

**BIOGRAPHICAL MEMORANDA OF ARTHUR
DUKE OF WELLINGTON. COMPILED FROM HIS
DESPATCHES, UNPUBLISHED LETTERS,
ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS, AUTOGRAPHS,
TRANSCRIPTS, AND
NOTES OF CONVERSATIONS WHICH WERE
REPEATED TO THE WRITER**

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Biographical Memoranda of Arthur Duke of Wellington. Compiled from His Despatches, Unpublished Letters, Original Documents, Autographs, Transcripts, and Notes of Conversations Which Were Repeated to the Writer by Anonymous

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DEDICATION.

THE following pages are dedicated, with the sincerest sentiments of gratitude and esteem, to **Rear-Admiral GEORGE JAMES PERCEVAL, EARL OF EGDMONT, &c., &c., &c.**, than whom no one will more fully appreciate any facts thus preserved of the Great Man to whom they relate, as well as the motive which has led to the publication of them.

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PREFACE.

ALTHOUGH impressed with the conviction that the characteristics of the mind of the Duke of Wellington are founded on acts which history will preserve, yet the writer believes it to be a duty to add facts relating to, and opinions of, that great man, which some years since were communicated to him, chiefly by the late lamented Colonel Gurwood, lest from his own broken and *very* precarious health, they should be lost. The high estimation in which the Duke held Colonel Gurwood was fully shown by the confidence reposed in him, by rendering every assistance to him when editing his dispatches, by the almost unreserved intercourse he held with him, and the great anxiety his Grace evinced when he was suffering from a painful injury. That friendship and confidence was fully appreciated, and returned with manly affection and just admiration.

The compiler of the following pages has no pre-

tension, excepting through that channel, and some accidental personal circumstances, to any particular knowledge. It has been a source of gratification to him, in his seclusion, to have rescued from oblivion memorable words written by his Grace on the night after the battle of Waterloo;* and to have traced a very important document to safe hands, which is referred to in the text. Recollections of the performance of some routine duty, when a mere youth, and a

* Five sequent letters fell, by the death of the person to whom they were written, into the possession of an individual. The writer, hearing of them, and not deeming it right to purchase letters written in the spirit of confidence and friendship, requested his most intimate friend, the late Major-General Sir Patrick Ross, to mention it to the Duke, who requested him to desire Colonel Gurwood to co-operate with us to procure them. We went together; Colonel Gurwood having a cheque signed by the Duke, which he filled up with the amount. The memorable words ending the letter written on the night after Waterloo, are quoted. All that the writer thinks right to say of the contents of them is, that they corroborated some statements in the following pages, and impressed him with the conviction that they were penned in a spirit which showed that this great man looked upon the events as directed by a higher Power, and himself as an humble but honoured agent. His Grace destroyed them; but the words remain, and can never be forgotten. The letters had been sent to the writer for perusal, before he, through his friend, communicated with the Duke. It was the perusal of them which led to the opinion that they ought to be returned. The reply made by his Grace to the Spanish Council, at Madrid, on their using bombastic terms in their address to him, is very similar in sentiment—"The events of war are in the hands of Providence."

memorandum discovered among useless papers, led to its discovery, and suggestion of thought to the contents of that remarkable paper, which he had heard read officially, nearly thirty years before, by the late Mr. Benjamin Sydenham, whom he believes to have been sent by the Prime Minister, and to whom his Grace was deeply attached.

The object of the compiler has been to leave, as it were, the Duke of Wellington to be, in some degree, his own biographer. If, under multifarious circumstances, calculated to bring the various prominent characteristics of his mind into action, illustrations of his high principles, his kindness, and justness of feeling, and mode of thought (from his own written words or authentic expressions), can be adapted, he virtually becomes his own biographer, and only leaves to others to generalise and draw conclusions on points which his Grace could not, without at least appearing egotistical and self-adulatory, —neither of which weaknesses were to be detected in that really upright and high-toned nature. It also seems to him that the military man, of whatever rank, may, from the following pages, learn much that this great leader considered to be his duty, and also the manner in which it should be done, and also what he expected from the men he com-

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