George Borrow's *Lavengro* and *Romany Rye*

Yūjū Ikeda

Foreword

In this brief survey an attempt is made to observe an individual commonly called by his Gypsy associates Lavengro, or Romany Rye, in the highly autobiographical narratives which bear for their titles those familiar names respectively, and, out of what he thinks, says or does on sundry occasions in the course of his pedestrian wanderings, pick up a number of different features apparently characteristic of that individual, so that a portrait may be drawn which is likely to represent him tolerably to the life.

There still remain, however, a thing or two to be done besides that, namely, to ascertain what Lavengro, or Romany Rye, chiefly intends to assert, plead or denounce, or how far the events in each "history", as Borrow calls his composition, correspond with those in the actual history of its author. The present survey will mainly consist of the accounts of those different features and presentation of the passages illustrative of them, by the combination of which the portrait is to be drawn.

There live upon this earth certain good fellows who are markedly themselves, grimly independent, and will at all times and all events go their own way, very often to the sorrow and disappointment of their parents. They are invariably good-natured, warm-hearted and well-meaning, ever ready to stand by the weak and helpless, but determined and also strong enough to knock down, if challenged to it, and trample underfoot any bully or braggart, till at last he gasps out, "Hold! enough!"

They take little thought what they eat, how they are arrayed, but

as for toiling, there is hardly any labour by which they can earn their living but they take up with the very best grace in the world, so long as it is an honest labour. Such a one may we not find in Lavengro?

1. Outward Looks

If a man's outward looks can provide us with any clue by which to form a conjecture upon his disposition or mentality, what is it that Borrow's looks suggest? In his portrait——painted by Henry W. Phillips and now in possession of John Murray the publisher, and probably the most popular or authentic, because the best known books on his life, such as Dr. W. I. Knapp's *Life, Writings, and Correspondence of George Borrow* (2 vols.), Herbert Jenkins's *Life of George Borrow*, Clement K. Shorter's *George Borrow and His Circle*, and R. A. J. Walling's *George Borrow the Man and His Work*, are all frontispieced with one and the same portrait, that is, Phillip's——he is represented as a young man, apparently somewhere upward of, say, twenty-five, very good-looking, with big, bright eyes, a high, shapely nose, and firm, well-defined lips, the most striking element of the whole features being the eyes——clear, suggestive of high intelligence, yet not without a faint shadow of melancholy, but on the whole very meek and mild.

It was, above all other good qualities in him, this mildness or amiableness of his nature that made Lavengro, the intended counterpart of Borrow, liked and trusted almost as soon as he came into contact with some of the very singular characters of this narrative, namely, Jasper Petulengro, the well-to-do Gypsy horse-dealer, the bereaved apple-woman on the London Bridge, Mr Ardry, a young man with a great legacy, the rich Armenian merchant, and, although last, not the least in importance, Belle, or Isopel Berners, the most sprightly girl imaginable, who was the only person that kindled, unwittingly on her part, love into the proud

and proved heart of Lavengro's, though he did not eventually prosper in his courtship. All these characters entertained for him great respect, to say nothing of a kind of love, two of them offering him pecuniary help, that it might do him good, all of which he declined outright, but with thanks.

> (1) As for the postillions, I was sworn brother with them all, and some of them went so far as to swear that I was the best fellow in the world. (*R. R.* XXVI)[(1)]

Will it be out of place to insert here an incident in his childhood, in which he seized with the naked hand a viper, not knowing it to be such, and the viper suffered itself to be held in his hand feeling, as it seemed, snug and quite at home, although the creature showed much agitation as his brother, who was well aware of the nature of the danger his brother was in, ran to him with a scream of horror?

> (2) All of a sudden a bright yellow, and, to my infantine eye, beautiful and glorious object made its appearance at the top of the bank from between the thick quickset, and, gliding down, began to move across the lane to the other side, like a line of golden light. Uttering a cry of pleasure, I sprang forward, and seized it nearly by the middle. (*Lav.* II)[(2)]

> (3) I did not drop it however, but, holding it up, looked at it intently, as its head dangled about a foot from my hand. It made no resistance; I felt not even the slightest struggle; but now my brother began to scream and shriek like one possessed. "Oh, mother, mother!" said he, "the viper! my brother has a viper in his hand!" He then, like one frantic, made an effort to snatch the creature away from me. The viper now hissed amain, and raised its head, in which were eyes like hot coals, menacing, not myself, but my brother. ·········and yet I was not three years old. (*ibid.*)

May it be that his open, undoubting countenance assured even a reptile that there was not a hint of any harmful intention in the child?

As for his being politely disposed, he himself avers it, which is certainly the most reliable guarantee ever made!

(1) *Romany Rye* Chapter XXVI (2) *Lavengro* Chapter II

(4) As I passed, being naturally of a very polite disposition, I gave the man the sele of the day, asking him, at the same time, why he beat the donkey. (*R. R.* XX)

Lastly, the following allusions may be cited as describing his personal appearance.

(5) What should I do? — enlist as a soldier? I was tall enough; but something besides height is required to make a man play with credit the part of soldier, I mean a private one. (*Lav.* XLVIII)

(6) "Grey, tall, and talks Romany," said she to herself. (*Lav.* LXX)

"Good-bye, tall brother," said the girl, as she departed singing—

"The Romany chi," etc. (*ibid.*)

(7) "I think you would make an excellent merchant."
"Why do you think so?"
"Because you have something of the Armenian look."
"I understand you," said I; "you mean to say that I squint?"
"Not exactly," said the Armenian, "but there is certainly a kind of irregularity in your features. One eye appears to me larger than the other. Never mind, but rather rejoice. All people with regular features are fools." (*Lav.* XLIX)

(8) "What! the sap-engro? Lor', the sap-engro upon the hill!"

"I remember that word," said I, "and I almost think I remember you. You can't be—"

"Jasper, your pal! Truth, and no lie, brother."

"It is strange that you should have known me," said I. "I am certain, but for the word you used, I should never have recognised you."

"Not so strange as you may think, brother; there is something in your face which would prevent people from forgetting you, even though they might wish it; and your face is not much altered since the time you wot of, though you are so much grown." (*Lav.* XVI)

(9) "I find no fault with the wages," said I, "but I don't like the employ."

