

During the while that Thomas Mulock was in Ireland, then Scotland, his daughter, Dinah, had attracted attention with her stories published in *Chamber's Magazine* and in May, 1848, the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, in commenting on her progress, remarked that her father, Thomas was once resident in the county:

“Miss Mulock is a young lady who is coming before the public in a very remarkable manner, through the inadequate medium of magazines and other periodical publications. A series of tales, some of which are unrivalled for grace and eloquence of sentiment and execution, have revealed in her a mind of a very uncommon order; and the most striking evidence of its inspiration is, that we know not how else than by the prerogative of genius a young woman should have found those deep spiritual secrets which are ordinarily the issues of long and mournful thought – said to be learnt by the poets in suffering ere they are taught by them in song. Certain it is, that this young lady brings up pearls from deeps which might be supposed to be the haunts of only the experienced diver. She has thus early read – who shall say how – the moral of life. Some angel has silently taught her that, as in all natural harmonies – the flow of the river, the whispering of trees in the moonlight, the sound of the wind as it bows the reeds and of the reeds as they answer, the ripple of the sea on the beach – nay, even in the cheerful singing of birds – there is an undertone of sadness, so is there a soul of melancholy underlying all the things and events of earth. As the shadow that beauty lets fall is dark – as the echo of even glad signs is like a sigh – so by the side of our dearest affections and brightest hopes and best enjoyments walks ever a veiled presence – dimly revealed in the course of years by suffering, but which the young and happy can see only through the deep spirituality of their own natures and by their high capacity for reading truth. But it is to be understood that this young lady's moralities are not the moralities of the sentimentalists. She has no task for the affectations. She sees the smile on the face of life if her heart dictates the sighs: - and *they* only have a true understanding of the one who makes no display or turning away from the other. Her philosophy is quite wholesome. She has the real secret of peace in the exercise of a firm but submissive will, and the sense of duty perceived and obeyed. Her morals are cheerful though there are tears in them – more wholesomely and abidingly cheerful than those which have no such nourishing. In a word, Miss Mulock is a very remarkable accession to the ranks of the lady-writers of England. In the present little work we have her on more practical and (seemingly) commonplace ground; in the best office, nevertheless, in which a woman can be engaged – that of catering for the mind of youth, and preparing it for the healthy reception of those truths which, as they must be learnt someday as a fact, may as well be taught early as a philosophy. This book is for the training of the *very* young – and the normal teaching of ethics is a task which we believe can be entrusted with true success only to a true woman. The nursery of the mind as well as the body seems to be, by natural provision of her especial charge. The range of Miss Mulock's educational powers extends, as we have shown, far beyond such a sphere – but in this too she is a valuable teacher. Her little tale is sound and wholesome, while it is fresh and pleasant. Such books are a more important department of our literature than, in their apparent simplicity, may be always perceived – and this lady will be a very valuable addition to the class of moral teachers for the young who in our day do it credit.”ⁱ

Meanwhile Thomas Mulock's exchange of letters with members of the nobility continued, albeit in a slightly different vein. In June, 1848, Lord Clarendon had written to Lord Hatherton enclosing a copy of a letter from Mulock, in which he sought Clarendon's assistance or influence, to gain employment with the Encumbered Estates Commission, set up to deal with Irish estates rendered insolvent through the great famine of 1845. Clarendon was not prepared to oblige:

“My dear Hatherton,

As we talked of friend Mulock the other night I cannot help troubling you with a specimen of his correspondence. I mean to take your advice and not answer him but if you chance to write to him I would be much obliged if you would suggest how foolish it was to expect employment under the Commission and to be offended at not getting it.

The government has no other appointments to make than those of the Special Commission who - as they will have to deal with all the intricacies of real property and as to the transfer of estates and supersede the Court of Chancery – must be men of professional eminence in their experience and ability in whom the public will confide. Mulock may think himself such a man but I doubt if landowners and encumbrances would share his opinion.

Clarendon.”ⁱⁱ

In November, 1848, Mulock wrote to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland via the *Freeman's Journal* decrying the British legal system in Ireland in its dealing with alleged offenders charged with treasonous activities:

“Is British Law Administered in Ireland?”

To his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland,

My Lord,

In my former letter to your Excellency on the terrible theme of convicted treason in Ireland, I carefully confined myself to such pleas for the extension of mercy towards the unhappy malefactors, as I conscientiously conceived were applicable to their cases, taken in connection with the unsuppressed spirit of political agitation which has for a long period stirred this empire to its foundations. But now that the proceedings of the Special Commission are closed, I feel myself sufficiently freed from judicial prohibition, to take a wider range of comment, remonstrance and argument, and to enter boldly upon the inquiry, whether the judgements recorded at Clonmel CAN be executed without violating every principle of that equal justice which ought to pervade every part of her Majesty's dominions? If it can be clearly shown – and in my impartial opinion, the proof is irrefragable, that the Queen's delinquent subjects in Ireland have been, by operation of unequal law, dealt with differently from criminals charged with the same offences in England and Scotland, then I am entitled to raise the question whether the Legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland, has been anything else than a solemn mockery. I ask you, my lord, as the Queen's vice-regent in Ireland, if the four prisoners convicted of high treason in Tipperary were allowed the same advantages which the British Law would rightfully afford to any alleged traitors triable in Middlesex? This is a plain, intelligible question, which requires a specific answer. I disdain to listen to legal sophistry in a matter so awfully important as the forfeiture of human life on the scaffold. I call upon your Excellency – I call upon the ministers of the Crown – I call upon the Crown itself, to render a response to the great question which I have proposed; and I will dare to add, that unless it can be demonstrated clear as the noon-day, that the culprits now under sentence were in all respects tried in Ireland, as they would have been tried in England, the whole system of imperial law is a nullity in relation to the former country. Is treason a crime of deeper dye in Ireland than in England? I trow not. Then why fence round the alleged traitor in England with legal rights which are denied to a prosecuted party in Ireland? Upon this ground alone I am justified in repudiating the whole of the penal proceedings at Clonmel; for if Ireland possess practically an inherent code of peculiar law, she cannot be said to form an integral part of the British empire. She may be governed as a prostrate province, with mutilated laws and perverted institutions, but all real and truthful participation in the privileges of the British constitution must be scouted even as a supposition by her Majesty's Irish subjects. If Your Excellency should condescend to reply to me as you have done to deputations, by referring to the long course of evil legislation in and against Ireland, I would respectfully remark that a period of eighteen years since the Union has been reasonably sufficient to equalise all the laws for the conservation of the public peace, and of regal rule. If this has not been done, in the name of justice do it now; and I invoke the same eternal justice (not mere money) to protect from immediate immolation the wretched men who have been arraigned for assailing the Queen's crown, but who have not been tried according to the laws of her realm. In making these earnest appeals, my loyalty and love of order cannot for a moment be questioned. From the moment that sedition raised its front in Ireland I besought the government to put forth the rightful energy of the law in repressing the undisguised violence of the mischievous demagogues. Publicly and privately I expressed to your Excellency my fearlessness that disaffection would gain strength from the unaccountable laxity of the executive, who, as it appeared to me, were permitting sedition to swell into treason. I foresaw that indecision on the part of rulers would give a false confidence to revolters, and I implored your Excellency to resort to martial law rather than rebellion should be engendered by confederations and clubs. But I well know that all governments are lawyer-ridden, and that instead of acting upon the high principles of a wise, generous and provident policy, they must truckle to some legal pedagogue, lynx-eyed in peering out technical trivialities, but stone-blind to the glories of truth, justice and comprehensive charity; nor do I venture to cherish a hope for nations, until more lawyers are driven from the council-board of sovereigns, and relegated to their proper forensic functions, totally apart from a statesman's responsibilities. The crown's lawyers' law is, generally speaking, without righteousness, and lenity without clemency, and woe-betide the land where the rulers are ruled by black-letter pedants, themselves enslaved by paltry precedents and strained analogies! If I felt it necessary to prove these hardy propositions, I should atonce resort to the recent proceedings in the court-house of Clonmel. Your Excellency enjoys the gift of a luminous and manly understanding, un-vitiated by legal quibbling, and I ask you to exercise that understanding in taking to pieces the blundering chaotic contexture of the state prosecutions. The prisoners were to be tried for a week's insurrectionary wickedness in Tipperary – the time and place being distinctly declared on the respective indictments. Who but a lawyer, lost to commonsense, would seek to prove an outbreak in Tipperary by means of speeches uttered months before by frantic orators in Dublin? The mothers of those mischievous speeches were amenable under a special law manufactured for the purpose; their sedition was either winked at, or ineffectually prosecuted from the fatuity of the temporary law, and then at the suited season, spoken sedition in one locality, is employed to eke out the charge of actual treason in another quarter, and at another period. Had I been a juryman to whom this piebald evidence was presented, I should have scattered to the winds every tittle of every speech thus made to crutch up a charge of treasonable acts. Seditious speeches I have no doubt they were, and as such worthy of condign punishment; but to frame a special statute to put down seditious speechifiers, to

refrain from or fail in prosecuting them, and then to endeavour to cobble condemnation out of neglected sedition, and partly proved treason, is a monstrous combination that shocks the moral sense of mankind. I protest, my lord, that I would infinitely prefer drum-head courts martial, and their stern simplicity, to those august displays of delusion by which truth is so painfully perverted. The sorest oppression under the sun is where the forms of law are associated with the denial of justice. The naked tyranny of the vengeful sword tells its plain tale of terror; but the complex persecution of fraudulent law agonises society without measure and without end.

It would be preposterous on my part to condescend to clear myself from the possible reproach of sympathising in the slightest degree with the Irish insurgents – I loathe their principles – I denounce their designs – and I rejoice that their evil attempts were soon and signally frustrated. But I hold that even the most culpable of men cannot be justly convicted if they have not been justly tried. Delinquent as they may be in a moral view – still their legal guilt must be proved with legal exactitude – or all the righteous purposes of law are perniciously made void.

