
At least I'll die with harness on my back.
And ye, dread Scotchmen! whose decrees of steel
Have broke such numbers on the Critic Wheel,
Expect no bribes from my uncourtly pen;
Which asks applause from none but Gentlemen.
To Gifford's taste, or such as Byron's wit,
At once I bow and tremblingly submit:
But will not tamely kiss your worsted rod,
Nor recognize, in Scotland's dregs, a God.
To your tribunal dragg'd, Bards know their fate,
Censure harsh, coarse, and indiscriminate:
Save when some craz'd enthusiast of the North
Sends his unmeaning, high-pric'd, nonsense forth.
Vulgar and scurrilous ye needs must be,
And low and filthy⁴⁰ to the last degree:
And though attack'd, expos'd, on all sides beat,
Trade on in venom, that yourselves may eat!

Goulburn's first serious target, perhaps surprisingly, is the alleged decline of the domestic religious ministry. After the reflection that once upon a time,

When Europe arm'd against the Infidel:
When Albion's banner cheer'd the Christian van,
And fill'd with dread the flying Mussulman;
And grateful Christendom was proud to vie
With England's zeal and England's piety

now

these enlighten'd, philosophic times,
Have dubb'd religious zeal the worst of crimes.
To vex our God is now the proof of skill.

There is reason enough for such a falling off: the corrupt state of the Church itself and its representative instructors, with their recourse to activities associated with – remarkably enough – Edward's old stamping grounds, now by implication rejected and deplored:

Look at [God's] Ministers! Behold the herd,
Selected from the crowd to preach his word;
Ordain'd to teach the unlearn'd of their kind,
Reclaim the wanderer, and lead the blind!

⁴⁰ Goulburn footnotes this charge in both versions of his text with a convincingly offensive passage from the 'Tweedish [i.e. *Edinburgh*] Review': again the example of Byron's *English Bards* is evoked.

Are they not (shocking as it is to state!)
 Some few excepted vile and profligate?
 Say! is this malice? is it rant and spleen?
 Or is it truth? – Behold what I have seen!
 Mark in yon crowd, a Priest, a Prebend stand,
 His family the noblest in our land;
 With rank and station, and reputed sense,
 And all that they command of influence.
 What ground is that he treads on? – Muse, declare,
 What is't he tends, with so much seeming care?
 A *stall* he stands in, Readers! – we confess,
 Though not the stall which, haply, you might guess.
 Not that one, by his bounteous sov'reign giv'n,
 To teach us sinful folks the way to Heav'n!
 A stall he stands in – where no puzzling creeds
 Perplex: – a stall – for it contains his steeds!
 In this, or on Newmarket's barren heath,
 Where brutes are tortur'd for the want of breath;
 Where villainies of ev'ry kind abound,
 And all proclaims it, Satan's hallow'd ground;
 Where fraud is just, where virtue has a price,
 And all is infamy and avarice –
 ...
 'Tis not my meaning to accuse of fraud,
 This curious compound, this mistaken lord;
 I do not say, he enter'd an abode,
 And plunder'd it; or robb'd upon the road;
 Nay, farther, we attempt not to deny,
 His conduct, *as a betting man*, stands high.
 But when I call to mind his rank, his birth,
 His post, as Minister of God on earth:
 I pass his sporting fame, or foul or fair,
 And simply ask 'what bus'ness has he there?'

Another delinquent clergyman ('like the preceding, of ennobled blood, / Titled, and rich, and ev'rything – *but good*') spends his sabbaths (presumably after divine service) in 'the Park',

Choosing *this* public place, *this* day, *this* time,
 (As if 'twere laudable, and not a crime,)
 To chat, forsooth, and saunter up and down
 With two *notorious* women of the town!

And such reprehensible conduct is not restricted to London, but flourishes in the country as well, where several priests known to Goulburn practice amateur bare-knuckle boxing (like the famous contemporary prize fighters John Jackson, 'Chickens' (Henry 'Hen' Pearce, known as 'the Game Chicken'), and his successor Tom Cribb), 'think the deity is in the fist', and 'feel themselves *ordain'd* to pummel ribs'), including a remarkable roughouser

advanced in years,
 Whose courage bids him spurn all common fears;
 Though time has, long since, silver'd o'er his pate,
 Yet hobbling on, – a *limping* reprobate!
 His flock forsaking, family and home,
 With boys and stripling debauchees to roam;
 Straining his aged limbs, with them to vie
 In every sort of brutal revelry:
 With them compell'd to bear a prison's damp,
 Not for St. Paul's offence, but – breaking lamps!
 Vice of each sort, and species, and degree,
 Indulging in: – and this at *sixty-three!*

Part One of *The Pursuits* concludes at some length with an unallayed (and for Goulburn, unprecedented) lament for the helplessness of the 'untaught village-rustic' in the absence of any sustained encouragement to piety of any sort – undermined as belief has become by a corrupt ministry, distracting schismatics ('motley tribes, professing Methodism'), and scoffers at every level. Warning his readers of the fate of ancient Greece and modern Italy he pleads – sincerely, one must think – for a return to the faith and virtues of the English common ancestry, as he imagined it:

Ye I invoke! – And ye, my countrymen!
 If British blood yet flows within your veins,
 If for your country aught of love remains,
 O make your first, your chief, your only care,
 That which first rais'd and made you what ye are!
 For men of sense, of education, search,
 To guard the hallow'd altars of your church!
 Their wants as Men, as Gentlemen, supply –
 And spurn the pettifogging penury,
 Which bids enrich the creatures of a throne,
 And starve the ministers of God alone!
 One moment's more delay, and ye are lost;
 Your boasted liberty becomes the cost.
 Where'er we turn, the prospect ev'ry way
 Declares me true, enforces what I say.
 Lo! where proud Europe groans beneath the rod,
 Of an insulted, an avenging God!
 Where empires flourish'd, and where kingdoms stood,
 Behold a scene of wretchedness and blood!
 ...
 Shall we, I ask, like all around depriv'd,
 Submit by choice, by choice become enslav'd?
 No! Let us rather fly th' impending storm,
 Commence at once a radical reform;
 From infamy, as from contagion, fly;
 And snatch this last and only remedy!

This *cri de coeur* may not in its own way rival Shelley, but it is not negligible in terms of what we have heard of and from Edward Goulburn before.

'Part the Second' again heavily revises the 1810 text. Turning to Britain's current civil government, and beginning with lavish praise of Pitt the Younger (d. 23 January 1806) and his perceived halcyon regime (1783–1801, 1804–06), Goulburn laments its paltry, irresponsible succession:

But when our crimes compell'd Omniscient Heaven,
To snatch from us the Guardian it had given;
As if by magic's pow'r, up sprang at once,
Each *self-made* statesman, ev'ry titled dunce;
At once commenc'd a kind of scrambling race,
Who should obtain the vacant, wish'd-for place.
A gen'ral rush for pow'r and place and pelf,
The sole grand aim of each intruder – SELF.
Yet let who would succeed, be *in*, or *out*,
England, alas! the *last thing* thought about.
Imprimis, all their pockets claim'd supplies;
Then *all* the branches of their families
Must *all* be thought of, *all* must be enrich'd,
And hosts of cousins pensioned, scarcely breech'd.