"Not like bonneting," said the man; "ah, I see, you would like to be principal. Well, a time may come — those long white fingers of yours would just serve for the business. (*Lav.* LIII)

2. Inward Man

From what we observe about him during his travels through many parts of England, Scotland and Ireland, we may point out some features mental, moral and physical, to be noticed in the person of Lavengro. Most of us have in our personality certain different phases, often sharply contrastive with or even contradictory to one another, and even so does our hero of the narrative. He is, on one hand, honest, open-hearted, amiable, hospitable to strangers, and persevering in time of need, and on the other, rather too aggressive in his arguments, unrelenting in his attack on everything Catholic—we find at least forty-seven references to Pope, Papists, Catholics and so forth in *Lavengro* alone, and not less than twenty-two in *Romany Rye*, all revealing an inveterate hate of Catholicism and everything involved in it. Besides, not a few of his readers may frown, as did W. H. Hudson in his *Short History of English Literature in the 19th Century*, at his peculiar love and practice of beer-drinking and his praise of English prize fighting, at his too hard and fast a rule of life never to receive gifts at the hand of others, which is often liable to cause disappointment and even disgust to those courteous, well-meaning people who offer them.

> (1) Oh, genial and gladdening is the power of good ale, the true and proper drink of Englishmen. He is not deserving of the name of Englishman who speaketh against ale, that is, good ale, like that which has just made merry the hearts of this poor family; and yet there are beings, calling themselves Englishmen, who say that it is a sin to drink a cup of ale, and who, on coming to this passage, will be tempted to fling down the book and exclaim, "The man is evidently a bad man, for behold, by his own confession, he is not only fond of ale himself, but he is in the habit of tempting other people with it." Alas! Alas! what a number of silly individuals there are in this world; I wonder what they would have had me do in this instance—give the afflicted family a cup of cold water? go to! (*Lav*. LXVIII)

> (2) But those to which the course of my narrative has carried me were the days of pugilism; it was then at its height, and

consequently near its decline, for corruption had crept into the ring; and how many things, states and sects among the rest, owe their decline to this cause! But what a bold and vigorous aspect pugilism wore at that time! and the great battle was just then coming off: the day had been decided upon, and the spot—a convenient distance from the old town; and to the old town were now flocking the bruisers of England—men of tremendous renown. Let no one sneer at the bruisers of England. What were the gladiators of Rome, or the bull-fighters of Spain, in its palmiest days, compared to England's bruisers? (*Lav.* XXVI)

(3) "Hollo!" said the radical, interfering; "what are you saying about the Pope? I say hurrah for the Pope! I value no religion three halfpence, as I said before, but if I were to adopt any, it should be the Popish, as it's called, because I conceive the Popish to be the grand enemy of the Church of England, of the beggarly aristocracy, and the borough-monger system, so I won't hear the Pope abused while I am by. Come, don't look fierce. You won't fight, you know, I have proved it; but I will give you another chance—I will fight for the Pope, will you fight against him?"

"O dear me, yes!" said I, getting up and stepping forward. "I am a quiet, peaceable young man, and, being so, am always ready to fight against the Pope—the enemy of all peace and quiet—to refuse fighting for the aristocracy is a widely different thing from refusing to fight against the Pope—so come on, if you are disposed to fight for him. (*Lav.* LXXXVIII)

(4) 'Oh! the English are a clever people, and have a deep meaning in all they do. What a vision of deep policy opens itself to my view: they do not send their fool to Vienna in order to gape at processions, and to bow and scrape at a base Papist court, but to drink at the great dinners the celebrated Tokay of Hungary, which the Hungarians, though they do not drink it, are very proud of, and by doing so to intimate the sympathy which the English entertain for their fellow religionists of Hungary. Oh! the English are a deep people. (*R. R.* XXXIX)

3. A Man of Sturdy Build

"Mens sana in corpore sano" is said to have been a motto of the Romans, and its Greek parallel that of the ancient Greeks before them, setting forth their ideal of the state of mind and body together. If so, how near that standard will come our hero of the novels, or how far

short of it will he fall? Borrow, by the way, does not call *Lavengro* a novel,

> I will not say that I was awakened in the morning by the carolling of birds, as I perhaps might if I were writing a novel; I awoke because, to use vulgar language, I had slept my sleep out. (*Lav.* LXIX)

but calls *Romany Rye* a history.

> I wended my way to Horncastle, which I reached in the evening of the same day, without having met any adventure on the way worthy of being marked down in this very remarkable history. (*R. R.* XXVI)

Now, his "mens" put aside for the present, though I have no doubt that it comes well up to the mark, soundness of his "corpus" will leave no room for any question whatever, as the passages cited below will amply prove.

> (1) "One-and-nine pence, sir, or your things will be taken away from you!" he said, in a kind of lisping tone, coming yet nearer to me.
>
> I still remained staring fixedly at him, but never a word answered. Our eyes met; whereupon he suddenly lost the easy impudent air which he before wore. He glanced for a moment at my fist, which I had by this time clenched, and his features became yet more haggard; he faltered; a fresh "one-and-ninepence," which he was about to utter, died on his lips; he shrank back, disappeared behind a coach, and I saw no more of him. (*Lav.* XXIX)

> (2) Just before I reached the mouth of the alley, a man in a greatcoat closely followed by another, passed it; and, at the moment in which they were passing, I observed the man behind snatch something from the pocket of the other; whereupon, darting into the street, I seized the hindermost man by the collar, crying at the same time to the other, "My good friend, this person has just picked your pocket." (*Lav.* XLVI)

> (3) What was I to do? turn porter? I was strong; but there was something besides strength required to ply the trade of a porter—a mind of a particularly phlegmatic temperament, which I did not possess. (*Lav.* XLVIII)

> (4) Thou must be wondrous strong; many, after what thou

hast suffered, would not have stood on their feet for weeks or months.·········Peter, my husband, who is skilled in medicine, just now told me that not one in five hundred would have survived what thou hast this day undergone. (*Lav.* LXXII)

(5) So I put myself into a posture which I deemed the best both for offence and defence, and the tussle commenced; and when it had endured for about half an hour, Mr Petulengro said, "Brother, there is much blood on your face, you had better wipe it off. (*Lav.* LXXXII)

(6) Before the Tinman could recover himself, I collected all my strength, and struck him beneath the ear, and then fell to the ground completely exhausted. (*Lav.* LXXXV)

(7) I had the use of all my faculties; my eyes, it is true, were rather dull from early study, and from writing the *Life of Joseph Sell;* but I could see tolerably well with them, and they were not bleared. I felt my arms, and thighs, and teeth—they were strong and sound enough; so now was the time to labour, to marry, eat strong flesh, and beget strong children. (*R. R.* XII)

(8) I was in high spirits at finding myself once more on horseback, and trotted gaily on, until the heat of the weather induced me to slacken my pace, more out of pity for my horse than because I felt any particular inconvenience from it—heat and cold being then, and still, matters of great indifference to me. (*R. R.* XXI)

4. Wanderlust Never Quenched

"I have been a wanderer the greater part of my life; indeed I remember only two periods, and these by no means lengthy, when I was, strictly speaking, stationary," he begins the second chapter of *Lavengro* with these words. To walk all by himself or, as he sometimes did, with a pony and cart, over various parts of the country, or the metropolis, was the very thing congenial to his disposition or rather, I should say, to his stout, tireless legs, and allusions to his vagrancy abound in either of the narratives.