In common with every loyal and devoted subject of her Majesty, I heartily approved of the Special Commission which your Excellency thought proper to issue – but I more than dread that the result will be far from establishing a stronger national sense of the impartial administration of the law. What law may now form a painful point of inquiry? Is it British law in its dignity and liberal watchfulness for the safety of the subject when accused by the Crown? – or is it the remnants of a base and cruel code for a conquered country – whose severities survive that ostensible union which professed to bind both islands with the golden bands of equal justice and impartial equity? ”ⁱⁱⁱ

Confirming Mulock’s presence in Scotland, the *Staffordshire Advertiser*, in January 1849, reproduced a letter that Thomas Mulock had written as a tribute to the late Earl Talbot, a noted Staffordshire magistrate, which had been published in the *Edinburgh Witness*:

*“There is a melancholy gratification in dwelling, however briefly and imperfectly, on the memory of departed worth, and we render some advantages to posterity when we record the services of distinguished men who have been employed, each in his department of usefulness, in benefiting the generation to which they belonged. Earl Talbot, whose decease was recently mentioned in this journal, was a nobleman who cannot be suffered to pass away without a tribute of honourable memorial. He was of the true stock of English aristocracy, and he carried with him through life the characteristic qualities of a lofty lineage. Frank, liberal, dignified, and affable, he had that easy conscientiousness of rank which conduces to make a position in the British peerage at once eminent, and yet free from invidiousness. In short, Earl Talbot was a **gentleman** born to be the inheritor of a noble name. His Lord Lieutenancy in Ireland, though stigmatised by politicians opposed to the party to which he belonged, was marked with good sense and good intention; for being himself a sound, practical and prosperous agriculturist, he sought anxiously to diffuse an improved system of farming throughout that fertile, yet neglected and backward country. Often we have heard him dilate, with a cultivator’s zeal, on the amazing capabilities of the Irish soil; and deplore the delusions which, under the guise of patriotism, beguiled Irishmen from the sphere of profitable duties to the region of excited and extravagant expectations, never to be fulfilled. During the last thirty years, Earl Talbot resided constantly in Staffordshire, with the exception of those periods which drew him to Scotland, in consequence of his daughter’s inter-marriage with the Marquis of Lothian.”^{iv}*

There is no indication as to why Thomas Mulock had travelled as far afield as he did from the London that he once seemed to have loved; perhaps he sought to distance himself from potential litigants in the English legal system when Ireland, his place of birth, might have appealed as a temporary refuge; but then to Scotland? Having been in Ireland during the great potato famine, a blight that also embraced the produce of many areas of Scotland, his investigative mind - fired by a need to find financial security - may have deemed it a potentially lucrative opportunity. Journey through Sutherland and Caithness he did and in November, 1848, arrived at Inverness. During the time he was in Scotland Mulock contributed articles on Irish affairs to the *Edinburgh Witness*, but these were said to have given offence to Fox Maule (later Lord Panmure and Earl of Dalhousie), and through Maule’s influence were discontinued by the newspaper! But all the while he was there Mulock absorbed details concerning the Highlands and the people and of the difficulties they had experienced.

Early in February 1849, Mulock sent a copy of a letter he intended for publication in *The Scotsman*, to the Duke of Sutherland: it gave irritation to the Duke and annoyance to members of his staff:

“The Duke of Sutherland and the Highland Destitution Committee:

Sir,

The recent report of the Committee of Management of the above-named association having been obligingly placed in my hands by Mr. W. F. Skene, I have perused that publication, not only with an interest commensurate with my deep sympathy for Scottish sufferers, but also with a sharpness of scrutiny which I owe to my close enquiries into the sinister subject of Destitution in Ireland. It is not my present intention to review the general statements, and suggestions put forward by the Committee, but there is one theme of such astounding peculiarity that I do not hesitate to call public attention to it through the impartial medium of your journal.

It appears from the report (pp 9 and 14) that no less a personage than the Duke of Sutherland has been a successful suitor to the Highlands Destitution Committee for the sum of three thousand, five hundred pounds to be appropriated out of a charitable fund raised by public subscription. The grounds on which this large grant has been allocated to his Grace simply an averment made by Mr. Lock that the Duke of Sutherland (whose bounty during the two last years of comparative famine in the Western and Northern parts of his Scottish Estates was such as became a nobleman of his princely possessions) is now reduced to the hard necessity of asking aid for the sustenance of his own poor – and moreover for the improvement of his own property, at the cost of generous subscribers to a compassionate fund! It is true that Mr. Lock with somewhat questionable good taste reminds us that his noble employer (of agents) formerly subscribed one thousand pounds to the General Fund, but under existing circumstances the reminiscence only serves to show us that the Duke of Sutherland laid out his money to more than ordinary advantage since a single thousand fructified into three.

Now Sir, as I have the hardihood to assert that this arrangement made with the Duke of Sutherland is utterly at variance with the legitimate purposes of the Highland Destitution Fund, is thereby subversive of the confidence reposed in the managers of public contributions for charitable objects is unfair towards the poor and discreditable to the Ducal proprietor of Sutherland. I beg you will bear with me while I endeavour with all attainable brevity to substantiate these proposition.

I assume as an incontrovertible certainty that the Highland Destitution Fund, if properly administered, is for the succour of persons rendered indigent, and helpless in consequence of temporary calamities affecting large portions of a generally poor population. It was in behalf of such that the public sympathy was awakened, and that contributions poured in from private benevolence in order to constitute a public fund. But judging from the system now pursued by the Committee, it strikes me that they are under the delusion that the funds confided to them are to be applied to relieve the rich, instead of relieving the poor. Their vaunted plan of ‘co-operating with the proprietors’ amounts merely to the fact that certain nobleman and gentlemen enter into a profitable partnership with the Committee whereby the estates of the former are to be permanently improved at the expense of subscribers to a charity; examine the case of the Duke of Sutherland. His Grace proposes to change places with the Highland Committee. He is to avert the destitution of the poor Sutherlanders, while the Destitution Committee, flinging aside their proper and indeed exclusive function betake themselves to the formation of a road bisecting ‘His Grace’s Territory’ in the most favourable direction (Mr. Lock’s own words) and thus conferring a durable benefit on Gower generations yet unborn. Mr. Lock goes on to prove the vast utility of the road (planned by himself, and to be executed by the Committee) designed to stretch “from Inchnadamph in Assyut to the boundary of the county of Caithness.” That good roads extending inter-communication between distant districts, are admirable modes of improvement I concede to the uttermost – but of all the parties likely to be benefitted by the proposed road, who, and where posterity will reap such ample advantages as the Duke of Sutherland and his successors? Therefore I presume to say let the Duke of Sutherland employ his own staff of engineers, surveyors, &c., employ his own people in doing his own work – and construct roads on his own vast estates without sullyng his own coronet by doffing it to obtain a degrading dole out of a public purse for the proposed relief of the Destitute! And I would add, let the Destitution Committee conscientiously confine themselves to those objects for which the money now in their hands was originally raised, instead of embarking in schemes which bear an aspect of jobbery, by departing from the characteristic simplicity, and straightforwardness which should pervade the acts of men strictly discharging a great public trust.

I must honestly avoid any persuasion (challenged by Mr. Lock’s supplicating letter) that the noble owner of the most magnificent of all Metropolitan mansions, the splendid augments of Trentham – the liberal if not lavish renovator of Dunrobin – the proprietor of so many estates in England and Scotland might contrive to retrench in some suitable quarter, so as to avoid being indebted to the Highland Destitution Committee for an expenditure of £3,500 on road making which will eventually swell his Grace’s rent roll.”

Thomas Mulock.”

The Duke sought advice from his agent in a letter dated 5th March:

“You may have heard of the writer Mr. Mulock, he had once some situation in Canning’s office (Jackson believes pretended to be his son) and once used to lecture at Newcastle or Potteries and write in Staffordshire papers and last year wrote about Irish affairs – and now it seems has taken to Scotland. I also enclose a letter I have written to him. His is dated 27th February they had foolishly kept it in London and received with others in a box on Monday. Therefore the sooner my letter is sent to him the better. I have not kept a copy of the statement to the *Scotsman* – only of his short letter to me and of mine to him. I suppose his to *Scotsman* and Mr. Keane’s should be returned to him with mine.”^{vi}

There was then another note from the Duke, of the same date:

“You understand that I send my letter to Mr. Mulock for you to judge if you see anything you think had better not be said pray tell me without hesitation.”^{vii}

Two days later the Duke had taken the advice that was given him:

“I have re-written my letter to Mr. Mulock taking your suggestion as to vindicating the Commission and omitting whatever might have a resemblance of deprecating – but I must continue to claim the suggestion of co-operation was raised.”^{viii}

Later the same day came another note from the Duke:

“I forgot to say today that I received the copy of McIvers letter about the distress of the people and their call for employment and food, which you had shown me before and which occasioned the answer to which you also allude as having had copied, which I did not however find, but I think I remember the whole of it. You allowed him to expect a certain amount for their relief, and authorised his beginning the work of the road, but I did not see how I could use these in any way in answering Mr. Mulock as his argument was not one of any doubt as to *the wants of the people* but as to the proper quarter for their relief to proceed from, which he states is from *me*. McIver says they apply for work but I cannot give it them because I am not allowed. I have no friends. Mulock says the landlord is a rich man has estates, etc., elsewhere, and ought to support them. If they are in distress and want you are to blame and are. But to have money given *to you* to assist those dependent on you, which money is subscribed for the poor who have no resource. Therefore I thought it better to state their poverty and distress generally. I enclose copy of the letter.”^{ix}

The Duke was soon again in touch with his agent, Lock, on the subject of Mulock:

“I have read the copy of your answer to McIver, and his letter to Mr. Skene you had not mentioned. And as Mr. Mulock’s attack was chiefly on me and it was in regard to my answer to him that you wrote I thought you so intended it. I think the Committee have already their full answer and defence in their report. They were applied to on account of distress and prospect of destitution. They sent to inquire and their inspector satisfied them this was the case and they then as shown here gave assistance they also express their regret that they were called on to do so as I had stated that though I had refrained from having recourse to them for two years I was now obliged to apply for their aid.”^x

The following day another letter was sent dealing with the subject:

“I had yesterday a letter from Mr. Mulock which I enclose in a separate note in case you like my note to go to Mr. Keane with Mr. M’s letter. If so you had better to save time forwarding both at once to Mr. S. I have not kept a copy of Mr. M’s.”^{xi}

William Skene, the secretary of the Highlands Destitution Committee, in Edinburgh, writing to James Lock, the Duke of Sutherland’s agent on the 14th March 1849, in respect of reports of the Committee, commented:

“This Mr. Mulock is a thorough quack but I do not think will now publish. I told him to study the whole system and deal with it in the abstract and not to separate out individual cases for attack. I am sorry that he succeeded in drawing the Duke in to a correspondence with him which I daresay was his main object. It seems to me a strange step to send his Grace such a letter as he had written and he hardly deserved the courtesy with which it was received.”^{xii}

The following week, in the postscript of a letter of introduction for his brother, James, Skene in writing to Lock, referred to the reports of the Committee that had been sent on, adding:

“I had a visit from Mr. Mulock who is not to publish.”^{xiii}

During September, 1849, letters that Mulock had written dealing with the Highland Clearances – inevitably associated with the estates of the Duke of Sutherland and Lord Macdonald – began to appear in the *Inverness Advertiser*. Obviously smarting at the attacks but consoling himself that most would understand his position, Sutherland in writing to Dr. McKenzie commented:

“With regard to Mulock his statements will be disregarded by those whose opinions are valuable – no doubt evil will be produced in the hands of those who are disposed to take the poison – but these are few and the most ignorant.”^{xiv}

Nevertheless there was still some concern about Mulock’s views and he appears to have continued to engage the Duke in correspondence. Lock, the Duke’s agent, writing to D. M. Smith, esquire on December 13th 1849, expressed some contempt about Mulock’s effort:

“The Duke showed me yesterday a large rigmarole from Mr. Mulock, the only piece of which that attracted my attention was that towards the coracles he says that he may possibly present ideas showing how the prosperity of Sutherland may be restored. It so happens that among these things he does suggest granting leases.”^{xv}

Letters about the ‘Clearances’ had poured from Mulock’s pen when, due to the poor health of the owner of the newspaper, Mulock was asked to assume the interim management of the *Inverness Advertiser*. In the January of 1850, however, an article that Mulock had written concerning the life of the late Dr. Thomas Chalmers - which included comments critical of that learned gentleman - led McCosh, the paper’s proprietor, to seek its withdrawal. Mulock, ever true to himself and his principles, refused declaring:

‘As no objection had been raised against the truth, soundness or style of the article, he could not be a party to its withdrawal on the allegation that some Free Church friends objected to the review of a work with fairness and candour!’^{xvi}

Relationships were now soured and shortly after this McCosh died when an attempt was made by friends and relatives of the deceased to remove Mulock as editor; but he stood firm refusing to surrender his position except to the legal representatives of the late proprietor; a compromise was then reached, with Mulock remaining in editorial charge while another man, George Francis, took over the general management.