And where, the while, the tenant of the throne?
– Unhappy monarch! friendless and alone,
Upon his people's welfare still intent,
That ceaseless object of his government,
He saw, with grief, the system going on,
And sigh'd in secret for his Chatham's son.
Alas, in vain! – Meanwhile no twelve months past
Without some change, more vexing than the last:
Some council squabble, caus'd by pet or whim,
Some childish broil, referr'd, of course, to him;
'The Marquis *Twiddledum* could no-how see
Why he was pass'd for Viscount *Twiddledee*;
Nor would that lord forego his first intent,
His friend *must* have this place, – that regiment!
And *where*, we ask, was Britain all this while?
Where was our country, that ill-fated isle?
– All news that reach'd her, ev'ry post that came,
Announc'd some novel insult on her name;
Each public print, each European press,
Teem'd with accounts of Gaul's uncheck'd success:
Some fresh privation on her sinking trade,
Napoleon's hatred ev'ry hour display'd;
Some ambuscade, some unexpected blow,
Which prov'd his only aim, her overthrow.

Here the publisher himself cautiously interrupts the poet's tirade, pointing out (in a footnote to his reflection on 'those who rule us now') that 'Our late noble conduct with regard to Spain and Portugal seems to render these remarks inapplicable to those who *do* "rule us

now”. ... This poem appeared before our late efforts in the cause of our allies [in the Peninsular War] had commenced, and this edition being published by the purchaser of the copy-right against the author’s inclination, (*see the Publisher’s Preface,*) the text remains in its original state.’ But Goulburn clearly thought otherwise, censuring the arrogance with which Britain’s stay-at-home ministers have treated their ‘unnecessary’ allies, with the result that in battle

when our gallant troops, compell’d to halt,
Not by their own, but by their chieftain’s fault,
His orders wait for; that heroic wight,⁴¹
Perplex’d, confus’d, and quaking, bids them – *fight!*
And fight they do, and *will* do, till they die,
For Britons cannot, *know not how* to fly –
And hence obtain, if such is, Victory!
One, truly, purchas’d at a *trifling* cost –
Haply, some quarter of the army lost.

Our satirist goes on to ridicule elected and hereditary parliament, those ‘sentinels of Liberty ... chosen to watch the avenues of wrong’, whose ‘time [now] more weighty matter occupies’. They

First, must explore some new-discover’d *job*,
Find out if *so and so* did really rob:
Then arbitrate upon some chaste dispute
Between a prince and cast-off prostitute:
On shrieval insolence display their power,
And drag astounded bailiffs to the Tower:
And, last of all, before they turn their backs,
Perhaps remember that they *ought* to tax!

Casting about for more to condemn, Goulburn picks on higher education for the offspring of privileged gentry, where

three tedious twelvemonths are decreed
To spend in college walls: – but does he read?
Do those who teach him, urge him to the prize
Which courts the grasp of learning’s votaries;
The ‘thirst of knowledge’ in his bosom plant,
And prove how wretched are the ignorant?

Behold his tutors – mark each full-fed paunch,
At table plac’d, around some smoking haunch;
'Tis here, collegiate teachers chiefly shine,
'Tis here that fellows *construe* and *decline*,
Where all *look’d-out* or *analyz’d* is – wine!
Here they discuss how tipsy once they got,
When youth and better claret were their lot,
With *holy* oaths attendant waiters fright;
And thus *divinely* wear away the night,

⁴¹ i.e. ‘some dictatorial elf ... [a] Lord, mayhap, [who] ne’er ken’d a hostile shot’.

Till morning dawns, and sends them to their school,
With heads and senses comfortably cool;
With intellects unfetter'd, quite at ease,
– Just fit for Juvenal or Sophocles.

Meanwhile their pupils, in no better state,
Idle by rule, by system profligate,
Indulge, uncheck'd, in Herculean feats,
And prove their *talents* in the suff'ring streets:
Their youthful fists *heroically* clench,
And drub the *townsmen*, as they would the French.
Their days, of course, to idleness devote,
To read their bets, or sport a hunting coat:
To think of study, or attempt to read,
With hounds and races near – were mad indeed.
Till duly skill'd in ev'ry proper prank,
To Town they fly, to seize on wealth and rank;
To hold the highest offices of state,
And make their country glorious, good, and great!

But some welcome redress from this litany of complaint is at last to hand, in Edward's proud recollections of his brief naval experience.

Whence, I would ask, the source of all that fame,
Which British seamen with such justice claim?
What so distinguishes our navy's code,
And points that navy out as honour's road?
– What but the care with which its youth are taught,
Are forc'd to learn, to study, what they ought,
Through navigation's ev'ry branch to ply,
And con their duty o'er from infancy. –
Hence all press forward to preferment's mead,
And, train'd to practice, one and all succeed.

The ensuing rhapsodic passage of praise for the maritime military is, for Goulburn, unusually fruity ('O, with what joy the muse enraptur'd flies / To where (if 'tis on earth) perfection lies! / Our Navy's name!'), despite its ostensible roots in autobiography (and one must remember his earlier loveless references, in *The Blueviad*, to 'ocean's troubled den', to the crowded below-decks 'orlop', and the 'cockpit's rude, unpolish'd shade'); they may now be spared as concessionary to a patriotic resolution, likewise the long celebration of the land army and its recent heroes that concludes the thirty-page 'prefatory [!] reflections' to the remainder of *The Pursuits of Fashion*.

This latter portion, much of it in galloping trisyllabic tetrameter like *The Epwell Hunt*, consists of the boasting soliloquies of 'three witnesses' to all the foregoing miseries of modern, degenerate England, pronounced by their fashionable beneficiaries. The speakers, all unmindful of their vices and contemptuous of correction, are satirized knowingly by one who might earlier have shared some of their deplorable traits; they are, in sequence, 'The Fine Man, or Buck of the first Set', 'The Coffee-house Cornet, or Buck of the second Set', and 'The Knowing Man, or Hero of the Turf'. The first of these anti-heroes, 'the commander-in-chief

of the bucks of the age', is simply an ultra-leisurely lout 'in the circles of *Ton*', who tells us that he rises 'mayhap about five' for a dinner scheduled for six, but then 'I lounge in about eight,

With my coat flying off, appear crabbed and surly,
And d–n the *low* custom of dining so early.