(1) 'Is she coming back, brother?' 'Never,' said I; 'she is gone to America, and has deserted me.' 'I always knew that you two were never destined for each other,' said he. 'How did you

know that?' I inquired. 'The dook[1] told me so; you were born to be a great traveller.' (*R. R.* XVI)

(2) The distance was rather considerable, yet I hoped to be back by evening fall, for I was now a shrewd walker, thanks to constant practice. (*Lav.* XII)

(3) But suddenly, by a violent effort breaking away from my meditations, I hastened forward; one mile, two miles, three miles were speedily left behind. (*Lav.* XXIV)

(4) "But how is this, young gentleman, you look as if you had been walking? you did not come on foot?"

"Yes, sir, I came on foot."

"On foot! why, it is sixteen miles."

"I shan't be tired when I have walked back." (*Lav.* XXIV)

(5) I should say that I scarcely walked less than thirty miles about the big city on the day of of my first arrival. Night came on, but still I was walking about, my eyes wide open, and admiring everything that presented itself to them. (*Lav.* XXXII)

(6) "No," said I, "I am good for nothing; I think I shall stroll to London Bridge."

"That's too far for me—farewell!" (*Lav.* XXXIX)

(7) So I walked more lustily than before, passing group after group of the crowd, and almost vieing in speed with some of the carriages, especially the hackney-coaches. (*Lav.* LII)

(8) In about two hours I had cleared the Great City, and got beyond the suburban villages, or rather towns, in the direction in which I was travelling. ········ I now slackened my pace, which had hitherto been great. (*Lav.* LIX)

(9) I had always been a good pedestrian; but now, whether owing to indisposition or to not having for some time past been much in the habit of taking such lengthy walks, I began to feel not a little weary. (*ibid.*)

(10) I proceeded rapidly, making my way over the downs covered with coarse grass and fern. (*Lav.* LXI)

(11) I continued journeying for four days, my daily journeyings varying from twenty to twenty-five miles. (*Lav.* LXII)

(12) I walked at a great rate, with a springing and elastic step. (*Lav.*LXVIII)

(13) So far from having to hasten him forward by the particular application which the tinker had pointed out to me, I had rather to

repress his eagerness, being, though an excellent pedestrian, not unfrequently left behind. (*Lav.* LXIX)

(14) In this manner I proceeded for several days, travelling on an average from twenty to twenty-five miles a day, always leading the animal. (*R. R.* XXX)

(15) I walked at a brisk rate, and late in the evening reached a large town. (*R. R.* XLVII)

(1) fortune (a Gypsy word)

5. Independence Inveterate

One of the most outstanding of Lavengro's moral principles is that of independence— a determination never to owe anything to any one under any circumstance, never to receive a gift from others without giving in return for it something, whether in money or in kind. Indeed, he is so scrupulous not to break this rule of his that it may often cause him to look, to an unwonted eye, unsociable, eccentric, or even morbid, and both of the narratives in our hand are replete with instances of the kind, some of which will follow.

(1) "I think so too," said my mother.

"I do not," said my father; "that a boy of his years should entertain an opinion of his own— I mean one which militates against all established authority— is astounding; as well might a raw recruit pretend to offer an unfavourable opinion on the manual and platoon exercise; the idea is preposterous; the lad is too independent by half." (*Lav.* XX)

(2) "It is certainly a curious book," said I; "and I should like to have it, but I can't think of taking it as a gift, I must give you an equivalent, I never take presents from anybody." (*Lav.* XXII)

(3) "I thank you, however, for your offer, which is, I dare say, well meant. If I am to escape from my cares and troubles, and find my mind refreshed and invigorated, I must adopt other means than conducting a French demoiselle to Brighton or Bagnigge Wells, defraying the expense by borrowing from a friend." (*Lav.* XLVIII)

(4) "It is not everyone can read faces, brother; and, unless

you knew I had money, how could you ask me to lend you any?"

"I am not going to ask you to lend me any."

"Then you may have it without asking; as I said before, I have fifty pounds, all lawfully earned money, got by fighting in the ring— I will lend you that, brother."

"You are kind," said I; "but I will not take it."

"Then the half of it?"

"Nor the half of it;………" (*Lav.* LIV)

(5) Moreover, my pride revolted at the idea of being beholden to Mr Petulengro for the materials of the history. (*Lav.* LV)

(6) I thought of all my ways and doings since the day of my first arrival in that vast city— I had worked and toiled, and, though I had accomplished nothing at all commensulate with the hopes which I had entertained previous to my arrival, I had achieved my own living, preserved my independence, and become indebted to no one. (*Lav.* LIX)

(7) "Here is sixpence."

"I won't have it."

"Why not?"

"You talk so prettily about these stones; you seem to know all about them."

"I never receive presents." (*Lav.* LX)

(8) After some further conversation,……… I rose and said to my host, "I must now leave you."

"Whither are you going?"

"I do not know."

"Stay here, then—you shall be welcome as many days, months, and years as you please to stay."

"Do you think I would hang upon another man? No, not if he were Emperor of all the Chinas." (*Lav.* LXVII)

(9) I had originally intended to pass the night in the cart, or to pitch my little tent on some convenient spot by the road's side; but, owing to the alteration in the weather, I thought that it would be advisable to take up my quarters in any hedge alehouse at which I might arrive. To tell the truth, I was not very sorry to have an excuse to pass the night once more beneath a roof. I had determined to live quite independent, but I had never before passed a night by myself abroad, and felt a little apprehensive at the idea. (*Lav.* LXIX)

(10) "No," said I, "I do not mean to go to church."

"May I ask thee wherefore?" said Peter.

"Because," said I, "I prefer remaining beneath the shade of these trees, listening to the sound of the leaves and tinkling of the waters."

"Then thou intendest to remain here?" said Peter, looking fixedly at me.

"If I do not intrude," said I; "but if I do, I will wander away; I wish to be beholden to nobody—perhaps you wish me to go?"