Meanwhile in England litigation concerning the Direct London to Manchester Railway Line, ‘the Remington Line’, was in progress and in the April of 1849 a shareholder in the original concern succeeded in his appeal before the Lord Chancellor in the Queen’s Bench, against a decision in a lower court with the effect that the original board could be held liable for loss or damages. Was this to have some disadvantageous outcome for Thomas Mulock?^{xvii} A petition for winding up the Direct London and Manchester Railway Company was then presented to the Lord Chancellor on the 21st April 1849.^{xviii}

All went well for Mulock until in April, 1850, the McCosh family gave up their interest in the newspaper when the new proprietor(s) saw to it that Mulock was eased out of his situation, though retained as a contributor. This last aspect of his relationship with the paper did not last long; there was editorial interference with his submissions leading him to write to the rival *Inverness Courier* addressing a letter to the readers of the *Advertiser*:

‘Mr. Mulock is under the painful necessity of publishing the following letter in order to explain the grounds upon which he is constrained to seek some other medium for his communications upon Highland subjects than the Inverness Advertiser:

To George Francis, esquire,

Sir, on looking over the Advertiser this morning, I find, to my great surprise and dissatisfaction, that, after my editorial articles had been carefully revised last night for publication, the unwarrantable liberty has been taken of mutilating and garbling my writings for which I was emphatically responsible. In the earlier part of the evening you called upon me with the view of earnestly entreating the aid of my future communications on subjects connected with the welfare of the Highlands, where the Advertiser chiefly circulates. But I must now inform you that it will be impossible for me to afford any countenance or support to a journal whose proprietor should arbitrarily and disingenuously suppress truths and facts to sub-serve his personal purposes. My connection with the Inverness Advertiser is more than editorially closed, which I shall publicly notify.

Thomas Mulock.^{xix}

Mulock now set forth his views on Irish matters and addressed two letters to the Earl of Clarendon, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, on the 'Disenthralment of Incurably Involved Irish Estates.' In the first, dated 1st May 1849, Mulock made valid and reasoned proposals concerning a measure that was to be put to Parliament to deal with the agricultural problems in Ireland, beginning:

"My Lord,

So many vague and impracticable projects for the amelioration of Ireland are now glaringly set forth in and out of Parliament, that I should feel reluctant to place myself among the propounders of plans, if I did not cherish a truthful confidence in the general soundness of my views."

In the second letter, dated 8th June 1849, Mulock applauded the government bill on matters that had then passed through the House (Irish Encumbered Estates), taking the opportunity to point out that so much of what had been passed was what he had put forward, so that he could almost claim to have inspired the government's decision to proceed with these measures.^{xx}

Writing from 44, Cumberland Street, Edinburgh, Mulock next examined the contrast in relief afforded to the poor in Scotland as compared to Ireland:

"Contrasted Cases of Ireland and Scotland in Regard to the Relief of Destitution

In connection with an effort which I made to draw the public attention here to the vastness of the mortality presently prevailing in the west and south of Ireland from proved want of food, I felt the propriety and expediency of applying to the Highland Destitution Board, to furnish me with information on the following point, viz. Whether within the range of their relief operations any cases of death had ever been authentically made known to them? I beg to send you the inclosed letter which I have received from the board's efficient secretary, Mr. Skene, and you will perceive, with satisfaction, so far as relates to Scotland, and with shame and grief when pondering on the famine horrors of Ireland, that no deaths from starvation have occurred in this country.

*It would be wholly beside my purpose to enter upon a criminating review of all the errors and mistakes, both in principle and practice, committed by the Irish government and people with reference to the deplorable destitution which, necessarily resulted from the failure of the potato. In your columns I frequently censured the whole system of government relief, as being void of **prospective** wisdom, for instead of the public funds being employed in corn-cropping the land (say with bere, or rye, as suitable substitutes for the loss of **the poor man's food**, the labour of the peasants was lavished upon wretched road-making, whilst the precious opportunity was neglected of turning even calamity to account, by universally improving the system of agriculture, and, at the same time, securing the subsistence for the people. To that fatal neglect may chiefly be ascribed the present awful destruction of the peasant population, and year after year the like cause will produce the like effect.*

*But my object is to deal with the present distress, so as to ensure, under the providence of God, the salvation of life in Ireland. I am lost in astonishment when I consider not merely the supineness of the legislature, but the language used in parliament with respect to Irish destitution – their words of bitterness are worse than their acts of niggardliness. Is it not a fact, proved by their own Blue Books, that thousands upon thousands **must** die of starvation in Ireland if the government be not empowered to apply imperial resources to stay the progress of an immense calamity, but which resources are withheld, and the stern refusal accompanied with taunts and reproaches? The appalling destitution of a portion of the Irish people, coupled with the downright denial of efficient relief on the part of parliament, is a disgrace to Christian civilisation. I boldly avow my belief that the remotest barbarism cannot supply a darker shade of cruelty than is to be found in some of the debates of our refined senators, babbling against the pettiest succours, and raving against a futile rate in aid, whilst every post comes laden with bills of mortality – the dreadful records of **DEATH FROM DESTITUTION**.*

My view is that the minister in his place in parliament should instantly make (what he has never yet made), a full exposition, derived from official information of the horrible state of parts of Ireland, simply from the wants of means to buy food, and from the total inefficiency of the poor law in certain distressed districts. Nay, if the usages of parliament permit, I should say that the exigency of the case would justify Lord John Russell in coming down with a royal message declaratory of our gracious sovereign's compassionate considerations for the sufferings of her Irish subjects. Such a demonstration on the part of the crown would awaken the dormant sympathies of her parliament and her people, and the British annals would be unstained with further revolting records of starvation in the midst of plenty.

The Queen's government are as welcome to this suggestion as they were to my plan for the 'Disenthralment of Incurably Involved Irish Estates,' which was fortunately anterior to their excellent bill. I earnestly hope they will pay as much attention to my entreaties in favour of LIFE, as to my hints regarding property.

To this Mulock received the following reply from the Highland Destitution Committee:

"I am favoured with yours of the 28th May, and in reply I beg to inform you that no authenticated case of death by starvation has been made known to the committee during the course of their administration of relief.

In the seventh report for 1847, published by them on 30th September of that year, they state that "there has been no district in which the destitution has not been effectually met – no place in which the direct effects of want reached the length of death before the aid held out by the board was extended to it," and their published statement has since remained unchallenged and un-impugned.

In 1848 an attempt was made to fasten a charge against the committee of allowing a death by starvation to take place in Skye, but this charge was disproved on inquiry. You will find the particulars in the appendix ix to the first report for 1848, page 65.

With this exception, I never heard of any case being even alleged to have occurred.
William F. Skene, Secretary.

There was then further criticism for the British in Mulock's next contribution, another letter addressed to the Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Clarendon:

"Is the Queen's Government Upholding Lawlessness in Ireland?"

*"As I have on many occasions given my public and private testimony to the ability and judgment with which your vice-regal career has been eminently marked, it is with no slight degree of regret and disappointment that I find myself constrained to censure the conduct of your Excellency's Government in relation to the recent sanguinary proceedings near Castlewella. Fully aware of the powers ordinary and extraordinary, with which the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland is entrusted for the purpose of conserving the public peace – that by his special authority whole districts may be proclaimed, and the entire population disarmed – I cannot but express my astonishment that your Excellency, when, informed I presume as you must have been, that **armed** party processions were about to take place in localities formerly stained with the bloody strife of contending factions, should not have peremptorily prohibited those dangerous and unlawful assemblages. It was not the possible forbearance of rival religionists, to the amicable interposition of the priesthood, or to the mere martial presence of an imposing military force; that the presiding guardianship of public order was confided. It was upon your Excellency alone that this serious responsibility rested, and I am bound in fairness and impartiality to declare that you have not apparently acted as became your high position. Instead of issuing a proclamation interdicting processions which (if I read the statutes aright) the law condemns, your Excellency appears to have confined yourself to authorising certain military arrangements, which had the air of giving gorgeousness and even sanction to the procession in question. I have perused with the closest attention the report of the evidence drawn forth by the inquest on the bodies of the persons killed at Maghermayo, and my conclusion is irresistible that a culpable want of prudent energy on the part of the executive led to the fatal results so much to be deplored. The interference of the Government appears to have consisted in ordering a force of cavalry, infantry, and constabulary to repair to a certain place called Dolly's-brae, and there to take up a position which should enable them to **protect** the permeating march of multitudes of processionists, "armed to the teeth," as Major Wilkinson technically described them; covering the neighbouring hills adverse multitudes, also armed, but not in such regular array as the Orange belligerents. A chance shot seemed to have been sufficient signal for fight, and Orangemen, Ribbonmen, her Majesty's troops and constabulary force engage in a headlong melee, which did not terminate until lives were lost, and in the sequel houses burnt down by infuriated Orange factionists.*

Now, my lord, be the verdict of the coroner's jury what it may, I hold that all those evil consequences might have been averted by a precautionary proclamation from your Excellency, warning the intended processionists of the illegality of their announced proceedings, and calling upon them to desist from a vain and irritating display of party strength. If, encouraged by an invitation to Tullymore Park the misguided multitudes had still resolved to brave the authorities, it would then, I conceive, have been the bounden duty of your Excellency to secure the dispersion of those disturbers of the public peace, whether Orangemen or Ribbonmen, by means of the forces placed at the disposal of the local authorities. No such proclamation was issued – no notification even was given that the processions were disapproved of – and it comes clearly out in evidence that a troop of the Queen's Dragoons served in a sort of vanguard

to the procession, thus palpably affording countenance to the belief on one side of impunity – on the other of hostility. I will not for a moment suppose that your Excellency had any leaning to the one faction more than the other – but I must avow my sorrow and surprise that your Excellency did not at once adopt the decisive and dignified course of nipping this mischief in the bud by publicly interdicting all unlawful assemblages on the twelfth of July. I see more and more that what Ireland needs is firm and impartial rule – doing justice to all without fear or favour. Until this shall be the permanent principle of righteous government, I cherish no hope for nations. Statesmen may consult, legislators may contrive, and soldiers may wield the sword; but tranquillity cannot be maintained In Ireland or in any other country except by satisfying man’s minds that equal justice is shewn towards the whole community.”^{xxi}

Involving himself in the general community, while in Edinburgh Mulock attended the annual presentations at a college for young ladies:

“Thomas Mulock, Esq., a literary gentleman from England, rose to give expression to his approval of the mode of instruction pursued in this institution and the principle on which it was managed. He had made himself thoroughly conversant with its merits; he had attended on the days of examination, and he had himself subjected one of the classes to a close questioning. His conclusions were, that the system of teaching was admirable in its results, and the principle of an association of teachers as directors of such schools, he considered to be highly beneficial. He went at length into the comparative merits of the Scotch and English modes of education, and concluded a most elaborate address by passing a high eulogium on the Scotch system of tuition.”^{xxii}

In August, 1849, Queen Victoria visited Ireland: Thomas Mulock welcomed the news of her visit with a public letter and courteous advice and the editor of the *Freeman* happily published it:

“To the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland:

May it Please Your Majesty,

As it was my fortune to suggest to the Earl of Clarendon so far back as the 5th of May last, that your Majesty should be entreated to visit your Irish dominions, I, although one of the humblest of your Majesty’s Irish subjects, hasten to congratulate my country on the auspicious arrival of a beloved sovereign in a land hitherto little blest with the benignant influence of royalty.

