[On 4 August Carlyle left Craigenputtoch and, after taking several coaches and enduring various adventures, arrived in London on the tenth. For a while it seemed as if the prestigious house of Murray might, on the strength of Jeffrey’s recommendation, publish *Sartor*. In London Carlyle saw old friends again with varying degrees of satisfaction: Mrs. Strachey, Charles Buller, Irving, Badams, Allan Cunningham, the Montagus. He met Godwin and Sir John Bowring. Murray delayed a decision on *Sartor*—it turned out that he never read the manuscript—and Carlyle in disgust finally took it back. Fraser offered to publish it—but only if Carlyle would “give him a sum not exceeding £150 sterling!” Carlyle refused, “strode thro’ these streets, carrying Teufelsdreck openly in my hand,” and took it to Longman, who also declined it. Jeffrey consented to take charge of the manuscript and promised to try to persuade Murray to look at it again.]

Carlyle, little sanguine as he was, had a right to be surprised at the difficulty of finding a publisher for his book. Seven years before he had received a hundred pounds for his *Life of Schiller*. It had been successful in England. It had been translated into German under the eye of Goethe himself. *Sartor* Carlyle reckoned to be at least three times as good, and no one seemed inclined to look at it.

Meanwhile, on another side of his affairs the prospect unexpectedly brightened. His brother had been the heaviest of his anxieties. A great lady, the Countess of Clare,
was going abroad and required a travelling physician. Jeffrey heard of it, and with more real practical kindness than Carlyle in his impatience had been inclined to credit him with, successfully recommended John Carlyle to her. The arrangements were swiftly concluded. The struggling, penniless John was lifted at once into a situation of responsibility and security, with a salary [300 guineas a year] which placed him far beyond need of further help, and promised to enable him to repay at no distant time both his debt to Jeffrey, and all the money which Carlyle had laid out for him. Here was more than compensation for the other disappointments. Not only Carlyle had no longer to feel that he must divide his poor earnings to provide for his brother's wants in London, but he could look without anxiety on his own situation. He even thought himself permitted, instead of returning to Craigenputtoch, to propose that Mrs. Carlyle should join him in London without the help of Mrs. Montagu. He was making friends; he was being talked about as a new phenomenon of a consequence as yet unknown. Review and magazine editors were recovering heart, and again seeking his assistance. He could write his articles as well in a London lodging as in the snowy solitudes of Dunscore, while he could look about him and weigh at more leisure the possibilities of finally removing thither.

[Murray finally agreed to] "print a small edition (750 copies) of Dreck, on the half-profits system (that is I getting nothing, but also giving nothing) after which the sole copyright of the Book is to be mine. Which offer he makes partly out of love to 'your Ludship [Jeffrey],,' chiefly from 'my great opinion of the originality' &c &c."

Anticipating slightly, I may finish here the adventures of Sartor or Dreck, and for the present have done with it. Murray at Jeffrey's instance had agreed to take the book on the terms which Carlyle mentioned—not, however, particularly willingly. Jeffrey himself, who had good practical knowledge of such things, thought that it was "too much of the nature of a rhapsody to command success or respectful attention." Murray perhaps rather wished to attach to himself a young man of unquestionable genius, whose works might be profitable hereafter, than expected much
from this immediate enterprise. He decided to run the risk, however. The manuscript was sent to the printer, and a page was set in type for consideration, when poor Murray, already repenting of what he had done, heard that while he was hesitating *Sartor* had been offered to Longman, and had been declined by him. He snatched at the escape, and tried to end his bargain. He professed to think, and perhaps he really thought, that he had been treated unfairly.

[Several exchanges of letters followed, Murray declining to print *Sartor* until he could "get it read by some literary friend," Carlyle replying formally that if Murray repented of his bargain he could return the manuscript.]

The result was the letter from the "bookseller," enclosing the critical communication from his literary adviser, which Carlyle with pardonable malice attached as an Appendix to *Sartor* when it was ultimately published, and which has been thus preserved as a singular evidence of critical fallibility. But neither is Murray to be blamed in the matter nor his critic. Their business was to ascertain whether the book, if published, would pay for the printing; and it was quite certain, both that the taste which could appreciate Carlyle did not exist till he himself created it, and that to *Sartor*, beautiful and brilliant as it now seems, the world would then have remained blind. Carlyle himself, proud, scornful, knowing if no one else knew the value of the estimate of "the gentleman in the highest class of men of letters" who had been consulted in the matter, judged Murray after his fashion far too harshly.

Carlyle was not alone in his contempt for the existing literary taste. Macvey Napier, to whom he had expressed an opinion that the public had been for some time "fed with froth," and was getting tired of it, agreed that he saw "no indications in that vast body, of any appetite for solid aliments." Nay, he added, I "am thoroughly convinced, that were another Gibbon to appear, & produce another such work as the *Decline & Fall*, the half of an impression of 750 copies would be left to load the shelves of its Publisher."