He attends balls and assemblies ('my principal sway'), the opera and playhouses (where 'I survey the dull scene, / Without an idea what the acting may mean / [But] because "'tis the best place I know – to be seen!'"). And of course his costume is, by his own lights, impeccable:

But my beautiful taste, (as indeed you will guess,
Is manifest most in my toilet and dress.
My neckcloth, of course, forms my principal care;
For by that we criterions of elegance swear:
Each morning it costs me whole hours of flurry,
To make it *appear* to be tied in a *hurry!*
My boot-tops, those unerring marks of a *blade*,
With *champaigne* are polish'd, and *peach marmalade*,
Whilst a BR[U]M[E]L-cut coat, of the violet hue,
Tells the *canaille* at once, that I'm one of 'the few.'
And brown-leather buckskins, bewitchingly large,
Give the finishing stroke to this '*parfait ouvrage!*'

With the women – I need not declare, I suppose,
That they think me the devil himself in men's clothes.
'He has so much *to say!*' (cries each simpering maid),
'O! how witty he was about that – *lemonade!*
How he jokes about candlesticks! – Don't he, papa? –
And his teeth – how delightful! How charming! ha! ha!
In short, with soft speeches these creatures so cram me,
That nothing remains, but to grin and cry 'damn me!'
As for love, – I conceive it a mere empty bubble,
And the fruits of success never worth *half* the trouble;
Yet, as fashion decrees it, I bear the *fatigue*,
That the world may pronounce me '*a man of intrigue!*'

Plebeians should pay for patricians' keep;
So I usually manage to live pretty *cheap*:
On some hundreds a year I make no little show,
And discharge all my debts – except those that I owe!
My virtues are many: I tread not on *toes*,
Because I'm aware it might injure my nose.
As for courage – what is it? A mere pinch of snuff:
I can frighten the women – that's *surely* enough.
I can brandish my knuckles, protest they are weighty,
And prove that I *once* drubb'd a watchman – of *eighty!*

I can talk about scents – can descant on perfume, –
I can lead down a dance, and bewitch a whole room –
And, if no one of fashion or rank should be present,
Gad! I sometimes am *vulgar* enough to be *pleasant*!

But if the 'Fine Man' is a self-satisfied paragon of social misconduct, the 'Coffee-House Cornet', technically a commissioned military recruit but in effect a provincial-bred wastrel and ignorant bully, can outdo him in sheer arrogant boorishness, and (finally) spendthrift disgrace – in many ways resembling the worst excesses and present plight of the author himself. This bravo's spirited monologue, as a kind of *reductio* of Edward's own (in retrospect reprehensible) youthful conduct, deserves an extended hearing:

My father, a comical, countryfied pig,
Was a priest, by profession, and *sported* a wig,
Of me he was fond; and, the best of the joke,
Wish'd to keep me at home, like 'a pig in a poke;'

...

And mamma, too, so plagued him, and swore 'twas a shame,
That a lad of *my* spunk should be coop'd up quite tame;
That, at length, he agreed, and I *cut* these old *spoons*,⁴²
And am now what you see me, – a *Sub*' of *Dragoons*.
'Ere I started, old dad preach'd me plenty of sense,
Prated much about morals, and more of expence;
– 'Twelve children, I knew, were the fruits of his marriage,
To buy my commission had cost him his *carriage*.' –
Yet with tears he protested, (an ignorant ninny)
That George should, at all times, command his last guinea;
That for comforts or income, HE ne'er should repine,
Though he turn'd off his Curate, and gave up his wine!
So two hundred a year he was willing to give –
'On the which *any* gentleman,' (he thought,) 'might live;
– And for which, master Georgy, to tell you the truth,
Three churches were serv'd by your father in youth!
But to *you* I grudge nothing, my hope, and my pride, –
– God bless you! my darling!' – the old fellow cried –
And I promis'd much – You may guess all the rest –
Ho, waiter! some wine, – I feel *queer* at the breast!

Upon joining my corps, (to continue my text,)
To get rid of *Old Time* I was plaguily vext:
There were bridges to *spit over*, fruit-shops, of course,
And I purchas'd a high-mettled thorough-bred horse;
Whom I took care to shew off in all his quick paces,
Agreeably splashing the passengers' faces.
At night I would reel to the ball, from the mess,
And astonish their minds with my glittering dress;
If I chose not to *caper*, – for something to do,
To their card-table lounge, – play at halfpenny loo, –

⁴² 'Spoons: The invariable appellation given to quizzical people' (Goulburn's footnote, p. 74).

Make a terrible noise with my helmet and sword,
 And let none, but my own pleasant self, say a word;
 – Upsetting their scores, at the moment I thunder'd,
 'Your six-pence be d—nd, sir! I'll set you a *hundred!*'
 – Returning to barracks, insult all I meet,
 Make all possible uproar, in every street;
 And if summon'd next morning, at suit of the lamps,
 Call the court an assemblage of insolent *scamps*;
 Then sit myself down in an Alderman's place,
 Crack jokes on the Mayor, and make fun of his mace!

Courtship of a sort is obligatory for our gallant, for

to stamp my renown, I commenc'd an intrigue;
 And, after much ogling, and time, and fatigue,
 Caught a milliner miss; a blithe cherry-cheek'd maid,
 Who was simple enough to believe what I said.
 She was lovely and young, had a bosom like snow,
 And was going to marry some shop-keeping beau:
 But I soon put a spoke in the clodhopper's wheel, –
 Made the fair one first simper – then listen – then feel –
 Cut numberless jokes on her countryfied swain, –
 And with visions of grandeur bewildered her brain!
 Till, blushing and fond, she surrender'd her charms,
 And gave both her honour and heart to my arms!
 And (would you believe it) she's now on the town!
 For I met her last evening, as drunk as a clown,
 And she bother'd my soul out to give her a crown!

But the step of all steps to establish my fame,
 And prove to the world I was thoroughly '*game*',
 Was to look out some *nearsighted*, fainthearted spark,
 And blaze at his carcase – by way of a mark!
 I waited some time; for my quarters were dull,
 Of tradesmen, mechanics, and shopkeepers full:

...

Till I fix'd on the surgeon, a man with a wife,
 And some *brats*, who depended for bread on his life.
 One evening I swore he had trod on my toes,
 And before he *could* answer, had hold of his nose.
 The Pleb was astonish'd – made numerous faces,
 I rav'd about *honour*, and *blood*, and six *paces*;
 And vow'd that the wretch, who on my toes had trod,
 Should be food for the worms – I would pink him, by G–!
 When (strange to declare t'ye,) this insolent quiz
 Replied to my friend, with a very grave phiz,
 'That his life was not food for each juvenile whim,
 That the laws of his country would ever rule *him*;
 And that none, *which he knew*, sanction'd such an attempt;
 So, all he could send me was – *sovereign contempt!*'

Of course, he was posted:⁴³ and I, in a pet,
Declar'd I should kick every surgeon I met;
Swore, no longer I'd stay where revenge was debarr'd,
And where honour was dealt out, like tape, by the yard!

Tiring of commissioned service with the local *cadre* of Dragoons, he

petition'd for leave, and set off for that town,
Where nothing but mirth and amusement go down,
And where frolic abounds ev'ry day in the year –
– Just the place for a boy with two hundred a year!

In London behold me! Not long was I there,
'Ere my manners and equipage made people stare.
'– Who is he? Whence comes he?' repeated each mouth,
Does his property lie in the North or the South?' –
'In the North' (cries my valet,) 'I'm credibly told,
When of age, he'll inherit whole oceans of gold.
But his friends keep him shortish at present, it seems –
Old guardians are cautious, we know, in extremes.'

This truth once admitted, my doorway was lin'd
With tradesmen of every species and kind;
All anxious to spirit *the captain to order*, –
'O, pray look at this, Sir! – How beauteous a border –
These seals you *must* take – and this diamond-set comb –
And this watch – on my word, Sir! I had it from Rome –'
– I nod my applause, and the things are sent home.
All the clubs that were *prime*, I got into, of course,
The '*Fly-by-Nights*,' '*Clippers*,' the '*Screws*,' and '*Four-Horse*;
And my dress I took care should be strikingly new,
And display all the emblems of each in a view.

