

NOTES FROM A DIARY, 1851-1872

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649378203

Notes from a diary, 1851-1872 by Sir Mountstuart E. Grant Duff

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

SIR MOUNTSTUART E. GRANT DUFF

**NOTES FROM A
DIARY, 1851-1872**

Notes from a Diary

1851—1872

First Edition, January, 1897
Popular Edition, November, 1911.

Notes from a Diary

1851—1872

BY THE RIGHT HON.

SIR MOUNTSTUART E. GRANT DUFF

G.C.S.I.

"On ne doit jamais écrire que de ce qu'on aime.
L'oubli et le silence sont la punition qu'on inflige à ce
qu'on a trouvé laid ou commun dans la promenade à travers
la vie."—RENAN

LONDON

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET

1911

DA
565
G75A61
1911

NOTES FROM A DIARY

1852.

SPENT April and part of May at Eden, returning to London for about three months to read law. This summer I saw a good deal of Colonel Outram, heard with him several Indian discussions in the House of Commons, and was present with him and Mr. Willoughby, when Lord Hardinge gave his evidence before the Committee then sitting on Indian affairs.

July

10 to 12. At Hookwood with Mountstuart Elphinstone, who was living there in great retirement. I have unfortunately very brief notes of our conversations, in which Sir Charles Adam made the third. We talked of Epitaphs, and Mr. Elphinstone spoke with extreme admiration of Trivulzio's.

"Johannes Trivulzium qui nunquam quievit, hic quiescit—tace."

Amongst others which he cited was an old Scotch one.

"Ill to his freen, waur to his foe,
True to his Macker¹ in weel and in woe."

¹ Macker means feudal lord.

We talked about conversation. He put Luttrell's above that of all whom he had known. Talleyrand's was very rich in anecdote, but by no means witty. Of Sydney Smith he spoke with very great regard, treating his wit as merely the flower of his wisdom. He talked much about India, much about the old Whig set in Edinburgh, and much about his travels in Greece, Italy, Hungary, and elsewhere. To his eye, coming from the East, Croatia had appeared a very civilised region.

August and September

7. Leave London, and by Havre (where I had an interesting conversation with Dr. Miley, who was with O'Connell when he died) to Paris. In memory of Lever's *Horace Templeton*—a book which contains a few very remarkable pages—I went to stay at the Hotel des Princes.

13. Climbed the spire of Strasbourg to look over the scenes described in *Dichtung und Wahrheit*.

16. Joined Henry Smith in the Oberland, and see with him the Wengern Alp, the Grimsel, and much else.

Walking down the Haslithal in a tremendous downpour, I repeated to him the motto of the Earls Marischal, given by them to Marischal College,

"They say.
Quhat say they?
Lat them say,"

which had been quoted to me by Mr. Elphinstone,

and with which circumstances in after years were to make me very familiar.¹ "Ah!" said he, "I see what that means. It is the account of a young man's life at the University. In his first year he believes all that his Professors tell him. His answer to all objections is—*They say*. In his second year doubts begin to arise. He asks—*What say they?* In his third year he has lost all confidence, and says—*Let them talk as they will.*"

We met at Interlaken a very pleasant person—the Countess Zawicza. Her husband was of Bohemian descent, but his ancestor, having been despatched from Prague in his character of "*Vir pietate gravis*" to go and see for himself that the Grand Duke of Lithuania was not a bear—a fact of which the populace had become so persuaded that they utterly refused to allow a daughter of the Royal House to leave the city to marry him—found Lithuania so agreeable that he settled there.

From Interlaken Henry Smith and I journeyed by Fribourg to Lausanne, and thence, after crossing the great St. Bernard, by Vercelli, Novara, and Magenta, to Milan.

I find a note in my diary under August 29th. Inn of *Magenta*. So unfamiliar was then the name which has since become so famous!

My winter and spring experience of Italy had by no means prepared me for the autumn aspect of

¹ As M.P. for Peterhead, and Lord Rector of the University of Aberdeen.

this rich and rejoicing Lombardy, into which we penetrated as far as the Certosa of Pavia, returning to the north by Como and Lugano.

As we were walking up the Val Anzasca, on our way to the Monte Moro, we met two acquaintances of Smith's. They said to us, "If you have any idea of crossing the Weissthor, you had better take our guides, and give us yours; for these two men (to the best of my recollection they were both Taugwalds, but not brothers) are the only two who are to be depended on." The idea of crossing the Weissthor had never entered our minds, for we were quite out of training, and it passed in those days for the most difficult glacier pass in all Switzerland. I believe indeed that from 1829 to 1849, or thereabouts, no one crossed it.

However, the change of guides was no inconvenience to us, and was a convenience to the men, so we agreed to it, and went on. In the course of the day, the ambition of crossing the Weissthor gained upon us, and by the time we got to Macugnaga, we had determined to cross it.

I shall never forget the impression produced on my mind by the scene which presented itself, when we met together, coming each from the little *châlet* where we had spent the night. It was about three in the morning, the air was perfectly still, the starlight magnificent, and we stood just at the foot of the Monte Rosa glacier,—eight thousand feet of silver-shining snow. We started about four in