The article on Luther which Carlyle had offered for the *Edinburgh* could not get itself accepted. Napier recognised that Luther was a noble subject, but he could not spare
space for the effective treatment of it. He recommended instead a review of Thomas Hope's book on Man; and Carlyle, accepting the change, made Hope the text for the paper which he called "Characteristics." This essay, more profound and far-reaching even than Sartor, was written in these autumn weeks in London.

Mrs. Carlyle arrived in London on the first of October, a good deal shattered by the journey and the charge of the miscellaneous cargo of luggage which she had brought with her: oatmeal, hams, butter, etc., supplied by the generous Scotsbrig to lighten the expense of the London winter. George Irving's lodgings, being found to contain bugs, were exchanged for others. John Carlyle departed with Lady Clare for Italy. Carlyle and his wife quartered themselves at Ampton Street, turning out of Gray's Inn Road, where they had two comfortable rooms in the house of an excellent family named Miles, who belonged to Irving's congregation. Here friends came to see them: Mill, Emerson, later on Leigh Hunt, drawn by the article on Hope ("Characteristics") which Carlyle was now assiduously writing, Jeffrey, and afterwards many more, the Carlyles going out into society, and reconnoitring literary London. Mrs. Carlyle in her way was as brilliant as her husband was in his own; she attracting every one, he wondered at as a prodigy, which the world was yet uncertain whether it was to love or execrate.

[Among those Carlyle met was Charles Lamb, whom he judged harshly:]

Charles Lamb I sincerely believe to be in some considerable degree insane. A more pitiful, rickety, grasping, staggering, stammering Tom fool I do not know. He is witty by denying truisms, and abjuring good manners. His speech wriggles hither and thither with an incessant painful fluctuation; not an opinion in it or a fact or even a phrase that you can thank him for: more like a convulsion fit than natural systole and diastole. —Besides he is now a confirmed shameless drunkard; asks vehemently for gin-and-water in strangers houses; tipples till he is utterly mad, and is only not thrown out of doors because he is too much despised for taking such trouble with him. Poor Lamb! Poor England where such a despicable abortion is named genius! —He said: There are just two things I regret in English History; first that Guy Faux's Plot did not take effect (there would have been so glorious an explo-
sion); second, that the Royalists did not hang Milton (then we might have laughed at them); &c. &c. Armer Teufel [poor devil]?

Carlyle did not know at this time the tragedy lying behind the life of Charles Lamb, which explained or extenuated his faults. Yet this extravagantly harsh estimate is repeated—scarcely qualified—in a sketch written nearly forty years after.

Among the scrambling miscellany of notables and quasi-notables that hovered about us, Leigh Hunt . . . was probably the best; poor Charles Lamb . . . the worst. He was sinking into drink, poor creature; his fraction of “humour” &c I recognised, and recognise, but never could accept for a great thing,—genuine, but an essentially small and Cockney thing;—and now with gin &c super-added, one had to say, “Genius”? This is not genius, but diluted insanity: please remove this!

The gentle Elia deserved a kinder judgement. Carlyle considered “humour” to be the characteristic of the highest order of mind. He had heard Lamb extravagantly praised, perhaps, for this particular quality, and he was provoked to find it combined with habits which his own stern Calvinism was unable to tolerate.

[Edward Irving was, in Carlyle’s eyes, well advanced on the long road of his decline. Carlyle wrote to his mother:]

I daresay you have not yet seen in the newspapers, but will soon see something extraordinary about poor Edward Irving. His friends here are all much grieved about him. For many months, he has been puddling and muddling in the midst of certain insane jargoning of hysterical women, and crackbrained enthusiasts, who start up from time to time in public companies, and utter confused Stuff, mostly “Ohs” and “Ahs” and absurd interjections about “the Body of Jesus”; they also pretend to “work miracles,” and have raised more than one weak bedrid woman, and cured people of “Nerves,” or as they themselves say, “cast Devils out of them.” All which poor Irving is pleased to consider as the “work of the Spirit”; and to janner [talk foolishly] about at great length, as making his Church the peculiarly blessed of Heaven, and equal to or greater than the primitive one at Corinth! This, greatly to my sorrow, and that of many, has gone on privately for a good while, with increasing vigour; but last Sabbath, it burst out publicly in the open Church; for one of the “Prophetesses” (a woman on the verge of derangement) started up in the time of worship, and began to “speak with tongues”; and as the thing was encouraged by Irving, there were some three or four fresh hands who started up in the evening sermon, and began their ragings;
whereupon the whole congregation got into foul uproar, some groaning, some laughing, some shrieking, not a few falling into swoons: more like a Bedlam than a Christian Church.