A disquisition on fashionable dress follows, entertaining enough, if perhaps otherwise familiar:

As my dress has long grac'd a particular tribe,
With your leave, I'll digress, and attempt to describe.
First, my coat, like myself, is the emblem of taste;
Large buttons all o'er it, a curious long waist,
And a collar which comes, o'er my head, to a peak,
And I think I can say is completely *unique*.
Round my neck is a shawl, of large value and size,
Which the place of a 'kerchief and waistcoat supplies,
And serves to display all my broches upon:
– For broches, with us, are criterions of *ton*.

...

Pantaloons richly lac'd, of cærulean dye,
Embellish the shape of each elegant thigh;

⁴³ Shades of Goulburn's 'posting' of Captain Horsley in 1805–06! And is the dismissive epithet 'surgeon' a memory of the insulted McGrigor of the *Blueviad*?

And my boots, made of leather from Spain, as I'm told,
Have the spurs fasten'd on them of solidest gold,
As for seals and such gewgaws, my watch or its chain,
Or their number, their nature, or weight, to explain,
Were an useless, indeed an impossible, task, –

...

Thus accoutred, equipp'd, I stir out about five,
And rattle my team at full speed round 'the drive';
Then stroll to some tavern, to see who is there,
And amuse myself making the multitude stare:
It is charming to hear them all ask, '*who I am?*'
And the clergymen turn up their eyes as I damn!
Here I loll, o'er a chair or a table astride,
And roar out for *soda* to cool my inside;
Send the waiters on errands, and swear, for their pains,
If they loiter *five seconds* I'll blow out their brains;
Pull tooth-picks to pieces, squirt spittle abroad,
Through a hole in my tooth, which is *purposely bor'd*.

...

Then, as duelling now is completely a *science*,
And sets the *Old Bailey* itself at defiance;
Now *Hibernians* are met with in every street, –
'Tis as needful to know how to shoot, as to eat.
So I lounge to a gun-maker's, stick up a mark,
And blaze at a wafer or shilling till dark:
And hence, in some popping which fell in my way,
On account of three women I carried away,
– (Two frail ones, who me to their spouses preferr'd,
And a boarding-school chicken who trusted my word),
I've been fortunate each time in *winging my bird*;
And although to *dispatch* one has ne'er been my lot,
I am pretty well mark'd as a *dangerous* shot.

In the evening, if nothing more *prime's* to be done,
No *hop* going on, or no prospect of *fun*;
No chance of a *kick-up* or *row* being plann'd,
Any cash in my pocket, and if – *I can stand*;
Why, I order my carriage, and drive to the *Hell*,⁴⁴
Where the Captain's appearance makes no little *swell*;
Here, I seize on the *Bones*,⁴⁵ have at all in the ring,
And with '*seven's the main*,' make the neighbourhood sing.
If I lose, I protest 'tis a palpable theft,
And, securing the poker, let fly right and left:
Call them villains and thieves, and society's dregs;
And, in short, as we term it, 'play Hell with the *legs!*'

⁴⁴ 'Hell: The abode of the Blacklegs [strike-breaking bullies], where their nocturnal depredations are committed' (Goulburn's footnote, p. 88).

⁴⁵ i.e. dice, for the game of hazard, where the 'Main' of seven is the caster's best chance to throw a winner.

Then smashing the lamps, as I fly up the street,
 And, *of course*, all the heads of the watchmen I meet,
 Into Steevens's⁴⁶ rush; on the crockery leap,
 Shy plates at the waiters for *daring* to sleep,
 Order '*pickled champagne and an ostrich entire*,'
 Swear I'll shoot them *all round*, if I've not my desire;
 Turn the cock of the kettle that boils on the fire;
 And flying about, like a madman at large,
 Snatch the bugle, and sound 'the *Reveille and Charge!*'
 Fill the landlord with terror, the house with affright,
 Roaring '*Nocte Volamus!*' we fly in the night!
 Then, as bed is *a bore*, to their lodgings I go,
 Knock up *Playfair*, and *Shuffle*, and *Scoreall* and Co.
 And with them at a whist-table *keep up the ball*,
 Till daylight informs me – *I've lost to them all!*

Thus flies my existence, one round of variety,
 Enchanting alike to myself and society.

Nonetheless all good things must end, and Cadet George comes a cropper at last, for 'as at breakfast I sat',

– My door was thrust open, and in walk'd a slave,
 An insolent, ill-dress'd, uncouth-looking knave,
 Who seem'd unawares of the verb yclept 'shave';
 Whose garments of *fustian* were cover'd with grease,
 And whose face seem'd to say, '*I am licens'd to fleece.*'
 First, he pull'd out a paper, which he call'd 'a writ,'
 On the which, in large letters, was 'Greeting, to wit,'
 And by which he was order'd my person to bring
 Into *Westminster Hall*, there to look at the king:
 And herein was commanded by no means to *fail*: –
 So requested to know whom I fix'd on for bail;
 Begg'd I'd not be alarm'd, but would make up my mind,
 As his pocket contain'd *twenty* more of the kind.
 Soon I learn'd that a tradesman of mine, a sharp fool,
 By principle cautious, suspicious by rule,
 Chanc'd to go into Yorkshire, some visits to pay,
 And so thought he would look where my *property* lay,
 But found out with horror said *property* small,
 And plac'd in a parish call'd '*No Where at All.*'
 So back he return'd, nearly murder'd his hack,
 And plac'd all my tradesmen *at once* on my back.

Now, to tell you the truth, this is rather a bore,
 For those scoundrels are *now* always watching my door;
 And my slave, very often, whilst dressing my hair,
 Is oblig'd to desist, to inquire 'Who's there?'

⁴⁶ Stevens's Coffee House and Hotel in Bond Street, where Byron was dining in 1809 when Goulburn came in: see above, p. 18.

So, to keep me from what my attorney calls *jail*,
 My day passes mostly in hunting for *bail*.
 But at night, when the hell-hounds of justice are gone,
 When my seals are arrang'd, and my *chapeau-bras* [silk tricorn] on, –
 Once again I'm the leader of *coffee-house ton*!
 Ambition, once more, takes her seat in my brain,
 And the *Fly-by-Night Richard*'s himself once again!
 Then a truce to reflection! reflection ne'er ends!
 After all, I can fly – 'tis but *fixing* one's *friends*.
 Those trinkets and gewgaws, which stamp'd me a blade,
 Are yet in my drawers, tho' for none have I paid:
 With these and my cornetcy turn'd into cash,
 I can always continue to *bluster* and *dash*,
 With these yet can live on a *Clipper-like* plan,
 And astonish their minds in the *Island of Man*!⁴⁷
 Or Scotland can fly to, my creditors chouse [i.e. deceive],
 And live the amazement of *Hollywood-house*!⁴⁸
 – Or if Britain I fly, where their d—d legal code,
 Appears likely all freedom and sense to explode –
 After all, there's the *service of France*, – or *the road*.