"On the contrary," said Peter, "I wish you to stay. I begin to see something in thee which has much interest for me."
(*Lav.* LXXIII)

(11) Next morning the kind pair invited me to share their breakfast.

"I will not share your breakfast," said I.

"Wherefore not?" said Winifred anxiously.

"Because," said I, "it is not proper that I be beholden to you for meat and drink." (*Lav.* LXXIV)

(12) "What shall I now do?" said I to myself; "shall I continue here, or decamp? This is a sad, lonely spot—perhaps I had better quit it; but whither should I go? the wide world is before me, but what can I do therein? I have been in the world already without much success. No, I had better remain here. The place is lonely, it is true; but here I am free and independent, and can do what I please." (*Lav.* LXXXV)

(13) "Many people would be willing to oblige the young rye, if he would but ask them; but he is not in the habit of asking favours. He has a nose of his own, which he keeps tolerably exalted; he does not think small-beer of himself, madam; and all the time I have been with him, I never heard him ask a favour before." (*R. R.* VI)

(14) But I again declined, telling him that doing so would be a violation of a rule which I had determined to follow, and which nothing but the greatest necessity would ever compel me to break through— never to incur obligations. (*R. R.* XXIX)

(15) "But," said he, "receiving this money will not be incurring an obligation, it is your due. Perhaps you will take it as a loan?" said he.

"No," I replied, "I never borrow." (*ibid.*)

(16) "Every vessel must stand on its own bottom," said I; "they take pleasure in receiving obligations, I take pleasure in being independent. Perhaps they are wise and I am a fool, I know

not; but one thing I am certain of, which is, that were I not independent I should be very unhappy: I should have no visions then." (*ibid.*)

(17) "To-morrow I will pay you a farewell visit, and bring you the letter."

"Thank you," said I; "and do not forget to bring your bill." The surgeon looked at the old man, who gave him a peculiar nod.

"Oh!" said he, in reply to me, "for the little service I have rendered you, I require no remuneration. You are in my friend's house, and he and I understand each other."

"I never receive such favours," said I, "as you have rendered me, without remunerating them; therefore I shall expect your bill." (*R. R.* XXXIII)

6. Chivalry Vigilant

As his brawny limbs combined with his inborn hate of insolence and injustice never allowed him to keep aloof from the tyranny of the Flaming Tinman but made him throw the villain down nearly dead upon the ground (*Lav.* LXXXV), or urged him to catch the 'cly-faker' in the very act (*Lav.* XLVI), so does his amiable yet chivalrous nature impel him to stand by and console the forlorn apple-woman on the London Bridge and do an errand for her, or to listen with an willing ear to the story of a tinker scared and deprived of his beat by the Tinman above mentioned, treat him and his wife to the 'true English ale', and finally take over for a reasonable price his things and his pony and cart, so as to set him up in a new trade in some other place and out of harm's way, and himself to enter into a tinker's life. Or again, he cannot ride past an old man weeping bitterly by the dusty roadside, without dismounting and inquiring what makes him cry, and on being told how he was cheated out of his donkey with six pounds' weight of flints, he loses no time but mounts his horse, gallops after the man he just now met on the way riding a donkey and urging it with a cudgel, overtakes the ruffian, forces him to get down, and recovers the animal for its owner.

(1) The old woman shook.

"What is the matter with you?" said I; "are you ill?"

"No, child, no; only—"

"Only what? Any bad news of your son?"

"No, child, no; nothing about my son. Only low, child—every heart has its bitters."

"That's true," said I; "well, I don't want to know your sorrows; come, where's the book?" (*Lav.* XL)

(2) Whereupon, looking anxiously at the young man, "what am I to do?" said I; "I really want a Bible."

"Can't you buy one?" said the young man; "have you no money?"

"Yes," said I, "I have some, but I am merely an agent of another; I came to exchange, not to buy; what am I to do?" (*Lav.* XLV)

(3) "Here is your health, sir," said I to the grimy-looking man, as I raised the pitcher to my lips.

The tinker, for such I supposed him to be, without altering his posture, raised his eyes, looked at me for a moment, gave a slight nod, and then once more fixed his eyes upon the table. I took a draught of the ale, which I found excellent. "Won't you drink?" said I, holding the pitcher to the tinker. (*Lav.* LXVIII)

(4) Slowly removing his head from his arms, he took the pitcher, sighed, nodded, and drank a tolerable quantity, and then set the pitcher down before me upon the table.

"You had better mend your draught," said I to the tinker; "it is a sad heart that never rejoices." (*ibid.*)

(5) "Pass it to your wife," said I.

The poor woman took the pitcher from the man's hand; before, however, raising it to her lips, she looked at the children. True mother's heart, thought I to myself, and taking the half-pint mug, I made her fill it, and then held it to the children, causing each to take a draught. The woman wiped her eyes, with the corner of her gown before she raised the pitcher and drank to my health. (*ibid.*)

(6) "Do you know those fellows," I demanded, "since you let them go away in your debt?"

"I know nothing about them," said the landlord, "save that they are a couple of scamps."

"Then why did you let them go away without paying you?" said I.

"I had not the heart to stop them," said the landlord; and

to tell you the truth, everybody serves me so now, and I suppose they are right, for a child could flog me."

"Nonsense," said I, "behave more like a man, and with respect to those two fellows run after them, I will go with you, and if they refuse to pay the reckoning I will help you to shake some money out of their clothes." (*R. R.* XIII)

(7) I had not proceeded a furlong before I saw seated on the dust by the wayside, close by a heap of stones, and with several flints before him, a respectable-looking old man, with a straw hat and a white smock, who was weeping bitterly.

"What are you crying for, father?" said I. "Have you come to any hurt?"

"Hurt enough," sobbed the old man, "I have been just tricked out of the best ass in England by a villain, who gave me nothing but these trash in return," pointing to the stones before him. (*R. R.* XXI)

(8) "I never heard such a story," said I; "well, do you mean to submit to such a piece of roguery quietly?"

"Oh, dear," said the old man, "what can I do? I am seventy-nine years of age; I am bad on my feet, and dar'n't go after him." (*ibid.*)

(9) "Do you want to rob me?"

"To rob you?" said I. "No, but to take from you that ass, of which you have just robbed its owner."

"I have robbed no man," said the fellow; "I just now purchased it fairly of its master, and the law will give it to me; he asked six pounds for it, and I gave him six pounds."

"Six stones, you mean, you rascal," said I; "get down, or my horse shall be upon you in a moment'; then with a motion of my reins, I caused the horse to rear, pressing his sides with my heels as if I intended to make him leap.