*But as I used the freedom of offering one suggestion to the Earl of Clarendon bearing on your Majesty’s visit to Ireland, *I now take the greater liberty of addressing myself to Lord Clarendon’s monarch and mine.*

It is, I believe, customary on Coronation days (may the next be far distant!) to cause royal largesse to be profusely distributed among the witnesses of that solemn and gorgeous pageant. Would it not add graciousness to the splendour of your Majesty’s advent to Ireland, if a special largesse proceeding from the royal bounty, and directed by the royal command, were, with timely benevolence, distributed among your Majesty’s subjects, who are known to be perishing from absolute want of food in some distressed districts of the west and south of Ireland?

Which is humbly submitted by Thomas Mulock.^{xxiii}

(*Mulock refers to the *Freeman Journal* of 26th July 1849, ‘Letter to Lord Clarendon on her Majesty’s visit to Ireland.’)

Now pursuing what appears to be an attempt to become involved in Scottish life, Mulock produced ‘*The Vindicated Value of Scottish Education – being a series of articles reprinted from the Inverness Courier.*’ This was published by C. Keith at Inverness and appeared in the *Scotsman* on the 4th May 1850.

It was in this year that Dinah, Mulock’s daughter, had her first novel, ‘The Ogilvies,’ published; it was a success and gained welcome financial remuneration for her as well as adding to her growing reputation. Her second novel, ‘Clive’ was published in 1850.^{xxiv}

Mulock remained active in Scotland until later in the year and attended a meeting of the Inverness Mechanics Institute early in the April when he was mentioned as being amongst a group of people seeking to get the Institute revived.^{xxv}

Mulock then published in book form the many articles that he had written for the *Inverness Advertiser*, under the title, ‘The Western Highlands and Islands of Scotland considered, with reference to Proprietors and People,’ dealing with Lord Macdonald’s evictions at Sollan, Uist, and of those of the Duke of Sutherland, stressing the situation of the

Golspie fishermen, and claiming that the Duke had misused the Charitable Destitute Fund that had been set up to assist in the development of the area. The comments contained in these letters were said to have led the Duke of Sutherland, through his agent, to buy up all available copies as a means of taking the book out of circulation, not caring to have the facts about the depopulation of the counties that had taken place during his father's lifetime, publicised.^{xxvi} The articles on the 'Clearances' contained logical argument and opinion and are sufficiently extensive to warrant a separate assessment as distinct from inclusion amongst these notes; sufficient to say that as with any political comment, they inevitably upset somebody, somewhere. At a later date one author wrote: 'The scale and intensity of publicity about the Highland Clearances of 1853-1854 was unprecedented. It owed much to the vigour of journalists in the North, who included the vociferous but erratic Thomas Mulock.'^{xxvii}

"Speedily will be Published, by C. Keith, 21, Church Street, Inverness:

Mr. Mulock's letters and Editorial articles on THE STATE OF THE HIGHLANDS AND WESTERN ISLES; reprinted from the Inverness Advertiser, to which will be appended an Argument showing the absolute necessity of abolishing every vestige of the LAW OF ENTAIL as it operates in Scotland.

C. Keith will feel obliged to parties residing in the country to notify their orders for the publication, in order to regulate the number of the impression.

Lord Macdonald's evictions – the Sollas sufferers

Sutherland – burnings – clearances – sheep farming system – failure and proposed retrieval – the Good Duke"

Caithness – Maladministration – of the Scottish Poor Law

Glenelg – Lochalah – Mr. Baillie – Mr. Lillingstone – South Uist and Barra – Colonel Gordon

The Highland Destitution Relief Board – their officers – operations and results

Articles relating to the Agricultural Interest – Protection and Free Trade – Landlords and Tenants

Literary Articles – Dr. Chalmers – Lord Jeffrey – Thomas Carlyle – The Cameronians – The Edinburgh and Quarterly Review

Brief Argument on the Necessity of Abolishing the Law of Entail, as it operates in Scotland

Appendix of Articles on the Proposed Malversation of the Mackintosh Bequest

C. Keith has just received a fresh supply of Mr. Mulock's *Vindicated Value of Scottish Education* – price sixpence."^{xxviii}

A review of this book given at a little later date, proved favourable, though whether the landed gentry were quite as amenable to it might be questionable:

"This is an entertaining as well as very instructive volume. The composition is animated, elastic, and full of point; and the information it embodies regarding the state of the Highland's is the result of the author's personal observation, and peculiarly valuable on that account. Many of the subjects discussed are of enduring interest, and they are all important, and treated with fearlessness and intelligence. If Mr. Mulock has any faults as a journalist – and we suppose, though dogmatic enough sometimes, he does not claim infallibility – lack of courage is not one of them. When he falls upon the track of a giant grievance, he follows it pertinaciously, and having found it, encounters it. Yet there is not a shade of malignity displayed by him in these onslaughts. His object is to expose, and if possible annihilate the social evils he encounters, but not to revel in unnecessary personalities or 'railing accusations.' The wholesale ejections from Sutherlandshire form one of the chief themes that occupy the author's attention."^{xxix}

At the end of September, 1850, Mulock attended a meeting concerning poor relief representations to be heard before the Parochial Board of Inverness; Mulock made a short statement of the grievances of appellants – to do with the assessment of income - but it was agreed that C. Stewart, a solicitor, should appear before the board to state the case of the men concerned. It made no difference, however, as the Reverend Clark, president of the Board, refused to hear Stewart, requiring that each appellant should appear in person and state the grounds of appeal without argument!^{xxx}

The Inverness Mechanics Institute (noticed above) was now re-established and the management committee had agreed that Mulock should deliver a lecture to the member, the subject of which was 'What Branches of Knowledge should be Specially Cultivated by the Industrial Classes?' and was to be given on the 5th December, 1850.^{xxxi}

At the end of December, 1850, Mulock had written a critical appraisal on destitution in Skye and matters to do with the estate of Macleod of Macleod, an article that had been published in the *Northern Ensign*. Having had this brought to his attention, Macleod of Macleod replied with a rebuff:

“If it affords Mr. Mulock any pleasure to indulge in personal invective, I shall not stay the abusive torrent. It can be a subject of little interest to your readers, and wholly beside the real question, to discuss any former schemes of mine, whether successful or otherwise, for improving the postal and other communications between the Isle of Skye and the capital of the Highlands, or for encouraging fishing, or for establishing tile-yards. I always observe that personal abuse is estimated by the public at its just value, and the cause must be a bad one that requires it.

I cannot, however, permit Mr. Mulock to assert of me, as respects my treatment of the people, that which is wholly false, without contradicting it, lest it might be supposed true, from being permitted to pass unnoticed. During the period the Macleod estates were under my management, it is well known to all my friends and neighbours in Skye, that, whatever my faults may be, I never turned away a poor man from them. I was once of Mr. Mulock’s opinion, that the land could be cultivated advantageously, and all the money I could obtain on a strictly entailed estate was devoted for many years to the employment of the people in tilling and improving land. I not only did this very largely but I went so far as to break down the beautiful and extended farm of Waterstein in to small holdings. Whether I acted wisely, in so doing, I leave to those to say who now collect the rents; but I believe I am justified in stating that the people I placed on those holdings, under most favourable circumstances, from the vicinity of an excellent fishing station, and the fertility of the soil, are not in a better condition now than any of their neighbours. My experience, in short, leads me to believe that if the present population had the land amongst them at its present rental, or less, they would never become an independent, comfortable people, because the climate is against them; and without potatoes, food can now, and always, be purchased cheaper than it can be grown. I am of opinion that the change which naturally follows the discovery of a more profitable management has been retarded by the reluctance of the old proprietors to deal harshly by their poor dependents; and as properties fall out of the hands of those whose ties to the people are of centuries duration, the change I speak of will become, I may say *has* become, more rapid. It is no personal interest of my own (for I have none now) that leads me to urge a people’s emigration. I think their transfer to a richer soil, a better climate, and a younger and more vigorous community, would effect an amelioration of their physical and moral condition; and I leave the public to judge, whether these are the opinions of the “subtle tyrannical landlord,” or the real well-wisher of the people.

Macleod of Macleod.”

Shortly afterwards Mulock suffered another smarting attack, this time from the agent of the Royal Patriotic and Industrial Society who writing from London ridiculed Mulock’s presentation of data and asserted:

“While some persons, unhappily afflicted, are capable of thinking correctly, and writing lucidly, on various subjects, it is well-known that the class recognised as monomaniacs betray their malady as soon as the particular subject of their mental hallucination is introduced. With such persons, and under such circumstances, the most glaring evidence is in vain, and truths, written as it were with a sunbeam, are to them not only invisible, but their existence is confidently denied. I have been led to make these remarks, in consequence of the recent and unfounded statements of Mr. Thomas Mulock, with regard to the Royal Patriotic Society, and of myself, its humble secretary. As Mr. Mulock seems to be the presiding genius of the publication in which his statements appeared, I cannot anticipate anything like such an amount of space for my reply as the circumstances warrant; I am, therefore, induced to ask the favour of your affording me an opportunity of defending an institution to which you, like many of your contemporaries, have contributed your encouragement, and your aid. As regards Mr. Mulock’s attack upon myself, I shall say nothing further than that his charge of being “*the bustling factotum*” of the institution, is itself an admission that I have not eaten the *crust* of idleness. I am aware that your contemporary the *Witness* stated publicly months ago, that this same Mr. Mulock had been for some time confined in a lunatic asylum, an assertion which never appears to have been contradicted even by the party himself. Knowing that his hallucination consists in considering himself *the patriot*, not only for all of Ireland, but for the United Kingdom, and of the Highlands in particular, I am not surprised at his *mania* betraying itself in the most extravagant manner, and inducing him not only to deny palpable facts, but to mistake even plain figures which a schoolboy would be guiltless of misquoting, when the Royal patriotic Society, with its quiet but efficient labours, cast his utterly self-assumed and mischievous intervention into the shade, of which it is alone worthy.