Moreover, last night, o'er some *Burgundy-cup*,
 Lord Scoreall declar'd, he would soon put me up
 To his calling, elect me as one of *the brothers*;
 And then I might live *on the fortune of others*.
 Once again then, what good can it do us to think?
 Whilst we breathe, let us live! whilst we live, let us drink!
 Till my *peepers* are clos'd, I will keep up the ball,
 Like a *hero* I've liv'd, – like a hero I'll fall!
 At least I'll be happy till that period comes –
 So, waiter! more claret! – Who cares for the *Bums*?⁴⁹

The last of Edward Goulburn's three 'witnesses' to the degeneracy of modern British society, 'The Knowing Man, or Hero of the Turf', returns us to the equine world of Edward's misspent youth – now already, in effect, disparaged or disowned, in his prior censure of track-obsessed churchmen frequenting Newmarket and other haunts of 'Satan's hallowed ground' (1810) – but with a new twist. This final thumbnail presents us with William, the beloved son of 'Lord Glenalvon' (a name taken from John Home's anti-hero in the tragedy of *Douglas*), whose melancholy reflections on his own manipulative, acquisitive past are relieved only by his paternal hopes of political, military, or scholarly distinction for his heir. But as the narrator reveals, the lad's voluminous personal library, rather than containing inspirational texts toward such attainments, is otherwise oriented:

⁴⁷ Where Edward's brother Henry suggested that he 'retire' while his gambling debts were being settled in 1809–10: see below.

⁴⁸ The Abbey grounds were (and remain) a sanctuary for debtors.

⁴⁹ 'Bums: These are generally mean persons, employed by the Sheriff on account only of their adroitness and dexterity in hunting and seizing their prey. They are usually bound in an obligation with sureties for the due execution of their office, and thence are called Bound-Bailiffs: which the common people have corrupted into a much more "homely expression." – To wit, Bum-Bailiffs, or Bums!' (Goulburn's footnote, p. 98).

Books fill the chamber, and at once declare,
 That thought and meditation nestle there.
 And lo! he smiles! – A scholar’s joy, no doubt;
 Some problem solv’d, or mystery found out.
 Approach we! and his meditations share:
 In one so young, such application’s rare.
 What broods he on? – his studies, Muse, declare!
 No thoughts like these, the blushing Muse replies,
 No themes employ him such as you devise;
 No warlike plans, no legislative codes
 Are here: – those volumes, ‘*Weatherby and Rhodes!*’⁵⁰
 Yon shelves, which call forth that inquiring gaze,
 Hold all the *Calendars* of ancient days.
 That book, that dear delightful book of books,
 On which he casts such fond endearing looks,
 Contains, dull reader! ev’ry bet be makes,
 And tells his fate upon the *Derby stakes!*
 That smile you saw, replete with joy and fun,
 Was caus’d by finding, that whoever won,
 Whichever animal, or mare or colt, –
 Nay, though each horse that started for’t should *bolt*,
 Or all at once fall lame, or die, or stray, –
 He *yet* must pocket hundreds by the day.

In other words, William’s true study is – like Edward Goulburn’s shortly before him – the *turf*, and his bulging shelves contain the up to date standard guides to race tracks and their competitive opportunities (*Weatherby and Rhodes*, *Cocker*, *Crockford and Cloves*, *O’Mara*, *Holland*, *Bland*, and *Tattersall*, etc). He has in fact just won a substantial wager, and

Glenalvon’s youthful son
 Survey’d this maiden prize his brain had won.
 Thoughtless, ambitious, in his twentieth year,
 And free from cares of any kind or fear;
 With all the fire attach’d to youthful blood,
 And heart and intellects innately good;
 Our hopeful hero now essay’d to start,
 To spoil those intellects, destroy that heart,
 To render useless all his nature gave,
 Become the tool of fraud, deception’s slave,
 – The dupe and jest of ev’ry well-dress’d knave!
 To govern *Gamblers*, be a *Blackleg* king,
 And shine the monarch of the *Betting ring!*

And for once, as Edward follows the career of his last anti-hero, retribution is slow indeed to reveal itself:

Nor long was it, ere fickle Fortune gave
 The rank his folly prompted him to crave:

⁵⁰ ‘*Weatherby and Rhodes*: two celebrated compilers of sporting occurrences, and proprietors of the *Racing Calendars* mentioned in the next lines’ (Goulburn’s footnote, p. 104).

His wealth and youth made ample haste to gain
 A crowd of sycophants to swell his train:
 Wretches! who hourly sooth'd his boyish pride,
 His faults and weaknesses at once descried,
 And ev'ry foible to its *use* applied,
 Fann'd him with adulation's grateful breeze,
 And praise too sure, at such an age, to please.
 And thus surrounded, the unthinking boy,
 With all to please him, nothing to annoy,
 Blaz'd forth at once, Newmarket's brightest star,
 With knaves of all descriptions popular.
 Obsequious trainers trembled at his nod,
 And jockeys worshipp'd as they would a god.
 His steeds wherever seen, or first or last,
 Were hail'd with shouts and plaudits as they past;
 Whilst beauteous females in surrounding stands,
 On tiptoes gazing, wav'd their lily hands;
 Dispatch'd their lisping orisons on high,
 And spread their 'kerchiefs as he canter'd by.
 Whilst he, the wonder of the thronging course,
 Bestrode some prancing and high-mettled horse;
 Survey'd the dubious race at ev'ry turn,
 With anxious gaze, though seeming unconcern;
 Smil'd, as his fate was echoed from the post,
 And told the gaping crowd the thousands lost,
 Meantime, th' inconstant goddess who presides,
 Supreme o'er sportsmen, in continued tides,
 Lavish'd her favours; and with random dart,
 Turn'd off each wily stratagem of art;
 Forc'd age and hackney'd fraud alike to yield,
 And quit, in ruin, the unfruitful field.
 In vain Experience, Judgment, Guile combine,
 And watch the hour of openness, and wine;
 Some pow'r unseen their utmost art defies,
 And baffles still their seeming certainties: –
 Lord William still succeeds, still gains the day,
 And bears in triumph ev'ry prize away.

More to the same effect follows (Edward is back in his old element, and grasps it tenaciously while he can); the narrative is ever lively, but we cannot follow it all. Still, some almost Homeric passages shine brightly:

As when some youthful and high-mettled steed,
 Springs from the starting post and claims the lead;
 Awhile in front his fleetest pace maintains,
 Breaks from the rider's grasp and spurns the reins;
 His head disdainful tosses to the clouds,
 And strides along amidst astonish'd crowds.
 But when the level ends, and rugged ground
 Calls for fresh pow'rs at each returning bound,

When hills and clay demand redoubled toil,
 And the slim fetlock falters in the soil;
 When blood's extremest efforts are requir'd –
 At once the dastard yields him and is tir'd:
 By those that follow spiritless is pass'd,
 And, spurr'd and panting, hobbles in the last.
 Thus Fortune's dame appears, awhile, to fly,
 So bears in front her hapless votary;
 Till when at length the glitt'ring prize draws near,
 The rainbow which his fancy lov'd to rear, –
 At once her fraud, her treach'ry stand confest;
 At once she fails – misfortune tell the rest!

And thus with him whose memoirs we relate:
 By her deserted, left to meet his fate;
 His boasted riches pay his folly's price,
 And vanish soon, an easy sacrifice:
 With these, of course, his *friendly* comrades fly,
 With these departs his popularity:
 His faults (so long unheeded) crowd in sight,
 And ev'ry foible now is dragg'd to light:
 – At all games worsted, beat on ev'ry race,
 He sinks – A wealthier pigeon takes the place.