"Stop," said the man, "I'll get down, and then try if I can't serve you out." He then got down, and confronted me with his cudgel; he was a horrible-looking fellow, and seemed prepared for anything. Scarcely, however, had he dismounted, when the donkey jerked the bridle out of his hand, and probably in revenge for the usage she had received, gave him a pair of tremendous kicks on the hip with her hinder legs, which overturned him, and then scampered down the road the way she had come. (*ibid.*)

(10) I, who have ever been an enemy to insolence, cruelty, and tyranny, loathe their memory, and, what is more, am not afraid to say so, well aware of the storm of vituperation,

partly learnt from them, which I may expect from those who used to fall down and worship them. (*R. R.* XXVI)

7. Memory Indelible

The tenacity of his memory is such that it astonishes the reader in many places of his roamings. Thus in one place he affirms that he never forgets anything he hears or sees.

(1) *Tinker.* "Only on one condition I'll sell you the pony and things; as for the beat, it's gone, isn't mine — sworn away by my own mouth. Tell me what's my name; if you can't may I — "

Myself. Don't swear, it's a bad habit, neither pleasant nor profitable. Your name is Slingsby — Jack Slingsby. There, don't stare, there's nothing in my telling you your name: I've been in these parts before, at least not very far from here. Ten years ago, when I was little more than a child, I was about twenty miles from here in a post chaise, at the door of an inn, and as I looked from the window of the chaise, I saw you standing by a gutter with a big tin ladle in your hand, and somebody called you Jack Slingsby. I never forget anything I hear or see; I can't, I wish I could. So there's nothing strange in my knowing your name; indeed, there's nothing strange in anything, provided you examine it to the bottom. (*Lav.* LXVIII)

Again, in a conversation between Jasper Petulengro and himself he exhibits an instance or two of this peculiar mental quality, and makes the former exclaim,

(2) "I say, brother, what a wonderful memory you have!"

"I wish I had not, Jasper, but I can't help it, it is my misfortune." (*R. R.* IX)

(3) "Indeed, Jasper, I heard you say on a previous occasion, on quoting a piece of a song, that when a man dies he is cast into the earth, and there's an end of him."

"I did, did I? Lor', what a memory you have, brother. But you are not sure that I hold that opinion now." (*ibid.*)

Strangely enough, however, he does not seem to set any great store by this innate and invaluable gift of his — how precious and enviable an endowment to students of foreign languages! — and even goes so far as to

wish he did not possess it, calling it a misfortune. Good memory a misfortune! Yet is it not exactly what enabled him, in a great measure at least, to be acquainted with so many foreign languages — one of George Borrow's works is entitled *Targum, or Metrical Translations from Thirty Languages* —— both classical and modern, widely spoken and scarcely known, and that at so early an age?

As a polyglot, he picked up, as the 'history' states, while still a youth a good knowledge of Latin, Greek, French, German, Danish, Irish, Welsh, and Romany, or the speech of the Gypsy race.

Into Latin he was initiated by a clergyman, an old friend of his father's, who kept a seminary at a town the very next they visited after their departure from 'the Cross', using for the text-book *Lilly's Latin Grammar*, 'the only good school-book in the world', as his instructor assured his father,

> (4) "Captain," said this divine, when my father came to take leave of him on the eve of our departure, "I have a friendship for you, and therefore wish to give you a piece of advice concerning this son of yours. You are now removing him from my care; you do wrong, but we will let that pass. Listen to me: there is but one good school-book in the world — the one I use in my seminary — Lilly's Latin Grammar, in which your son has already made some progress. If you are anxious for the success of your son in life, for the correctness of his conduct and the soundness of his principles, keep him to Lilly's Grammar. (*Lav.* VI)

and he kept on studying the book, under the tuition of various schoolmasters at various places to which the family moved, and where the same illustrious grammar was used, so hard that at the end of three years he had the whole by heart.

> (5) At the end of the three years I had the whole by heart; you had only to repeat the first two or three words of any sentence in any part of the book, and forthwith I would open cry, commencing without blundering and hesitation, and continue till you were glad to beg me to leave off, with many

expressins of admiration at my proficiency in the Latin language. (*ibid.*)

The next town to which his family moved with the regiment, for his father was captain in the militia regiment of the Earl of·········(*Lav.* I), was Edinburgh, at the High School of which city he acquired a considerable insight in the Latin tongue; and, to the scandal of his father and horror of his mother, a thorough proficiency in the Scotch (*Lav.* VII).

As for other languages, he availed himself of whatever opportunity presented itself before him, and learned them; for instance, Irish while stationed at Colonnel, and subsequently at Templemore, in Ireland, to which towns his family moved with the regiment between the years 1815-6.

(6) I had been to English schools, and to the celebrated one of Edinburgh; but my education, at the present day, would not be what it is — perfect, had I never had the honour of being *alumnus* in an Irish seminary. (*Lav.* X)

At the Irish seminary to which he was sent he succeeded in persuading one of his school-mates to teach him Irish, in exchange for a pack of cards which he possessed and of which the other was so covetous.

(7) "And is it a language-master you'd be making of me?"
"To be sure! — what better can you do? — it would help you to pass your time at school. You can't learn Greek, so you must teach Irish!"
Before Christmas, Murtagh was playing at cards with his brother Denis, and I could speak a considerable quantity of broken Irish. (*Lav.* X)

His acquaintance with Welsh was such that a native of Wales wondered if he had ever been in Wales.

(8) "The *Bardd Cwsg*," said I; "what kind of book is that? I have never heard of that book before."
"Heard of it before; I suppose not; how should you have heard of it before! By the way, can you read?"
"Very tolerably," said I; "so there are fairies in this book. What do you call it — the *Bardd Cwsg*?"
"Yes, the *Bardd Cwsg*. You pronounce Welsh very fairly; Have you ever been in Wales?"
"Never," said I. (*Lav.* LXXIV)

(9). "Well," said Peter, "will you go into Wales?"
"What should I do in Wales?" I demanded.
"Do!" said Peter, smiling; "learn Welsh."
I stopped my little pony. "Then I need not go into Wales; I already know Welsh."
"Know Welsh!" said Peter, staring at me.
"Know Welsh!" said Winifred, stopping her cart.
"How and when did you learn it?" said Peter.
"From books, in my boyhood."
"Read Welsh!" said Peter, "is it possible?"
"Read Welsh!" said Winifred, "is it possible?"
"Well, I hope you will come with us," said Peter.
"Come with us, young man," said Winifred; "let me, on the other side of the brook, welcome you into Wales."
"Thank you both," said I, "but I will not come."(*Lav.*LXXX)