Mr. Mulock has wandered up and down the country, not to make useful suggestions for the amelioration of the condition of the poor – not to extend the olive branch of peace between proprietor and people, by showing how they become mutually useful – but simply to exasperate the one against the other, and to make both, if it were possible, the cat’s paw to the meretricious newspaper popularity he covets – a popularity which can only extend among parties to whom the information afforded by the *Witness* has not reached.

It is only as regards such persons that I feel it necessary briefly to comment upon Mr. Mulock’s misstatements, by observing that, although the meeting at Inverness regarding Highlands Destitution was hastily summoned, it was,

nevertheless, attended by ministers of various denominations, including the Established, the Free Church, the United Presbyterian, and the Independent, and by a number of the municipal, legal and influential inhabitants of Inverness, who did respond to that invitation in a manner which the objector may be proud of when he is favoured with such a gathering, unless, indeed, it be on the occasion of his final exit from Inverness to his classic region of the Potteries; to edit a journal in *Morningside*, or anywhere else, when we promise, from what we heard respecting him, if due notice be given, a greater and a more joyful *reunion* of all classes will celebrate the auspicious event. It would be useless to argue with such an individual on the utility of a Society which has developed great principles of industrial and social amelioration – which has obtained the cancelling of debts due by crofters, and the bestowal of leases; which has shown a much needed improvement in the cottages of the peasantry, and in methods of cultivation; and, in addition to many other useful efforts, such as the promotion of agricultural schools, &c., has denounced the blunders committed under Highland Relief operations, and succeeded in inducing the Perthshire Committee to follow out a new course. All this was wormwood and gall to the party in question; and when, at the meeting referred to, I quietly gave a flat contradiction to his mischievous calumnies, by expressing a conviction that I could, as the agent of the Royal Patriotic and Industrial Society, go from Shetland to Tyrel without meeting with a refusal to any rational request in behalf of the people whom the Society may be able to assist – Mr. Mulock evidently “wincing like galled jade” under the infliction; but, instead of rebutting a single statement, contented himself; by making an insane attack upon associations generally, oblivious as it were of the fact that governments and churches are themselves but associations.

Mr. Mulock’s mis-statement of facts as regards the Society is only equalled by his falsification of its figures. He professed to give its principal items of expenditure “*during the past year*,” instead of which he gave them *during the whole period of the Society’s existence*, or MORE THAN FOUR YEARS. I send you the Report of the Society from which he professed to quote, where you will find the total expenditure of the Society stated, as also the average annual outlay; and I think you will agree with me that the party who could, with such plain figures and statements in juxtaposition before him, *communicate* such a statement, must either be a wilful calumniator or a madman – on one of the horns of this dilemma Mr. Mulock has transfixed himself.

Charles Bond^{xxxii}

Nor was Mulock forgotten by the Duke of Sutherland, as in a letter dated 10th April, he observed:

“I see in the *Inverness Advertiser* that Mulock has provoked Dr. McKenzie to write an angry note about his interference in regard to management of Gainlock. I dare say Dr. M has given notice to quit for want of following his order, as in his personal communication with me three or four years ago he remarked that I could thus enforce a similar system.”^{xxxiii}

At the time of the 1851 census Mulock was shown as lodging at 14, Douglas Road, Inverness, described as a public writer, journalist and revian (the latter a description that I assume to be ‘reviewer’).

In a lecture on Popery, given at Elgin, in May, 1851, Thomas Mulock was one of the principal speakers; when it came to his turn to speak:

“The latter gentleman held that the papal aggression was neither more nor less than a piece of paper or parchment which made the religion of the Roman Catholic Church neither better nor worse in itself or its practice; and in effect went on to show the absurdity of the present meeting, when he was interrupted.”^{xxxiv}

Mulock now seemed to be unpopular in the Northern area and returned to England possibly in financial straits and was in London in 1851, during the time of the Great Exhibition (May to October), where at the house of his sister, Sophia, he first met Elihu Rich, the scientist, who later contributed a written sketch of Mulock in *Notes and Queries*.^{xxxv}

In the December of this year Mulock wrote what Rich described as brilliant articles defending the *coup d’etat* that Louis Napoleon had engineered in France, articles that expressed the opinion that the coup was a political necessity for the country, though very much against the flow of general public opinion in the United Kingdom. Louis Napoleon, no doubt grateful for whatever support he could receive from what appeared to be an eminent and knowledgeable source, gave Mulock a diamond pin in recognition. However, given Mulock’s vehement assertions concerning Napoleon Bonaparte in 1815, it may be considered a strange volte-face that in 1851 such acclaim should have been given by Mulock to the French hero’s nephew.^{xxxvi} Mulock, then living at Camden Town, London, wrote to Lord Hatherton in response to a communication received from him:

My Lord,

I was very glad to receive your obliging note. I am getting an old man and I cannot afford to be alienated from valuable friends of ancient standing.

Do you remember the judicious counsel you offered me, on the issue of a conversation with Lord Clarendon (in the House of Lords) regarding me? Your Lordship averred that I should be more independent as a literary man in remunerative employment, than if I were to become the holder of a government appointment.

*I resolved at once to adopt the suggestion – tried it with moderate success in Scotland – have been competed for by the London Press and am now in my proper sphere, excellently paid, but still preserving my independence – and here lies the secret. I consented to write for the Morning Advertiser on the condition that my contributions should either be inserted without alteration or returned – which stipulation was agreed to – The Times or other journals pay much higher, but they consider the ms as their acquired property and garble and interlope *ad libitum* which I revolt from.*

Very many leading articles of mine have appeared since my arrival in town (shortly after I met your Lordship at Minton's). The late articles on 'Louis Napoleon's effort to maintain order in France' I will try and send you. With this post you will have two papers, one of yesterday in which you will see an article of mine on the late Sir John Gladstone – and one of today, on the vote by ballot.

P.S. I have this morning received a letter from a President of the French Republic, thanking me most warmly for my articles, and presenting me with a diamond pin.^{xxxvii}

Mulock dutifully made personal acknowledgement to Louis Napoleon:

London, 12th December, 1851

"To the President of the French Republic,

Prince, I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of the letter which has been addressed to me by your orders by M. Le Chef du Cabinet, for whose courteous expression of his master's commands I am deeply obliged. I cannot adequately convey my sense of satisfaction that the articles which I honestly and fearlessly wrote and published in behalf of order in France, should have been so warmly appreciated by the lawful head of the French Republic. I accept, with just pride and honourable gratitude, not the slight – but let me say it – the splendid testimonial of regard with which you have been pleased to adorn me; and I shall wear it with the consciousness of having disinterestedly laboured to advocate the cause of truth, justice, and good government. I have the honour to be, Prince, with every sentiment of respect, and every good wish for your continued prosperity,

Your obedient and faithful servant,

Thomas Mulock.^{xxxviii}

Mulock then travelled to Paris in the hope that his services would be gratefully received by Louis Napoleon, taking over the editorship of an English language newspaper, *Jonas's British and Foreign Advertiser*.^{xxxix} One report states that he began to qualify his opinions on Louis's exploits and left – or fled – for England. Mulock had experienced a shortage of money during his time in France and, by then staying at Bologne, wrote to Harding, one of the trustees of his late wife's trust for their children, seeking a loan of £30, explaining that he had accumulated a great deal of information concerning French political affairs and wished to publish the knowledge. The advance by Harding enabled Mulock to return to England. It may have been at this time that Mulock discovered that he was due money in consequence of son Thomas's death and dating from when he would have attained his majority.^{xl}

Though Mulock had departed from Scotland he was by no means forgotten in the Highlands. Remarking on favourable accounts sent home by some of the people who had emigrated from the Lewis Islands during 1850, with assistance from Sir James Matheson, editorial comment referred to Thomas Mulock as being at the head of a pack of opponents to schemes of emigration, but who had now changed his opinion and was as much in favour of the schemes as he previously had been against them.^{xli} James Lock, the Duke of Sutherland's agent drew the attention of the Duke of Sutherland to an article that Mulock had written, presumably the one regarding Louis Napoleon:

"My Dear Lord,

I enclose two papers of very different character.

1 – A satisfactory letter from Hall as to Gribble. 2 – A paper of Mulock's in support of the President.

May I beg them back.”^{xlii}

While Mulock may not have received the recognition that he believed to be his entitlement, he was at this time quoted by a Welshman writing on the Working Classes of Wales compared with the same classes in England and Scotland and an extract from ‘The Western Highlands,’ was included:

“Go to a region where the cry of absolute want prevails, and you will find famishing families, who formerly derived a precarious subsistence from the potato, now driven to the utmost miserable shifts to eke out a meal once a day! In the vicinity of sea-shores there is a constant search for shell-fish – a dietary productive of dysentery when long continued. Add a few chance turnips to an occasional handful of meal, and you have, in fact, the whole inventory of wretched fare which you are liable to trace in the abodes of Highland sufferers from starvation. When we use the term wretched, we do more so to denote the deficiency than the quality of these latter elements of food.”^{xliii}

Mulock’s support for Louis Napoleon had not at this stage subsided and in an article that criticised the British Press for its opposition to the French leader, Mulock wrote in complementary terms of the Marquis of Normanby, and offered hints to that nobleman’s successor:

“We cannot conclude these remarks without impressing on the mind of Lord Normanby’s successor the propriety and indeed strict justice of dissipating the delusion so savagely spread by the London press, as to the supposed warlike tendencies of the French government and people. So long as such pernicious errors prevail, the two countries will be kept in a condition of suspicious unprofitable estrangement, instead of reaping the benefit of the Great Exhibition, and continually interchanging those friendly, warm-hearted attestations which reflected such honour on both nations. Nothing but the love of down-right falsehood can account for the monstrous misgivings propagated by the slanderous scribes of the English press. What France may eventually be irritated into by the vilifying rancour of those atrocious writers, it is impossible to say, but if war – quod Deus avertat – shall calamitously occur, the deepest delinquents on promoting such tremendous visitation will be the London journalists! For filthy lucre they stirred up a causeless clamour against the government and people of France, who, occupied with their own internal change and reorganisation, have neither leisure nor inclination for going to war with their neighbours. In Louis Napoleon the French had obtained a firm, judicious and sedulous ruler – a man devoted to the duties of his lofty station – and of whom it may be truly said that the average acts of his government are wise and beneficial. France more than any other continental state demands the longest possible respite from the havoking evils of war, and we feel a strong confidence in the pacific policy of the Prince President. War, and all aggressive war – would weaken and even endanger his splendid position – would mar all his useful projects for his country’s good – and lay him open to the charge of assailing the common concord of mankind! We do not believe that Louis Napoleon is otherwise inclined than for permanent peace, and resting in that cheering and elevating persuasion we shall continue to rank ourselves among his earnest, disinterested, and consistent well-wishers.”^{xliv}

By the following year Thomas Mulock was in Ireland and wrote to Lord Hatherton from Dublin:

31, Upper Leeson Street,
July 25th 1852.