Carlyle did attempt, as he has related in the Reminiscences, and as he tells in his letters, to drag Irving back from the precipice; but it proved as vain as he had feared; and all that he could do was but to stand aside and watch the ruin of his true and noble-minded friend. The last touch was added to the tragedy by the presence of Mrs. Carlyle to witness the catastrophe.

Meanwhile London was filling again after the holidays: and the autumn brought back old faces of other friends whom Carlyle was glad to see again. The Bullers were among the earliest arrivals. Charles Buller, then beginning his brief and brilliant career, was an advanced Radical in politics, and equally advanced in matters of speculation. He had not yet found a creed, as he had said, which he could even wish to believe true. He had a generous scorn of affectation, and did not choose, like many of his contemporaries, to wear a mask of veiled hypocrisy. The hen is terrified when the ducklings she has hatched take to water. Mrs. Buller, indeed, shared her son's feelings and felt no alarm; but her sister, Mrs. Strachey, who, a good religious woman, was shocked at a freedom less common then than it is now, because it could be less safely avowed, and in despair of help from the professional authorities, to whom she knew that her nephew would not listen, she turned to Carlyle, whose opinions she perhaps imperfectly understood, but of whose piety of heart she was assured.

Carlyle was extremely fond of Charles Buller. He was the only person of distinction or promise of distinction with whom he came in contact that he heartily admired; and he, too, had regretted to see his old pupil rushing off into the ways of agnosticism. Well he knew that no man ever came, or ever could come, to any greatness in this world in irreverent occupation with the mere phenomena of earth. The agnostic doctrines, he once said to me, were to appearance like the finest flour, from which you might expect the most excellent bread; but when you came to feed on it you found it was powdered glass and you had been eating the deadliest poison. What he valued in Buller was
his hatred of cant, his frank contempt of insincere professions. But refusal even to appear to conform with opinions which the world holds it decent to profess, is but the clearing of the soil from weeds. Carlyle, without waiting to be urged by Mrs. Strachey, had long been labouring to sow the seeds in Buller of a nobler belief; but a faith which can stand the wear and tear of work cannot be taught like a mathematical problem, and if Carlyle had shown Mrs. Strachey the condition of his own mind, she would scarcely have applied to him for assistance. Buller died before it had been seen to what seed sown such a mind as his might eventually have grown.

A great catastrophe was now impending in Carlyle's life. His father had been ailing for more than two years, sometimes recovering a little, then relapsing again; and after each oscillation he had visibly sunk to a lower level. The family anticipated no immediate danger, but he had himself been steadily contemplating the end as fast approaching him.

The old man at parting with his son in the summer gave him some money out of a drawer with the peculiar manner which the Scotch call fey—the sign of death when a man does something which is unlike himself. Carlyle paid no particular attention to it, however, till the meaning of the unusual action was afterwards made intelligible to him. The reports from Scotsbrig in the autumn and early winter had been more favourable than usual.

Napier unexpectedly and even gratefully accepted "Characteristics." He confessed that he could not understand it; but everything which Carlyle wrote, he said, had the indisputable stamp of genius upon it, and was therefore most welcome to the Edinburgh Review. Lytton Bulwer pressed for an article on Frederick the Great; [Abraham] Hayward was anxious that a final article should be written on Goethe, to punish Wilson for his outrages against the great German in the Noctes Ambrosianae. Hayward, too, had done Carlyle a still more seasonable service, for he had induced Dr. Lardner to promise to take Carlyle's "History of German Literature" for the Cabinet Encyclopaedia. The articles on the subject which had al-
ready appeared were to form part of it; some new matter was to be added to round off the story; and the whole was to be bound up into a Zur Geschichte [Historical Sketch], for which Carlyle was to receive £300. To Hayward then and always he was heartily grateful for this piece of service, though eventually, as will be seen, it came to nothing. These brightening prospects were saddened by the deaths of various eminent persons whom he held in honour. Dr. Becker died of cholera at Berlin, then Hegel from cholera also; and still worse, his old friend Mr. Strachey, whom he had met lately in full health, was seized with inflammation of the lungs, and was carried off in a few days.

Worst of all—the worse because entirely unlooked for—came fatal news from Scotsbrig [announcing the death of his father on 22 January 1832].