(10) By this speech I obtained my wish, even as I knew I should, for my wife and daughter instantly observed, that, after all, they thought we had better go into Wales, which, though not so fashionable as either Leamington or Harrowgate, was a very nice picturesque country, where, they had no doubt, they should get on very well, more especially as I was acquainted with the Welsh language. (*Wild Wales* I)

What made him learn Danish was a 'strange and uncouth-looking' book offered him as a gift by an elderly couple — for which gift he consented to be kissed on the cheek — while he was articled an apprentice at the office of Simpson and Rackham, solicitors, Norwich. He first managed to obtain a Danish Bible, and, comparing it with an English Bible, succeeded at last to decipher that language, before he could read that 'strange' book, which turned out to be a book of Danish ballads (and of which translation by him was published at Norwich in 1826 entitled *Romantic Ballads from the Danish* of G. Oehlenschlager,………).

(11) But I toiled in vain, for I had neither grammar nor dictionary of the language; and when I sought for them could procure neither; and I was much dispirited, till suddenly a bright thought came into my head, and I said, Although I cannot obtain a dictionary or grammar, I can perhaps obtain a Bible in this language, and if I can procure a Bible I can learn the language, for the Bible in every tongue contains the same things, and I have only to compare the words of the Danish

Bible with those of the English, and, if I persevere, I shall in time acquire the language of the Danes; and I was pleased with the thought, which I considered to be a bright one, and I no longer bit my lips or tore my hair, but took my hat, and, going forth, I flung my hat into the air. (*Lav.* XXII)

I shall wind up this part of my observations by stating that a book in Armenian he was presented with by the widow of a rich clergyman gave him an opportunity of studying Armenian, or Haik, as the language is otherwise called by the Armenian natives, the language which he afterwards tried to teach Belle, or Isopel Berners, in the Mumper's Dingle.

(12) "I remember that I said one only feels uncomfortable in being silent with a companion, when one happens to be thinking of the companion. Well, I had been thinking of you the last two or three minutes, and had just come to the conclusion, that to prevent us both feeling occasionally uncomfortably each other, having nothing to say, it would be as well to have a standing subject on which to employ our tongues. Belle, I have determined to give you lessons in Armenian."

"What is Armenian?"

"Did you ever hear of Ararat?"

"Yes, that was the place where the ark rested; I have heard the chaplain in the great house talk of it; besides, I have read of it in the Bible."

"Well, Armenian is the speech of the people of that place, and I should like to teach it you." (*Lav.* LXXXIX)

8. Wit and Humour

Instances of witty repartees and remarks, playing on words, or jokes, cracked now and again by our hero and also by Isopel Berners and others, are not scarce in these narratives, or "histories", as the author calls them; only, it is feared that the shortness of the passages cited may sometimes hinder the soul of the quotations from being grasped clearly.

(1) "Politics! Why, the gemmen in the House would leave Pitt himself, if he were alive, to come to my pit. There were three of the best of them here to-night, all great horators." (*Lav.* XXXV)

(2) And now once more to my pursuits, to my Lives and Trials. However partial at first I might be to these lives and

trials, it was not long before they became regular trials to me, owing to the whims and caprices of the publisher. (*Lav.* XXXIX)

(3) However, I determined to see what could be done, so I took my ballads under my arm, and went to various publishers; some took snuff, others did not, but none took my ballads or Ab Gwilym, they would not even look at them. (*Lav.* XLIII)

(4) So I went to the house where Glorious John resided, and a glorious house it was, but I could not see Glorious John — I called a dozen times, but I never could see Glorious John. (*ibid.*)

(5) "Where do you come from?" said the girl.

"Out of the water," said I. "Don't start, I have been bathing; are you fond of the water?"

"No," said the girl, heaving a sigh; "I am not fond of the water, that is, of the sea"; and here she sighed again. (*Lav.* LXXIII)

(6) "To tell you the truth," said I, "I live very much alone, and pay very little heed to the passing of time."

"And yet of what infinite importance is time," said Winifred. "Art thou not aware that every year brings thee to thy end!"

"I do not think," said I, "that I am so near my end as I was yesterday." (*ibid.*)

(7) "Who is thy enemy?"

"An Egyptian sorceress and poisonmonger."

"Thy enemy is a female. I fear thou hadst given her cause to hate thee — of what did she complain?"

"That I had stolen the tongue out of her head."

"I do not understand thee — is she young?"

"About sixty-five." (*ibid.*)

(8) "Belle," said I, "I have determined to commence the course of Armenian lessons by teaching you the numerals; but, before I do that, it will be as well to tell you that the Armenian language is called Haik."

"I am sure that word will hang upon my memory," said Belle.

"Why hang upon it?"

"Because the old women in the great house used to call so the chimney-hook, on which they hung the kettle; in like manner; on the hake of my memory I will hang your hake."

"Good!" said I; "you will make an apt scholar; but, mind, that I did not say hake, but haik; the words are, however,

very much alike; and, as you observe, upon your hake you may hang my haik." (*Lav.* LXXXIX)

(9) "Belle, there are ten declensions in Armenian."

"What's a declension?"

"The way of declining a noun."

"Then, in the civilest way imaginable, I decline the noun. Is that a declension?"

"You should never play on words; to do so is low, vulgar, smelling of a pothouse, the workhouse. Belle, I insist on your declining an Armenian noun."

"I have done so already," said Belle.

"If you go on in this way," said I, "I shall decline taking any more tea with you. Will you decline an Armenian noun?" (*Lav.* XCV)

(10) After travelling a great many days in a thing which, though called a diligence, did not exhibit much diligence, we came to a great big town, seated around a nasty salt-water basin, connected by a narrow passage with the sea. (*Lav.* XCVIII)

9. An Eye for Poetry

An intense desire to know what is unknown to one, a wistful longing to roam about *terra incognita*, seeking after what is novel or beautiful either in nature or in man, and hoping to 'feed fat' one's life-long hunger with it when it is found, such desire or longing may presuppose the open, innocent heart of a child, a heart alive to beauty of every kind — in other words, the eye of a poet. Such an eye may we not find in Lavengro, when he gazes at the star Jupiter, sitting on the shaft of his cart, or at his forge, after nightfall in the dingle?

(1) Night came on, and a beautiful night it was; up rose the moon, and innumerable stars decked the firmament of heaven. I sat on the shaft, my eyes turned upwards. I had found it: there it was twinkling millions of miles above me, mightiest star of the system to which we belong: of all stars, the one which has the most interest for me — the star Jupiter.