Fast forward, then, to a further descent in fortune's slope:

But, not to dwell too long in woe's abode,
 Or tell each stage on ruin's dreary road, –
 Ten years are vanish'd, readers! and again
 Lord William ventures on Newmarket's plain.
 Although on *other* schemes and projects bent,
 With aim and object widely different.
 No more ambitious *only* of a name,
 Nor seeking now unprofitable fame;
 No more about to play the madman's part,
 And yield to ev'ry impulse of the heart:
 – The *use* of genius better understood,
 His aim, his object *now* – a livelihood.
 Thus, spurning ev'ry care 'bout right or wrong,
 Those common topics of the churchman's song,
 He now one end, one only path pursues, –
 The one most likely to acquire his views.
 In all societies, with ready ease.
 Puts on the garb adapted most to please;
 That suited best the ignorant to decoy,
 ...
 And learns each mystery of unfair play;
 To deal the certain flush, to cog the die,
 And make the *most* of opportunity.

Re-representing himself as a mysterious and wealthy landowner, he impresses 'astounded loungers' who

eye the godlike man,
And, quaking, wonder at the risks he ran.
Implicit credit yield; nor once believe
That tales so grand are destin'd to deceive.
Or if some few presume to doubt their truth,
Not such his *prey*, – not such unthinking youth.
'Mongst these his tales are certain to decoy;
Each word ensnares some unsuspecting boy,
Some headstrong *minor*, mad to run in debt;
Some wealthy Peer, or simple Baronet;
Who pants to shine the hero of a course,
As infants pant to stride the rocking-horse.

Following reflections on the simplicity of the 'pigeons' that sharps like William can bamboozle into trusting them, and questioning

the difference,
'Twixt him who robs on this insidious plan,
And yon avow'd, half-famish'd highwayman?
– The latter, want impels to seek relief;
The first, a mean, a pettifogging thief!
Of fraud acquit them, and admit their plea,
Idiots they must be in the last degree.

The narrator then returns to his aging 'witness':

But hold, my muse! nor in rhapsodic flight
Forget thy hero: he, illustrious wight!
Awhile along Fraud's beaten pathway trod,
'The Course' his income, and 'The Cards' his god:
Talk'd about 'honour,' 'conscience,' and 'fair play,'
And laugh'd and chatted as he spoil'd the prey.
But fickle Fortune, now his bitt'rest foe,
Struck down his hopes and laid each prospect low.
A faithless friend, in some contention cross'd,
Or angry at some wealthy pigeon lost,
One spiteful moment, ventur'd to reveal
His many ways to *cog a die* and *deal*,
Held forth each myst'ry to the public eye,
And prov'd how play became a certainty.
The facts were plain; and the invidious town,
Ever prepar'd to strike the wav'rer down,
Swallow with ecstasy the welcome news,
And hasten to insult, upbraid, abuse.
His friends and comrades quit him one by one,
And pity – He who gambles meets with none!
Thus then, without one hope, one plea to urge,
Again Lord William stands on Ruin's verge;

Without one friend to soothe the dire disgrace,
Once more destruction stares him in the face.
By all avoided, shunn'd by ev'ry sect,
Where can his plots, his fables take effect?

But yet again, Lord William experiences a miraculous redemption, when

Satan saw – and anxious for his friend,
To all his cares decreed at once an end:
Plac'd in his view, and bade him thither fly,
The new establish'd club of B–b–ry.⁵¹
A vast assemblage this, where boys from school,
In jockey garbs first hied, t'enact the fool;
Oxonian thick-heads, eminently dense,
Who yearly met to prove their lack of sense;
And give their steeds that whip-cord, (truant elves!)
Which wiser Nature destin'd for themselves.

...

Where Giant zanies, – Lilliputian peers,
Some scarcely breech'd, and some advanc'd in years, –
Militia bucks and cornets of dragoons,
Like shewmen habited or stage buffoons,
With wasted carcasses their ribs⁵² bestride,
And puff, perspire, and pant, and think they ride!
Here came Glenalvon's son, and with the scene
Enraptur'd, lost awhile his native spleen:
'Rich field,' he cries, 'for an aspiring mind,
Where wealth and ignorance appear combin'd.
Here sit thee down! Here fix thy future throne!
In other climes Lord William's pranks are known;
But here, uncheck'd, his hours may roll away,
And wealth and happiness reward his stay.'

The boyish crew the chief's arrival hail,
For Fate had fram'd him in the jockey scale;
All praise his science, and with one accord,
Proclaim him king, acknowledge him their lord.
The sceptre seiz'd, he throws off all disguise,
And grasps unblushingly at every prize;
And makes their sport, their property, their laws,
The tools and engines of his righteous cause;
Ordains at will, what jockey, weight, and place,
Belong to ev'ry horse in ev'ry race;

...

⁵¹ i.e. Bunbury, referring to Sir Charles Bunbury (1740–1821), politician and race horse breeder. Whether completely fictional or a real club under an alias, the 'Bunbury Club' clearly catered to gamblers and horsemen. Lord William takes up membership for the remainder of his life, and the noteworthy attractions of the club are outlined at some length over the remainder of the *Pursuits*.

⁵² A worthless or worn-out horse (*OED*).

Here then, his aim, his ev'ry wish attain'd,
 Glenalvon's offspring many years remain'd.
 Fortune crown'd all his projects with success,
 And all again bid fair for happiness.
 An ample property by fraud amass'd,
 Had spread a veil o'er all th' unwelcome past.
 And thus, of care devoid or seeming grief,
 Once more Newmarket saw the vet'ran chief;
 On ev'ry turf-pursuit again intent,
 Again its patron, pride, and ornament.
 Rever'd and courted by all sporting ranks,
 Nor once detail'd, nor thought of, former pranks:
 Old Time o'er these, had clos'd oblivion's gate,
 And wrapt in mist which none dar'd penetrate.

Yet retribution of a sort must eventually emerge, for

One latent feeling poison'd all his joy;
 One pang remain'd, to make Lord William own
 How rarely happiness, on earth, is known.
 One thorn yet tortur'd, one unceasing grief,
 From which nor wealth, nor rank, could yield relief;
 Nor human aid, nor human art set free –
 The dire reflection – he was eighty-three!
 Each hour the destin'd tyrant of mankind
 Plainly refus'd to loiter long behind;
 Each moment prov'd him gaining ground apace,
 To snatch his lengthen'd, long-protracted race.

Relentless monarch! From thy dreaded pow'r,
 What charm can shield us creatures of the hour!
 In early youth we thoughtless 'make our play,'
 Like colts, first started, headstrong break away;
 Disdainful slack the reason-given rein,
 And stride at speed across life's checquerd plain.
 When warn'd of thee, and of our certain fate,
 How slight the pang reflection can create!
 'Shall death impede our bright career,' we cry,
 'Yon shade, yon distant speck? – Absurdity!'
 And yet, how often whilst we most deride,
 Doff we, at that same shade's command, our pride!
 And, whilst on Time presuming as our own,
 Alas! how often, wretchedly 'break down.'

...

For when the destin'd ending mark draws near,
 Though life and pleasure then seem doubly dear,
 Though fame and wealth on ev'ry side surround,
 Our ruthless foe makes up at once his ground;
 At his approach, like jades, we 'give it in,'
 And harass'd Nature strives in vain to 'win.'

...