My Lord,

I must reciprocate in expressing the complete concurrence I feel in your sentiments.

Very recently I received a communication addressed to me by the Prince President, and in reply I ventured to assure him that the better judging portion of the British people were far from adverse to his government. Your lordship’s testimony to the same truth appeared to me so valuable that I have taken the liberty of sending your letter for the Prince’s private perusal. In the communications I had with the Prince he always appeared to attach most importance to English opinion. Angleterre he justly thought was (and is) the mental mistress of the world.

I was living quietly in the Rue Neuve, St. Augustine, all the time your lordship was in Paris – but sooth to say, I chose to live in French society in preference to my idle compatriots lounging about Paris and my main object was to arrive at some just conclusion as to the real result of the coup d’etat.

My opinion is that the principle of ultra democracy received a deadly wound from the President’s energy – and I think you agree with me. Vain wishes are the vainest of things, but I do wish we had met in Paris. The Staffordshire Advertiser informed me of your lordship’s marriage (on which I trust I am still entitled to felicitate you). I was called from Paris to receive some property at Newcastle – but although I heard you were at home (from my friend Mr. Wise) I did not learn that you had been at Paris.

*You will be amused with a characteristic note from Sir P. Crompton.
Thomas Mulock.^{xliv}*

Once more settled (for a time) in his native country, Mulock's pen resumed its natural activity, this time noticing a calamitous incident in the unhappy affairs of that country:

"The Unfortunate Affair at Six-Mile Bridge:

The careful perusal of the first day's proceedings of the coroner's inquest, consequent upon the deplorable event adverted to above, induces me to trouble you with a few remarks, which may possibly shed a clearer light on the sad subject now in course of investigation. I perceive the inquiry takes the shape of an accusatorial charge against her Majesty's troops, as being the imputed guilty parties in this fatal transaction; but I boldly maintain that the accusers are upon a wrong scent, for the really culpable persons are the five magistrates who signed a requisition to Colonel Douglas, calling upon that officer to employ the Queen's soldiers in protecting, on their way to a polling place, "a large body of FREEHOLDERS." By what law, I would ask, are these or any other magistrates justified in commanding the aid of horse and foot soldiers, in order to secure the uninterrupted passage of bodies of freeholders coming up in (probably) coerced gangs to vote en masse for partisan interests, and headed by landlord leaders? It is no excuse to allege that priests or other erring parties acted with similar impropriety in heading other mobs to support hostile interests. The case in question is one in which magistrates and presumably landlords, unjustly wrest their authority in procuring the succour of the soldiery to promote their electioneering views. These gentlemen, it seems, "provided cars" for the transport of the Queen's troops, who were to perform the part of military protectors to "bodies" of, perhaps, constrained voters. The franchise is an individual right to be honestly exercised by individuals; and, when electors are mischievously marshalled in to "bodies," they can have no lawful claim on the aid of magistrates or military to protect them in their processional progress towards any polling place.

Thomas Mulock.^{xlvi}

Perhaps actuated by the religious differences that then punctured the peace of Ireland, Mulock wrote and published another pamphlet, "The Double Curse of Ireland; or, The Two False Priesthoods, constituting the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches. In noticing this publication the Liverpool Mercury (Mulock seems in general to have been remembered in a kindly manner by the people of that city):

"This pamphlet embodies a powerful and impartial denunciation of the errors respectively inculcated by the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches now disputing the spiritual supremacy of Ireland. In analysing the objects and the practice of the latter, the author points out a broad distinction between Protestantism and the doctrine taught by the Established Protestant Church of England. Protestantism he defines to be an uncompromising exposure of the errors of popery, a faithful testimony on behalf of the Christian religion. No sooner, says he, had the spirit of religious reformation evoked by Wicklyffe, Luther, and other earnest Protestants began to operate, than the state seized upon Protestantism in order to unchain it, and employ it as an instrumentality for compassing the very purposes of spiritual tyranny and deception which it had begun to thwart and would ultimately have frustrated. He insist much upon the vanity of every attempt which the promulgators of this faith, established by act of parliament, may make to wean Ireland's affections from the counterfeit religion which unfortunately has established its hold upon her credulity, by offering to her another counterfeit abhorrent to her prejudice. It is to the development of true Christianity that the author looks for the emancipation of Ireland from both the incumbent priesthoods which now paralyse her moral energies. And we share in the belief he entertains, "That God has a people in that country, who shall be made willing, in the day of his power, to rejoice in the riches of grace and beauty."^{xlvi}

Mulock had sent a copy to Thomas Carlyle who referred to it in a letter to a friend. "One "Thomas Mulock, Dublin," sends me an acrid little Pamphlet, the other morning, solemnly denouncing and damning to the Pit, really in a rather sincere and devout manner, "both the Irish Churches" (Protestant and Catholic), in the name of Jesus, and of *any* instalment of Salvation to Ireland, of which native country he is a passionate lover. I fear the poor man is maddish. But I have thought a thousand times, since seeing Ireland, to much the same effect, in the "name" of still higher entities and considerations, — tho' virtuously holding my peace on the subject. The "Churches," alas, alas! Of all preachers and prophets and divine men wanted in Ireland (and in England, and Scotland, and all the other wretched lands, where Hypocritical Palaver reigns and rules and makes the world fetid and accursed) is the "Divine Drill-Serjeant" (as I often say), who, with steel whips, or by whatever method, wd teach poor canting slaves to *do* a little of the things they eloquently say (and even *know*) everywhere, and leave *undone*. Poor Mulock! Really, *is* there any such *totally* accursed *sin* as that (with no redeeming side at all); — or even such general, nay universal one, in this illustrious thrice-hopeful epoch of Free-Press, Emancipation, Toleration, Uncle Tom's Cabin, and the rest of it?"^{xlvi}

For some while during this period Mulock was at Killiney, near Dublin, perhaps staying with relatives, from where he wrote to Lord Clarendon (who had removed from office in Ireland to become the minister for Foreign Affairs), citing the intention to terminate correspondence with him; at the same time writing to Lord Hatherton to enclose a copy of the letter sent to Clarendon. The letter to Clarendon was dated 27th June 1853, and was one of indignation:

“My Lord,

The two latest letters which I addressed to your lordship not having met with the condescending courtesy of your private secretary’s acknowledgement, I beg leave to close our communications, and to renounce the friendly relation which sprang up between us, at the instance of Lord Hatherton. I will not stoop to do more than remind your lordship of the signal succour I honourably and disinterestedly afforded to your Irish government; and which I would not have rendered had I been aware that your lordship was, at the same time, lavishing thousands to secure the sinister service of a venal slanderer.

But I fear your lordship’s views of consistent conduct do not quadrate with mine. I have now lying before me the last two letters I received from your lordship. In the first you assert your inflexible determination “not to form a part of a coalition government.” In the next you repudiate your former sentiments, and you intimate your possible acceptance of office – which latter event was, I make no doubt, pre-arranged at the date of your lordship’s letter!’^{xlix}

That to Hatherton:

“My Lord,

It appears to me to be an act of propriety to send your Lordship the copy of a letter to Lord Clarendon, in which I have assigned my reasons for terminating my communications with that nobleman.

Together with this I send your lordship a copy of the Freeman’s Journal of the 25th instant, in which there appears a letter of mine on the working of the Encumbered Estates Court, which I closely investigated.

My preliminary remarks will recall to your lordship’s mind the conversation you held some years ago in the House of Lords with Lord Clarendon, on my subject – and which you graphically described in a kind letter to me.

I am very happy to get rid of so false a friend as Lord Clarendon.’’^l

Ever the gentleman, though justifiably irritated by Mulock’s attitude, Clarendon wrote a brief note to Hatherton:

“Enclosed is Mr. Mulock’s production. Until I went to the FO* I was absolutely swamped by business. I always answered his letters. Clarendon.’’^{li}

*Foreign Office.

Hatherton, politely affable, responded with a brief note to Mulock:

July 4th 1853.

My dear sir,

I fear, that like Lord Clarendon, I shall be in your black book for my very long delay in answering your letter – enclosing a copy of one written by you to his lordship. I must honestly own to you that I read it with the greatest surprise and concern. I know Lord Clarendon with all his correspondence he had no time to write to me. I have been at the camp and ought to have returned home some days ago. The Freeman Journal I shall read with much interest.

I remain my dear sir, faithfully yours, Hatherton.’’^{lii}

Mulock replied to Hatherton hastening to placate his lordship’s fears:

Killiney, County Dublin,
July 7th 1853.

“My Lord,

Nobody needs be apprehensive of getting into my black book if I am treated with respect and good feeling. Lord Clarendon failed toward me in those particulars, and accordingly we severed, which can be no loss to so great a personage. I am heartily glad to rid myself of all trammels which bound down my spirit. I have, however, heard since from Lord Clarendon upon a matter which he deemed official.

It is not for me to censure your lordship's forbearance as to the non-answering of letters – but as I had received 3 or 4 autograph letters from his lordship I thought it not unreasonable to expect at least an acknowledgement from one of his staff of private secretaries. I have more than a dozen of Canning's letters written from the Foreign Office. Your lordship may of course arrange in any way with people of your own order. I am a man void of position, and only deserving of notice in correspondence of the truth and weight of my communications.

I hope your lady and your lordship will cross the channel to see the Dublin Exhibition. It is in many respects more pleasing than the great London Bazaar.

A letter of mine on the Queen's visit has stirred the spirit of the people here. I recommended that her Majesty should come over in state. Now that the contrary is decided upon I will publish another letter, which I fear will not be palatable at court – but I am no courtier.

*I have the honour to be your lordship's obedient servant,
Thomas Mulock.*

P.S. As I am now resolved to publish my life of Canning (prepared with great care) I wrote to Viscount Canning on the subject. I enclose you his reply and my rejoinder. More black book entries your lordship will say. But I cannot cringe to the English aristocracy – who never did me any good. T.M. ^{liii}

The letter to Viscount Canning to which Mulock referred:

Killiney, County Dublin, June 28th 1853.

"My Lord,

The somewhat arrogant tone of your lordship's letter to me, calls for some few words of rebuke.

I never asked your lordship's 'consent' as to the proposed publication of my life of Mr. Canning. Why should I? I am as independent in thought and action as your lordship, perhaps more so. I gave an opportunity to Mr. Canning's son to contribute towards doing justice to the memory of his father – which opportunity you have lost – for I decline all aid from your Lordship in the way of information.

I was not, I confess, able to perceive the justice and reason of the statement made by Sir John Gladstone – forasmuch as the sole ground of the 'displeasure' of the Canning family urged in Sir John Gladstone's letters (which I will publish) was the disagreeable revelation of the desolate condition of the late Mr. Canning's mother "with her son George" after her husband's decease. There is nothing discreditable in honest poverty – and I am sure that Mrs. Hunn's letters disclosing her energy and pious confidence during some trials are honourable to any family she was connected with.