Why have I always taken an interest in thee, O Jupiter? I know nothing about thee, save what every child knows, that thou art a big star whose only light is derived from moons. And is not that knowledge enough to make me feel an interest in thee? Ay,

truly, I never look at thee without wondering what is going on in thee, what is life in Jupiter? That there is life in Jupiter who can doubt? There is life in our own little star, therefore there must be life in Jupiter, which is not a little star. (*Lav.* LXX)

(2) It has always struck me that there is something highly poetical about a forge. I am not singular in this opinion: various individuals have assured me that they never pass by one, even in the midst of a crowded town, without experiencing sensations which they can scarcely define, but which are highly pleasurable. I have a decided penchant for forges, especially rural ones, placed in some quaint, quiet spot — a dingle, for example, which is a poetical place, or at a meeting of four roads, which is still more so; for how many a superstition — and superstition is the soul of poetry — is connected with these cross roads! I love to light upon such a one, especially after nightfall, as everything about a forge tells to most advantage at night. (*Lav.* LXXXIII)

(3) It was now that I had frequent deliberations with myself. Should I continue at the inn in my present position? I was not very much captivated with it; there was little poetry in keeping account of the corn, hay, and straw which came in, and was given out, and I was fond of poetry; moreover, there was no glogy at all to be expected in doing so, and I was fond of glory. Should I give up that situation, and, remaining at the inn, become ostler under Bill? There was more poetry in rubbing down horses than in keeping an account of straw, hay, and corn; there was also some prospect of glory attached to the situation of ostler. (*R. R.* XXIX)

Although there is not any allusion to our hero's writing poetry either in *Lavengro* or in *Romany Rye*, its sequel, there is in the former narrative a detailed account of his study of the Welsh and the Danish languages, his translation of the Welsh poet Ab Gwilym and a book of Danish ballads, and how he took the manuscripts of these translations to London, showed them to a publisher — Sir Richard Philips, in reality —, begged them to be published, was told that literature was a drug, nobody would read ballads, and saw other publishers in the big city one after another with the same effect, that is, with no effect.

(4) "What is that you have got under your arm?"

"One of the works to which I was alluding; the one, indeed, which I am most anxious to lay before the world, as I hope to derive from it both profit and reputation."

"Indeed! what do you call it?"

"Ancient songs of Denmark, heroic and romantic, translated by myself; with notes philological, critical and historical."

"Then, sir, I assure you that your time and labour have been entirely flung away; nobody would read your ballads, if you were to give them to the world to-morrow."

"I am sure, sir, that you would say otherwise, if you would permit me to read one to you"; and without waiting for the big man, nor indeed so much as looking at him, to see whether he was inclined or not to hear me, I undid my manuscript, and with a voice trembling with eagerness, I read to the following effect:-

"Buckshank bold and Elfinstone,
And many other fellows tall,
Together built so stout a ship,
To Iceland which should bear them all.

"They launched the ship upon the main,
Which like a hungry monster roared;
Whelmed by the laidly ocean Trold,
The good ship sank with all on board.

"Down to the bottom sank young Roland,
And round about he groped awhile;
Until he found the path which led
Unto the bower of Ellenlyle."

(*Lav.* XXX)

(5) "Stop!" said the publisher. "Very pretty indeed, and very original — beats Scott hollow, and Percy too; but, sir, the day for these things is gone by. Nobody at present cares for Percy, nor for Scott either, save as a novelist. Sorry to discourage merit, sir, but what can I do? What else have you got?"

"The songs of Ab Gwilym, the Welsh bard, also translated by myself, with notes critical, philological, and historical."

"Pass on — what else?"

"Nothing else," said I, folding up my manuscript with a sigh, "unless it be a romance in the German style; on which, I confess, I set very little value." (*ibid.*)

The truth is, let it be added, that both the translations were published in after years — the Danish Ballads in 1826, and Ab Gwilym in

1835.

10. In the Doubting Castle

Seeing him wander about from place to placé as contented and carefree as a cloud that floats on high o'er dales and hills, or the wind that bloweth where it listeth, and take his ease at his inn when the day's journey on foot is at an end, to be resumed on the morrow, though, one might take him — Lavengro, or Romany Rye, as he is habitually called by the Romany chals and Romany chis — for a mere pedestrian, who employs his legs as mechanically as if they were a pair of pendulums, without bothering his brains with anything that demands the exercise of the faculty of human intellect. Yet nothing could be further from the case, for he is from time to time beset, and that at so early an age as eighteen, by a variety of harrowing doubts about conscience, truth, virtue and vice, ownership and authorship, the existence of the world, of the earth, of the firmament, of everything that surrounds him, and even of himself! — so much so that he now laments over the frailty of the flower's, glory's life, the vanity of human pursuits, and now gets weary of his own existence and wishes he had never been born, or is seized with an impulse to fling himself over the balustrade of the London Bridge down into the water that eddies under it.

> (1) I had inquired into many matters, in order that I might become wise, and I had read and pondered over the words of. the wise, so called, till I had made myself master of the sum of human wisdom — namely, that everything is enigmatical, and that man is an enigma to himself; thence the cry of "What is truth?" I had ceased to believe in the truth of that in which I had hitherto trusted, and yet could find nothing in which I could put any fixed or deliberate belief. I was, indeed, in a labyrinth! In what did I not doubt! (*Lav.* XXV)

> (2) With respect to crime and virtue, I am in doubt; I doubted that the one was blamable and the other praiseworthy. Are not all things subjected to the law of necessity? Assuredly; time and chance govern all things: yet how can this be? alas! (*ibid.*)

(3) It was neither more nor less than a doubt of the legality of my claim to the thoughts, expressions, and situations contained in the book; that is, to all that constituted the book. How did I get them? How did they come into my mind? Did I invent them? Did they originate with myself? Are they my own, or are they some other body's? You see into what difficulty I had got. (*Lav.* LXVI)

(4) "I wonder whether there is a world."
"What do you mean?"
"An earth and sea, moon and stars, sheep and men."
"Do you doubt it?"
"Sometimes."
"I never heard it doubted before."
"It is impossible there should be a world."
"It ain't possible there shouldn't be a world." (*Lav.* LX)