'And must this dread destroyer then prevail?'
 (Exclaim'd, one morn, the hero of our tale;
 When, grimly terrible, his dreaded foe
 Prepar'd to strike the long-expected blow,
 'O pause', he cried, 'stern arbiter of fate!
 Glenalvon's offspring deigns to supplicate;
 Intreats thee to forego thy dire intent,
 – He, even he, Newmarket's president.
 O then at least a few short months forbear! –
 Till next '*October meetings*' deign to spare!
 Let me but see my fav'rite filly win,
 Once more behold the public taken in,
 And then content I die – O! would'st thou snatch
 From my extended grasp that famous match?
 Would'st take me, tyrant! with my scheme half plann'd,
 With Derby, Oaks, Pavilion, all at hand?
 O! Let these sights but glad mine aged eyes,
 And then farewell.' – 'Forbear,' stern Death replies,
 'Nor more oppose irrevocable fate;
 Impatient Satan claims his intimate.'

By way of posthumous consolation, however (Lord William's luck, in Edward's narrative, seems virtually endless),

'Thy friends, moreover, in the realms of woe,
 Have form'd a club, a *B-b-ry* below,
 Where *Hellish Gentlemen* alone may ride, –
 And where thy virtues call thee to preside:
 – For thy advice they wait, thy potent aid –
 Then hence! and there pursue thy former trade!
 Be there, as here, the sov'reign of the club,
 And, 'stead of *Douglas*, jockey *Beelzebub*;
 Bid *Nox* and *Acheron* prepare thy horse,
 And tell old *Cerberus* to '*clear the course!!*'
 Shout at *Alecto*, as on earth at '*Day*,'
 And ride o'er Pluto self, if in the way!
 The Furies jostle, and the Fates o'erturn,
 – But hark! the bell has toll'd – no more delay!
 The despot spoke – and fasten'd on his prey.
 O then! what signs, what prodigies took place!
 Newmarket totter'd to its trembling base;
 ...
 The STAGNANT WATER-TROUGHS to poison turn'd!
 Fraud started, horror-stricken, from her throne.

A monitory conclusion is at last necessary, and (if almost reluctantly) ensues:

'But hold! of this enough,' methinks you cry,
 'Tis time to leave off jest and ribaldry;
 ...

Are such thy sentiments, inquiring youth? –
 Thy bard obeys: henceforth he utters truth.
 O then abjure the Turf! the vortex fly!
 Lest ruin prove, too late, its fallacy.
 No declamation this: experience speaks,
 And bids thee shun a host of rooks and Greeks;
 Where all are knaves, though class'd in diff'rent rates,
 And honesty itself contaminates.
 Say! can ye boast what schoolmen 'Talent' call?
 Ill-fated Albion claims, requires it all.
 Was genius giv'n to waste in betting rings?
 No! – 'tis your country's property, your king's.
 Or do ye wealth and worldly pelf possess? –
 Use it to succour woe and wretchedness.
 Go! wipe the tear from Want's imploring eye,
 And taste the bliss of sainted Charity!
 – A bliss which lasts beyond the grave;
 Which never bet, nor race-horse, gave –

And yet Edward, habitually a prevaricator in the presentation of moral advice, is not quite through with his return to the turf, and in a kind of footnote concedes that admirable sponsors of horse racing exist, such as 'that honest upright Lord', Earl Grosvenor, 'So justly lov'd, so worthily ador'd', who;

yet the turf's precarious sport pursues,
 With fame unspotted and the purest views;
 His wish and aim t' improve the British steed,
 Amend the kind, and meliorate the breed:
 And if delight attend upon success,
 Untold his joy! – How vast his happiness!

But although there are others, like Grosvenor, 'exempt from censure, free from infamy ... who still the turf pursue', they are (although saluted terminally by name) a rare breed indeed, and given that 'so few keep clear of ruin and disgrace', modern 'youth' will do best to abjure the turf, and its associated hazards of gambling, etc., altogether:

If sense and riper age so often fail –
 Shall youth, untutor'd thoughtless youth, prevail?
 O! for a Dryden's Muse, a Gifford's hand,
 To sweep such grievous folly from the land!
 To chase away these sloth-engender'd dreams,
 And point the mind of youth to nobler themes!

And with that exordium, quoting 'immortal Pope' on the concept that 'CONTENT is true Felicity', Edward closes his case somewhat abruptly:

But who, I ask, on gambling projects bent,
 Yet cried, 'enough' – yet deem'd himself content?
 Let lavish Fortune ope her amplest store,
 The pray'r is still, 'O! would it had been more!'
 And why diminish, wherefore render less
 The trifling stock we boast of happiness?

Why rack the mind, and agonize the brain,
With never-ceasing thoughts of *how to gain?*
Impair each faculty – obscure each sense,
With constant brooding over ‘pounds and pence?’
As well, by Heav’ns! turn pedagogue at once,
And deal out Cocker to each village dunce.

If then, thine earthly bliss be kept in view,
One certain path, and one alone pursue:
The path by reason pointed out and sense,
– The path of Virtue and Benevolence!

Bearing in mind that this final version of *The Pursuits of Fancy* was in Goulburn’s book-seller’s hands by 14 October 1809, what we have extracted above would appear to be his very last known published verse, the product of some five years only of poetical activity that survives to us. For with the refusal to contemplate any further challenge to ‘the eye of the Critic’, Edward Goulburn simply withdrew from the ranks of (Romantic) literary performance with a sum total of three volumes of verse that have required more than two centuries to exhume and (if this memoir itself is subsequently read) revive, as in many respects a body of work both entertaining and admirable, if by nature time-bound and (by that token) ‘arcane’.⁵³

EPILOGUE

The explanation for Edward’s latter-day troubles, and hence in part for his dealing at all with the publishing world in 1810–12, follows on directly from the ‘miscreancy’ of his earlier youth, as recent biographical research has made clear. On 3 July 1809 Henry Goulburn, as a new member of parliament from Horsham, West Sussex, and political ally of Sir Arthur Wellesley, future Duke of Wellington, departed for Portugal on a fact-finding mission to the Peninsular War theatre where Wellesley was now in command and brother Frederick was deployed on active service – a journey that would keep him beyond the ability to discipline stay-at-home Edward until 18 February 1810. Things had already reached a boiling point by then, however, when a major creditor of Edward’s procured his arrest and imprisonment in the Marshalsea, where he seems to have languished, at least on and off, for a full year before negotiations with a ‘Mr Oliver’ freed him.⁵⁴ Henry eventually agreed to settle some £2000

⁵³ Edward did publish one novel – a three-decker with a short and unrevealing apologetic preface, published by Ebers on 30 July 1811, between editions of *The Pursuits of Fashion*. *Frederick de Montford* (butchered in ODNB to ‘Edward de Monfort’ and there dated ‘1812’) is, alas, a sentimental potboiler of no merit or significance, inspired (says the narrator) by the fictions of Hannah More above all, and possibly those of William Godwin, recounting the young life and military, social, and romantic career of a hot-blooded noble orphan, brought up by a kindly baronet in a likewise loving family, who follows an instantly glorious military career in Colonial India and (as regimental leader) in the Peninsular War, escapes capture and casual imprisonment by the French at Paris and assassination in a Normandy dungeon (from the wrath of the monstrous Napoleon), and marries his long-intended after some diversionary missteps and repentances, etc., etc. There are subplots and episodes of violence, heroic action, aristocratic villainy, and of course crooked gambling, prosecution for imaginary debt, and just retribution throughout, some dimly autobiographical – but the text was obviously dashed off for Ebers while Edward was either in detention or necessity, and shows no sign of artistic ambition or concern.