Had you my lord, formerly or recently appealed to me with affability and kindness I should not have been slow to comply with your reasonable request. But as from first to last in our communications you treated me with haughtiness, with even rudeness one who loved and honoured your father – and who enjoyed his warmest friendship in return – I am resolved to set at naught your lordship's rank and position and to inflict the literary chastisement upon your lordship which you have drawn upon yourself and which you richly deserve.

Thomas Mulock. ^{liv}

During the time that this exchange of letters took place there was, as noticed in the letters, a move afoot to bring about another royal visit in the hope of soothing the troubled affairs of Ireland:

The Queen's Visit to Ireland: Mr. Mulock, the gentleman who it will be recalled suggested the former visit of her Majesty to this country in a letter to Lord Clarendon, has addressed a letter to the Queen herself, of which the following is a copy:

"TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN:

Madam,

In common with my countrymen, who, I can confidently affirm, are the devotedly loyal subjects of your Majesty, I learn with patriotic pleasure the gracious determination of your royal mind to favour this part of your Majesty's dominions with another auspicious visit; and I can safely say that an enthusiastic welcome awaits your Majesty and your royal consort – and, may I venture to add, your royal offspring.

Your Majesty's former visit found this country painfully emerging from the vast calamity which followed upon the total failure of the food of the peasant population; and, therefore, with a compassionate benignity your Majesty came among your Irish subjects – not so much with august, regal splendour as with the subdued rays of royalty sympathising with the sorrows of an afflicted people, yet anxious to cheer them with your maternal presence.

Through the boundless mercy of God, that calamitous state of things has perfectly passed away, and Ireland begins to resume her proper position as a prosperous, integral portion of the United Kingdom.

Under these happily altered circumstances, may I be permitted to hope that your Majesty sees the wisdom, expediency, and even justice of now presenting yourself to the Irish people with all the fitting pomp and gracious grandeur which properly belong to the powerful Sovereign of this great empire. As on the former occasion your Majesty's kindness and affability were sweetly displayed to the admiring multitudes, let me indulge the expectation that your Majesty's approaching visit will be signalled by such demonstrations of royal magnificence as shall serve to denote the high consideration in which your Majesty holds the loyalty and reverential regards of your Irish subjects.

*I beg leave humbly to subscribe myself,
Your Majesty's faithful servant,
Thomas Mulock.*^{lv}

Only a short time passed but during which interval the proposed visit had become modified to a private one whereupon Mulock produced another letter to her Majesty:

“The Queen's Private Visit to Ireland:

As respectful remonstrance does not appear to carry any weight with the advisers of the crown in relation to the more acceptable mode of presenting royalty to the public gaze, and the Queen's visit is arranged to be strictly private, it strikes me to be but a due deference to the royal wishes that her Irish subjects should, on the approaching occasion, conform implicitly to the ministerial arrangement devised for the Sovereign. I venture to recommend that the people shall not infringe upon the incognito of the head of the state, and that her Majesty's visit shall not be perturbed by popular demonstrations of recognition. I hope I do not yield to Whig or Tory in loyal reverence for our Queen; but if her Majesty is resolved to come to us in such privacy, I say let it be total and complete privacy. I am too old and apathetic to be a spectator of the royal arrival, but if I were present I should be as silent as a mute at a funeral. Neither Sovereign nor subjects should aim at incompatible things. Let privacy be privacy, and pomp be pomp. If the Queen kindly came to enjoy the Exhibition, let the royal desire be fully gratified, and let her Majesty come and go without being molested by that enthusiastic welcome which is inconsistent with the avoidance of all display.

The witty Lord Chesterfield divided visiting into three grades – a vis – a visit and a visitation. As her Majesty chooses the quietude of a vis, it would be wrong on the part of the Irish people to mar the royal intentions.

Thomas Mulock.^{lvi}

When a gentleman named Dargan proposed to establish an industrial institute it brought a critical response from Mulock:

“The Projected Dargan Industrial Institute:

To the Committee, Gentlemen,

A conversation which I held last evening with one of your honourable secretaries induces me at his (Mr. A Boyle's) request, to offer, for your consideration, the following kindly meant suggestions:-

In common with many others of far superior judgement, I strongly question the propriety of founding a fresh educational institute in this country, for the purpose advocated in your address to the public.

Owing to a combination of felicitous circumstances, Ireland is amply supplied with admirable machinery for promoting every branch of useful and ornamental education. In the Dublin University, in the Queen's Colleges, in private seminaries, in national schools, the elementary knowledge and higher science fitted to secure the species of instruction suited for mechanics, can be readily, and even cheaply attained; and if any increased facilities should be desirable, the allocation of certain funds in the way of endowment for professors or students would fill up every proved deficiency.

A Dargan Industrial Institute would, in my humble opinion, prove a hindrance rather than a help to the progress of education at large, by constituting a sort of college for one branch of knowledge, whereas other seminaries can give the same specific information, coupled with other branches of attainment.

To find fault without suggesting a remedy, being the universal proneness of captious objectors, I wish to clear myself from this reproach by throwing out the heads of a plan, which if adopted, would redound to Mr. Dargan's reputation and gratification, and, at the same time, secure the sympathy and abounding liberality of subscribers to the proposed fund.

I suggest that an extensive hospital or house of refuge, on the principle of the English and Scotch almshouses, should be founded for the reception of decayed mechanics, who, after a life of toil, had from accident, sickness, or unavoidable misfortune, been reduced to indigence, and who should find in such an asylum a sufficient refuge from the calamities attendant upon destitute old age.

To avert all misapprehension, I would observe that by using the word 'mechanics,' I mean to exclude ordinary operatives who, if destitute, could claim relief from parochial boards having the power to admit to poor houses.

Thomas Mulock, Killiney, 28th July, 1853.^{lvii}

The editor of the *Freeman*, while publishing Mulock's letter, by no means agreed with the sentiments he expressed and made critical editorial comment. Mulock acknowledged the criticisms and countered with arguments based on his concept of Christian Conservatism:

"Industrial Progress and Alms and Charity:

Sir,

*As in a leading article of your journal of the 5th instant, you took my letter on the projected Dargan Institute for your text, and with no small power and pungency of remark sought to show that I was the advocate of rational sloth and consequent impoverishment, while the Freeman is the strenuous encourager of industry and self-reliance, I beg to ask you whether the Dargan Institute is intended to afford **gratuitous education**? If the funds about to be collected (for the subscriptions come in, I understand, somewhat tardily) are to be made applicable to elementary education, then I conceive your self-reliant principle is wholly abandoned – for is not the necessity laid upon the parents of **paying** more or less for the education of their children a signal stimulus to the industry and thrift of all fathers? If, on the contrary, the education of students in this now industrial institute is to be defrayed out of the pockets of their friends, wherein does this proposed college differ from other equally well conducted establishments?*

*I am at a loss to perceive in what way the principle of self-reliance is weakened by my suggestion of an hospital for **decayed** mechanics. Surely men will not forgo prosperity – endanger health – rush upon casualty – or invite misfortune for the sake of a chance refuge in an alms-house?*

I see no danger of the Christian principle of benevolence being carried too far in this, or in any other country. I think, Sir, that more is to be dreaded from the overwhelming influence of selfishness and sordidness which, under the specious guise of utilitarian philosophy, threatens to extirpate all true charity from the earth."^{lviii}

The Queen's proposed visit to Ireland was still a subject of interest, if uncertainty and Thomas Mulock took what advantage he could of the situation and now published in a small pamphlet the three letters that he had addressed to Her Majesty:

Tomorrow, August 23rd will be published, price two-pence, three letters on the Queen's visit. Reprinted from the Freeman's Journal, with an introduction on the present state of Ireland, by Thomas Mulock. William Robertson, 35, Lower Sackville Street.^{lix}

Writing to Lord Hatherton from Killiney, Dublin, in September, 1853, Mulock explained his annoyance with Viscount Canning over the proposed biography of his father:

"My Lord,

My quarrel with Lord Canning is that he has not the feeling of a son. When I first applied to him in 1840, he was yachting in the Mediterranean – and he wrote me an impertinent letter denouncing any attempts to publish a biography of his father. It soon came out that he was intriguing for a place with Peel and an undersecretary-ship at the Foreign Office soon showed his motives for imposing silence upon me. According to his own phraseology Lord Canning has no father. He always writes and speaks of 'Mr. Canning' – which will enable me to make a little merriment out of his lordship.

I send your lordship my second letter on the intended visit of the Queen – now postponed. The first I cannot procure, but they are about to be re-published. We learn here that Lord Aberdeen is out, and Lord John^{lx} in, which is of the least possible importance. Will Lord John act up to Sydney Smith's commendation and take the command of the fleet at Spithead?

Do you know as a visitor, this sweetest of picturesque spots, Killiney? ^{lxi}

There followed another letter to Hatherton in which Mulock stressed his mellowed view over life:

"My Lord,

Whilst the dreadful din of war thickens among nations, I feel unconquerable yearnings for private peace. Whenever I clearly and conscientiously discern that I have been faulty in provoking or prolonging strife, I soon resolve to take the initiative in overtures for accommodation, as I see no possible humiliation in the candid confession of errors. Following this latter course, I am now, I am happy to say, on excellent terms with two noble friends of your Lordship's.

The first is Lord Clarendon – I wrote to him with frankness and simplicity – admitting fully that I had been unreasonably exacting in my correspondence with one who must maintain an official correspondence with the whole world. Lord Clarendon's response was kind and forgiving to the last degree, and from the tone of succeeding communications I plainly perceive that his lordship is well pleased with a recurrence to friendly feelings – and I am sure it flatters and gratifies me.

The next is Lord Canning. After all interchange of adverse views proved abortive, I thought it right to place myself mentally in the position of Mr. Canning's descendants, and to examine the point whether a publication of Mrs. Hunn's letters in a life of Canning was either needful or palatable – and I came to the clear conclusion that it was not. Things which were creditable to Mrs. Hunn might be, in their disclosure, painful to the Canning family.

Once persuaded in my own mind of this I lost no time in apprising Lord Canning that no consideration whatever should induce me to be the instrument of giving publicity to Mrs. Hunn's letters. Lord Canning writes to me in obliging and thankful terms, and this breach is made up also.

I wish all other strife might be terminated as happily – but vain wishes are the vainest of all things.