Fie! 'tis a fault to heaven,
A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
To reason most absurd, whose common theme
Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
From the first corse till he that died to-day,
"This must be so."11

Yet being so common, it was still "particular" to Carlyle. The entire family were knit together with an extremely peculiar bond. Their affections, if not limited within their own circle, yet were reserved for one another in their tenderest form. Friendship the Carlyles might have for others; their love was for those of their own household; while again, independently of his feeling as a son, Carlyle saw, or believed he saw, in his father personal qualities of the rarest and loftiest kind. Though the old man had no sense of poetry, Carlyle deliberately says that if he had been asked whether his father or Robert Burns had the finest intellect, he could not have answered. Carlyle's style, which has been so much wondered at, was learnt in the Annandale farmhouse; and beyond the intellect there was an inflexible integrity, in word and deed, which Carlyle honoured above all human qualities. The aspect in which he regarded human life, the unalterable conviction that justice and truth are the only bases on which successful conduct, either private or public, can be safely rested, he had derived from his father, and it was the root of all that was great in him-
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self. Being unable to be present at the funeral, he spent the intervening days in composing the memoir which has been published as the first of his Reminiscences.12

A few weeks only now remained of Carlyle’s stay in London. The great change at Scotsbrig recommended, and perhaps required, his presence in Scotland. His brother Alick had finally left Craigenputtoch to settle on a farm elsewhere, and the house on the moor could not be left unprotected. In London itself he had nothing further to detain him. He had failed in the object which had chiefly brought him there. Sartor Resartus had to lie unpublished in his desk. On the other hand, he had made new and valuable acquaintances—John Mill, Leigh Hunt, Hayward, Lytton Bulwer—for the first three of whom at least he entertained considerable respect. He had been courted more than ever by magazines. Owing to the effect of his personal presence, he had as much work before him as he was able to undertake, and by Hayward’s help Dr. Lardner was likely to accept on favourable terms his “Literary History.” He had learnt, once for all, that of promotion to any fixed employment there was no hope for him. Literature was and was to be the task of his life. But the doubt of being able to maintain himself honourably by it was apparently removed. His thrifty farmhouse habits made the smallest certain income sufficient for his wants. His wife had parted cheerfully with the luxuries in which she had been bred, and was the most perfect of economical stewardesses. His brother John was now in circumstances to repay the cost of his education, and thus for two years at least he saw his way clearly before him. Some editorship or share of editorship might have been attainable had he cared to seek such a thing; but the conditions of the London literary profession disinclined him to any close connection with it; and he had adjusted his relations with Napier, Fraser, Lytton Bulwer, and the rest, on terms more satisfactory to himself than complimentary to them. With Napier he was on a really pleasant footing. The “Characteristics” had been published without a word being altered or omitted. He liked Napier, and excepted him from his general censures. He was now writing his review of Croker’s [edition of Boswell’s] Life of Johnson, which he had promised Fraser as
THOMAS CARLYLE IN 1832. Pencil drawing, showing him full length leaning against a pillar, made by Daniel Maclise (signed "Alfred Croquis del") for inclusion in the series of portraits of contributors to Fraser's Magazine. Carlyle was a frequent contributor at this time, and Sartor first appeared in the journal in 1833-34. At first Carlyle thought that Maclise's drawing had "little or no resemblance: except in the hair, coat, and boots." Later he found that it "had a very considerable likeness. Done from life in Fraser's back-parlour in about twenty minutes." (From an engraving in the editor's possession.)
the last piece of work which he was to do in London. "So this is the way I have adjusted myself," he wrote: "I say, will you or your Dog's carrion-cart take this Article of mine, and sell it unchanged? With the Carrion-cart itself I have and can have no personal concern. For Fraser I am partly bound as to this piece on Johnson: Bulwer if he want anything on similar terms, and I feel unoccupied, he shall have it; otherwise not." In such scornful humour he prepared to retreat once more for another two years to his whinstone castle, and turn his back on London and the literary world.

My attitude towards literary London is almost exactly what I could wish: great respect, even love from some few; much matter of thought given me for instruction and high edification by the very baseness and ignorance of the many. . . . I dined at Magazine Fraser's some five weeks ago; saw Lockhart, Galt, Cunningham, Hogg: G[alt] has since sent me a Book (new, and worth little)[;] he is a broad gawsie Greenock man, old-growing, lovable with pity; L[ockhart] a dandiacal not without force, but barren and unfruitful; Hogg utterly a singing Goose, whom also I pitied and loved. The conversation was about the basest I ever assisted in. The Scotch here afterwards got up a brutish thing by way of "Burns's dinner," which has since been called the "Hogg dinner”; to the number of 500: famished Gluttony, Quackery and Stupidity were the elements of the work, which has been laughed at much. . . . Procter regards me as a proud Mystic; I him (mostly) as a worn-out Dud: so we walk on separate roads. The other Montagues are mostly mere simulacra, and not edifying ones. Peace be to all such. . . . Of male favourites Mill stands at the top: Jeffrey from his levity a good deal lower; yet he is ever kind, and pleasant to see hopping round one. . . . I saw Irving yesternight. . . . He is still goodnatured and patient; but enveloped in the vain sound of the "Tongues": I am glad to think he will not go utterly mad (not madder than a Don Quixote was); but his intellect seems quietly settling into a superstitious caput mortuorum; he has no longer any opinion to deliver worth listening to on any secular matter.\(^{14}\)