⁵⁴ See Jenkins, pp. 24–25 and notes (paying no attention whatever to Edward’s literary achievements), and Mullin, *A Sixpence at Whist* (note 5 above), pp. 162–71, esp. pp. 163, 166. Both writers rely chiefly on archival sources now in the Surrey History Centre, [Henry] Goulburn Correspondence and Memoir, 304/C/Box 1–24.

more of Edward's indebtedness, to which he himself was a guarantor, but he drew the line at ever again 'put[ting] down a sum of money for the discharge of your encumbrances', limited the wastrel to a modest 'allowance', and suggested that he 'seek refuge from his [other] creditors on the Isle of Man'. He branded Edward's conduct 'incurable', and saw no reason for 'ruining myself because you are ruined already', or of 'blasting all my hopes and prospects forever by feeding [your] disorder'. Ever-indulgent mother Susannah, however, worried that such *ultimata* might drive Edward 'even deeper in the arms of "the worst kind of society"', and in Jenkins's judgement, they may have done so, although Mullin's guess that his release came only 'in late 1810' is hardly possible, for on 27 June 1810 he was admitted to the Middle Temple to begin a new life as student of law.

For the all but improbable had occurred, as we may infer from the more sober contents and admonitions of the last publication extracted above: *genuine reformation*, which both Jenkins and Mullin seem to accept as a welcome but not surprising resolution of affairs, but I find no less than gratifyingly miraculous. After five years of absence from public record (no news is good news!), save for the unreviewed books brought out by Ebers, Edward took time out from his Middle Temple residence and study to marry, at Kensington on 25 February 1815, Harriet de Visme, the youngest daughter of Philip de Visme of Notting Hill House, and was called to the bar three months later. By now brother Henry had become Under-Secretary of State for Home Affairs during the premiership of Spencer Perceval, and by 1813 Under-Secretary for War and the Colonies. As Chancellor of the Exchequer under both Wellington (1828–30) and his long-term close friend Robert Peel (1841–46), he was able repeatedly to ease Edward's way in the world: the 'spendthrift brother', as one docket of family papers describes Edward, was licensed to practice on 9 June 1815, aged twenty-eight, and became at last a responsible, married, and wage-worthy citizen, if no longer a poet.

Wrapping up a further lifetime in brief (these following principally from newspaper notices): Harriet de Visme bore Edward two sons and two daughters,⁵⁵ including Edward Meyrick, on 11 February 1818, 'at Cadogan Terrace', Frederick Anderlecht in 1819 (d. 1877), and a daughter on 11 November 1820 ('at her house in Phillimore-place'), before her untimely death, at Kensington, on 27 November 1823. Edward was devastated and lonely, telling Henry (somewhat crudely, be it said) that he did not 'feel himself rich enough to marry a poor woman', although a rich one, observes Jenkins, p. 177, 'was no easy catch'. Having lodged his children with their maternal aunt, Mrs John Lewis Goldsmid,⁵⁶ Edward's solution was to marry, on 13 August 1825, his cousin Esther Chetwynd, second daughter of the late viscount, and his own mother's niece. The children returned to their father's house, where Esther gave birth to a son on 3 February 1827 and then a daughter on 23 March 1829, but she herself died three days later. Again the offspring were bundled off to Mrs Goldsmid, now living at Brighton, until the two sons from Edward's first marriage were old enough to be sent together first to the Revd Thomas Hooker's school at Rottingdean (where the eldest boy wrote poetry and a draft tragedy or two, one of them apparently resembling a play his father had essayed in childhood – a rare glimpse of our subject's poetical beginnings, otherwise untraced), and then to Eton.

⁵⁵ Berdmore Compton, *Edward Meyrick Goulburn, Dean of Norwich: A Memoir* (London, 1899), pp. 12–13, noting that by the time of Goulburn's second marriage only three children survived from his first.

⁵⁶ Of the great banking family: John Lewis had married Louisa de Visme in 1808.

Along the way, professionally, Goulburn had served as an attorney on the Midland Circuit after 1815 (some affectionate anecdotes of his performances there are given by Robert Walton, in whose recollections Edward is said to have been a great ‘favourite with [his] brethren on circuit’),⁵⁷ and no doubt through Henry’s influence had been chosen Recorder of Leicester on 19 November 1820; he later served as sub-Recorder of Lincoln, was appointed a justice on the [Welsh] Carmathen Circuit in September 1828, and was made a sergeant at law in the Court of Common Pleas on 3 February 1829, later gaining a patent of precedence. In late October 1831 he again remarried, aged fifty-four, keeping up the close but permissible family relationships: at Betchworth House, his brother’s Surrey residence, he wed the Hon. Catherine Montagu, daughter of the fourth Baron Rokeby and the niece of brother Henry’s wife Jane. In November 1832 Edward Goulburn contested the parliamentary election for Ipswich, and later that for Warwick, without success, and (victorious at last) won at Leicester, which he represented from 6 January 1835 to 24 July 1837, when he was defeated. Appointed a Commissioner of the Court of Bankruptcy on 21 October 1842, first at Exeter and then at London (Jenkins, p. 312, remarks archly that he brought a ‘fund of personal experience’ to the position), he was awarded an honorary DCL at Oxford on 4 June 1845.

By then Goulburn’s first son, Edward Meyrick, had left Balliol College (BA 1839), taking orders in 1842, preaching with popular success at nearby Holywell, and in 1845 marrying Julia Cartwright of Aynhoe, Northamptonshire. He succeeded Thomas Arnold and a future Archbishop of Canterbury, Archibald Campbell Tait, as Headmaster of Rugby School (1850–57), and in 1866 was appointed Dean of Norwich, a position he held until 1889 – quite eclipsing the moderate fame of his father.⁵⁸ Meanwhile our own Edward was still active in Bankruptcy Court as late as November 1867, but he died in Upper Seymour Street, near Portman Square, London, on 24 August 1868, aged eighty-one. His unrevised will of January 1862 left assets worth under £5000 to his third wife Catherine, although she had in fact died in 1865.⁵⁹ This curious last twist of carelessness, a distant echo of Munbee Goulburn’s in 1793, might seem to typify a long contradictory career, lit up at its rocky inception (redeemingly) by a brief burst of precocious literary achievement, which, after two centuries, remains undeniably impressive, and, to posterity, delightfully readable. Although diffidently abandoned as well, at an age before most poets ‘come into their own’, what he has left us is gifted enough to survive and preserve. *Finis coronat opuscula*.

⁵⁷ *Random Recollections of the Midland Circuit*, second series (note 4 above), pp. 34–35, followed by a reprint of Goulburn’s *Epswell Hunt*, pp. 36–43, intended to illustrate Walton’s comment that ‘the then young soldier could handle his pen as well as a more *cutting* weapon’.

⁵⁸ Edward Meyrick Goulburn published widely on a variety of religious and antiquarian topics, and died suddenly of cardiac syncope on 3 May 1897.

⁵⁹ The particulars of the will are given in the *Lady’s Own Paper*, 10 October 1868.