(5) My own peculiar ideas with respect to everything being a lying dream began also to revive. Sometimes at midnight, after having toiled for hours at my occupations, I would fling myself back on my chair, look about the poor apartment, dimly lighted by an unsnuffed candle, or upon the heaps of books and papers before me, and exclaim, "Do I exist? Do these things, which I think I see about me, exist, or do they not? Is not everything a dream — a deceiful dream? Is not this apartment a dream — the furniture a dream? The publisher a dream — his philosophy a dream? Am I not myself a dream — dreaming about translating a dream? (*Lav.* XXXVI)

(6) How for everything there is a time and a season, and then how does the glory of a thing pass from it, even like the flower of the grass. This is a truism, but it is one of those which are continually forcing themselves upon the mind. Many years have not passed over my head, yet, during those which I can call to remembrance, how many things have I seen flourish, pass away, and become forgotten, except myself, who, in spite of all my endeavours, never can forget anything. (*Lav.* XXVI)

(7) I was living, it is true, not unpleasantly, enjoying the healthy air of heaven; but, upon the whole, was I not sadly misspending my time? Surely I was; and, as I looked back, it appeared to me that I had always been doing so. What had been the profit of the tongues which I had learnt? had they ever assisted me in the day of hunger? No! no! it appeared to me that I had always misspent my time, save in one instance, when

by a desperate effort I had collected all the powers of my imagination, and written the *Life of Joseph Sell*. (*R. R.* XII)

(8) It has been said by this or that writer, I scarcely know by whom, that, in proportion as we grow old, and our time becomes short, the swifter does it pass, until at last, as we approach the borders of the grave, it assumes all the speed and impetuosity of a river about to precipitate itself into an abyss; this is doubtless the case, provided we can carry to the grave those pleasant thoughts and delusions which alone render life agreeable, and to which even to the very last we would gladly cling; but what becomes of the swiftness of time when the mind sees the vanity of human pursuits, which is sure to be the case when its fondest, dearest hopes have been blighted at the very moment when the harvest was deemed secure? (*Lav.* XIX)

(9) "Would I had never been born!" I said to myself; and a thought would occasionally intrude: but was I ever born? Is not all I see a lie — a deceitful phantom? Is there a world, and earth, and sky? Berkeley's doctrine — Spinoza's doctrine! Dear reader, I had at that time never read either Berkeley or Spinoza. I have still never read them; who are they, men of yesterday? "All is a lie — all a deceitful phantom," are old cries; they come naturally from the mouths of those who, casting aside that choicest shield against madness, simplicity, would fain be wise as God, and can only know that they are naked. This doubting in the "universal all" is almost coeval with the human race; wisdom, so called, was early sought after. All is a lie — a deceitful phantom — was said when the world was yet young; its surface, save a scanty portion, yet untrodden by human foot, and when the great tortoise yet crawled about. All is a lie, was the doctrine of Buddh; and Buddh lived thirty centuries before the wise King of Jerusalem, who sat in his arbours, beside his sunny fish-pools, saying many fine things, and amongst others, There is nothing new under the sun!" (*Lav.* XXV)

(10) "Life is sweet, brother."

"Do you think so?"

"Think so! There's night and day, brother, both sweet things; sun, moon, and stars, brother, all sweet things; there's likewise a wind on the heath. Life is very sweet, brother; who would wish to die—"

"I would wish to die — "

"You talk like a Gorgio — which is the same as talking

like a fool. Were you a Romany Chal, you would talk wiser. Wish to die, indeed! A Romany Chal would wish to live for ever!" (*ibid.*)

Afterword

Here in my cursory observations I have specified certain peculiarities which have struck me as remarkable in the character of Lavengro. In him are found existing side by side two shaprly contrastive types of features — one as hard as a flint and the other as soft, not to say weak, as milk. The former never yields to or compromises with any alluring motives, while the latter is easily moved to compassion by any petty wrong done to one oppressed and helpless; the spirit of independence represents the former, and that of chivalry is born of the latter.

This duplexity of personality appears to constitute the basis upon which are laid the superstructure of other traits — the wandering penchant which will never keep him stationary in one place but ever drives him on a pilgrimage in quest of adventures, the poetical turn which lies at the bottom and gives an impetus to that penchant, skepticism which ever and again haunts his solitary hours, that miraculous power of memory which rather molests than delights him, and confidence in himself and pride which the former begets. All these qualities are joined in one person to make Lavengro what he is.

What is he exactly, then? According to the author's description of his hero, he is 'one of rather a peculiar mind and system of nerves, with an exterior shy and cold, under which lurk much curiosity, especially with regard to what is wild and extraordinary, a considerable quantity of energy and industry, and an unconquerable love of independence' (*R. R.* Appendix). An apt and graphic description indeed! it is the father knows his son best, to be sure.

I, for one, however, have a good mind to call him a poet in a way, for is it not intrinsically the poet's part to be curious, to yearn

after the beautiful, the remote and the unknown, and, urged by that resistless call which whispers from within, pursue an endless tenor of a wandering life, even as do all the adventurers and explorers? and will not a mug or two of wholesome ale every now and again be allowed him as a comforter of his own loneliness and sometimes as an offer of encouragement to the dejected?

Secondly, as for what Lavengro has chiefly to say, or, to put it more definitely, what Borrow intends to speak through Lavengro, we had best listen to what the author sums up in the Appendix he puts at the end of *Romany Rye*. In it he points out a number of infirmities English people are liable to, there being among others "Foreign Nonsense", or the absurdity of blindly worshiping everything foreign, especially French, German, or Spanish language, literature, customs and manners, and abusing their own country and everything connected with it, more especially its language;"Gentility Nonsense", or the absurdity of entertaining an erroneous conception of what is genteel, by associating, for instance, the idea of gentility with something gorgeous, glittering or tawdry; "Canting Nonsense", in which he refers to three kinds of cant, namely, religious cant, unmanly cant, and temperance cant, and alluding to the last of these he says, "The Holy Scripture sayeth nothing to the contrary (that is, against drinking ale — a note by the present writer), but rather encourageth people in so doing in th text 'Wine maketh glad the heart of man.'"

There are besides these a few other subjects at which he hurls a most cutting criticism, but, as this part of my remarks has already run to a greater length than was intended, I must bring it to an ending, though far from a proper one, by stating that there is one on which he dwells with greater emphasis than on any other, and that is "Priestcraft", or "machination of Rome", as he more definitely names it; there he says, "To the very last moment of his (that is, Borrow's) life, he will do and

say all that in his power may be to hold up to contempt and execration the priestcraft and practice of Rome." That anti-Puseyism makes an outstanding feature of *Lavengro* and *Romany Rye* George Saintsbury has pointed out in his *Short History of English Literature* (1898).