I have the honour to be your lordship's obedient servant,

Thomas Mulock".^{lxii}

The proposed biography continued to play on Hatherton's mind sufficiently for him to record in his journal that he had broached the subject with Viscount Canning:

"A long conversation with Lord Canning at the House of Lords, about Mulock's determination to publish a life of Mr. Canning; Mulock thinks he has a great treasure in some early correspondence of Mr. Canning's mother, afterwards Mrs. Hunn, the production of which would annoy Lord Canning. I advised Lord Canning to try and buy Mulock's papers.^{lxiii}

Later this year Mulock submitted a public letter to the Duke of Sutherland in an apology for the ‘force of language’ that had been used in articles that criticised the policies of Highland Clearances. The *Staffordshire Advertiser*, perhaps conscious of the Duke’s influence in the county, made comment:

‘Mr. Mulock’s letters on the Highlands:

The letters to which the following communication refers had an extended circulation and wide interest – their literary beauty would alone have arrested attention; but at the time they appeared it was felt that the subjects to which they alluded were of more than momentary interest. However, those who best knew the administration of his Grace, the Duke of Sutherland, were assured that the writer of these strictures was labouring under very great misconceptions when most probably intentionally garbled or untruthful statements were made to him by unworthy persons. The paternal interest which his Grace has ever manifested in the treatment of the occupiers of his vast Northern estates, and the personal acquaintance he had of their condition, placed him high in the affections of his numerous tenantry, and still more numerous dependants, and rendered unnecessary any direct refutation of the erroneous charges contained in Mr. Mulock’s letters. It must be now, therefore, a great satisfaction to his Grace to be assured by the writer of his altered views with regard to his treatment of the subjects referred to; and it is alike honourable on the part of Mr. Mulock thus to endeavour to repair any injury his writings may possibly have inflicted. It is with much pleasure, therefore, that we give insertion to the following letter, addressed to the Duke of Sutherland (and kindly acknowledged by his Grace) a copy of which has just reached us from a friend of the writer:

“My Lord Duke,

Some recent commotions in a part of Scotland where your Grace’s family is entitled to bear sway have led me to reconsider with Christian calmness and impartiality the truth of the allegation, that my writings have had the effect of exciting an insubordinate spirit among the small holders of land against the proprietors of the soil, - for such I believe is the charge reported to have been urged against me by Mr. Scott, factor to the Marquis of Stafford, and by other persons.

Now, my Lord Duke, I have looked carefully over that portion of my published writings which relates to Sutherlandshire, and candour compels, or rather invites, me to admit that many passages escaped from my pen which were liable to be misconstrued by popular feeling. I now plainly perceive that my ardent zeal in behalf of parties whom I believed to be oppressed prompted me to an acrimonious strength of expression which may have widened the breach unhappily existing between conflicting, though in point of truth, reciprocal interests.

So far as my writings conduced to this evil result, I do not hesitate to avow that I was in error. Peace is the only security for prospecting among mankind; and to weaken concord is to inflict injury.

Therefore, I spontaneously acknowledge to your Grace my regret for having put forward my views in language which may have given offence to the house of Sutherland, and at the same time may have unduly diminished the proper reverence which the dependents of that noble house are bound to yield to their superiors.

I leave all other topics untouched. My mind had undergone no change respecting the impolicy of Highland clearances; but I feel conscientiously convinced that even unquestionable truths may be advocated with an angry pertinacity which impedes usefulness instead of promoting it.

I have the honour to be your Grace’s obedient humble servant, Thomas Mulock.

Killiney, near Dublin, October 27th 1853.^{lxiv}

The letter published in the *Advertiser* varies in minor detail from that sent to the Duke, but as the one in the Duke’s archives was a hand-written copy there may have been some error during the writing:

“My Lord Duke,

Some recent commotions in a part of Scotland where your Grace’s family is entitled to bear sway have led me to reconsider with Christian calmness and impartiality the truth of the allegation, that my writings have had the effect of exciting an insubordinate spirit among the small holders of land against the proprietors of the soil, - for such is the charge reported to have been urged against me by Mr. Scott, factor to the Marquis of Stafford.

Now I have looked over carefully that portion of my writings which relates to Sutherlandshire, and candour compels, or rather invites, me to admit that many passages escaped from my pen which were liable to be misconstrued by popular feeling. I now plainly perceive that my ardent zeal in behalf of parties whom I believed to be oppressed, prompted me to an acrimonious strength of expression which may have widened the breach unhappily existing between conflicting interests.

So far as my published writings conduced to this result, I do not hesitate to avow that I was in error. Peace is the only way to prosperity among mankind - and to weaken concord is to inflict injury.

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I leave all other topics untouched. My mind had undergone no change respecting the impolicy of Highland clearances; but I feel persuaded that even unquestionable truths may be advocated with an angry pertinacity which impedes usefulness instead of promoting it. Your Grace is at perfect liberty to make any desirable use of the contents of this letter.^{lvv}

A short time afterwards Mulock again wrote to the Duke:

“Killiney near Dublin,
November 9th 1853.

“My Lord Duke,

My former letter to your Grace was an act of pure justice – it was an offered apology to an excellent nobleman whom I had unwittingly injured by censuring his management of his own estates, without sufficiently considering the vast difficulties entailed upon him by a system of change – of which right or wrong the present Duke of Sutherland was not the author. Your Grace with a benignant condescension worthy of all praise kindly accepts my avowal of error and you do even more, you manifest the spirit of forgiveness which is the Glory of true Christianity and which in spite of the immense inequality of our conditions, binds me to your Grace with – shall I say it brotherly affection.

The considerations obligingly detailed to me by your Grace are admirably put, and I fully feel their force. I never yielded implicit credence to the wild fables of pristine prosperity dinned in my ears by the Highland **laudatories temporis acti** – But I also feel that each generation is responsible for its own acts and therefore we must stand or fall by the good or evil of our own doings. For your Grace personally I always entertained the highest respect and my belief is, that if it depended upon your own wish and will the best interests of your people would be efficiently consulted. But in the delegation of power evils will occur which superiors are not cognisant of, and which if they knew they would unfeignedly deplore. Pray pardon my seeming egotism when I venture to say that if your Grace were to investigate Sutherland tomorrow and that circumstances should conspire to cast me in your Grace’s well meant way – I could point out **facts** which would at once be appreciated by a mind so open to truth, and a heart so full of compassion as yours.

The course I have pursued towards your Grace in my recent acknowledgement is part of a system which I shall unswervingly follow on all topics connected with due assertion of authority and the just right of property. I am an humble and poor individual, without position or property, but I have intellectual gifts which in effect constitute **power**, to a certain extent and the present menacing state of society warns me to exercise that power **for good**. I plainly see that Authority is slighted and that property is in peril, and chiefly from the fearful encroachment of an anarchical spirit. Now I am resolved to throw such little weight as I possess into the scale that needs succour and without in the slightest degree abating my feelings of benevolence I withdraw myself from everything which would feed popular excitement.

Through Lord Clarendon (with whom I had for some years much confidential communication) I have dropped a warning word to the Government respecting the present dangerous state of the manufacturing districts. I think the executive should depute some person of weight and judgement to proceed to the seat of the ‘Strikes’ **not** to interfere in any arbitrary adjustment of wages, but to point out to employers and employed the common ruin which the present dispute will infallibly draw on. To the masters it might be urged, that if their trading profits are remunerative, they should consider calmly and compassionately, the claims preferred by their servants – avoiding all communication, or compact with combined classes but as each man was hired individually, so his alleged grievance should be examined individually (and in no other way) would the influence of pernicious associations of operatives be broken up, and workmen would return to his employers. To the Masters it should also be represented, that in populous districts if violence should arise, no military force could protect property on all points. Therefore the Masters should do all that in them lies to secure tranquillity by a wise and liberal course of conduct. The workmen should be recommended to

submit to their Master and the sure punishment of turbulence and outrage should be authoritatively set before them. If some such step be not taken by the Government depend upon it fire and sword will ere long ravage the manufacturing districts.

I dwell upon this subject because your Grace has large possessions in the vicinage of highly combustible manufacturing districts. Many years since I warned Masters and Men in the Potteries of approaching calamities and gave them similar advice as here stated, but it was the unheeded counsel of a private person, enjoying no influence or position. The time, however, came when the Potteries were for three days a scene of uncontrollable riot, and spoilation it being impossible to spare force from other threatened quarters. Some of the Pottery insurgents talked of marching to Trentham Hall as I was informed.

*Forgive me the trespass on your Grace's attention,
I have the honour to be
Your Grace's obedient, humble servant,
Thomas Mulock.*

P.S.

*I have sent my former letter to your Grace to the **Inverness Advertiser** and the **Staffordshire Advertiser** – It is but just that the wound inflicted by the press should be healed by the press. T.M.^{lxvi}*

As regards the published letter to the Duke other opinions existed. Donald McCloud, who expressed firm views on the Highland Clearances and had contact with Mulock at the time of his presence in Scotland, later wrote to the novelist, Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe (who had exonerated the Duke of blame in respect of the Clearances in her publication *'Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands'*):

“As to the vaunted letter which his Grace received from one of the most determined opponents of the measures and who travelled in the North of Scotland as editor of a newspaper, regretting all that he had written on the subject, being convinced that he was misinformed,” I may tell you, madam, that this man did not travel to the North or in the North of Scotland, as an editor, his name was Thomas Mulock; he came to Scotland a fanatic speculator in literature in search of money, or a lucrative situation, vainly thinking that he would be a dictator to every editor in Scotland. He first attacked the immortal Hugh Miller of the *Witness*, Edinburgh, but in him he met more than his match. He then went to the North, got hold of my first pamphlet, and by setting it up in a literary style, and in better English than I, he made a splendid and promising appearance in the Northern papers for some time; but he found out that the money he expected was not coming in, and that the hotels, head inns and taverns would not keep him up any longer without the prospect of being paid for the past or for the future. I found out that he was hard up, and a few of the Highlanders in Edinburgh and myself, sent him from £20 to £30 sterling. When he saw that that was all he was to get, he at once turned tail upon us, and instead of expressing his gratitude, he abused us unsparingly, and regretted that he ever wrote in behalf of such a hungry, moneyless class. He smelled (like others we suspect) where the gold was hoarded up for hypocrites and flatterers, and that one apologising letter to his Grace would be worth ten times as much as he could expect from the Highlanders all his lifetime; and I doubt not it was, for his apology for the sin of misinformation got wide circulation. He then went to France and started an English paper at Paris, and for the service he rendered Napoleon in crushing Republicanism during the besieging of Rome, etc., the Emperor presented him with a gold pin, and in a few days afterwards sent a gendarme to him with a brief notice that his service was not any longer required and a warning to quit France in a few days, which he was to do. What became of him after I know not, but very likely he is dictating to young Loch or some other Metternich.”^{lxvii}

In remarking on the ‘letter of apology’ that Mulock had sent to the Duke, the Inverness Courier commented:

Mr. Mulock: This gentleman has made the *amende honourable* to the Duke of Sutherland for some wholesale charges brought against his Grace respecting the management of his northern estates. We are glad to see that he has the magnanimity to acknowledge his error. When Mr. Mulock first visited the north, he offered his communications to us for insertion, and we declined after seeing a part, to accept them, though aware that they possessed very considerable literary merit, and were of an attractive character. Our motives in doing this were misrepresented at the time, but Mr. Mulock’s candid acknowledgement is a sufficient justification of the course we adopted.

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- ⁱ Staffordshire Advertiser 27th May 1848.
- ⁱⁱ SROD593/K/1/3/37 folio 23, Hatherton Letters 1849
- ⁱⁱⁱ Freeman's Journal 22nd November, 1848
- ^{iv} Staffordshire Advertiser 27th January 1849.
- ^v SROD593/K/1/3/37 In Letters March 1849 Sutherland Collection
- 5 SRO/D593/K/1/3/37 In Letters 1849 Sutherland Collection
- ^{vii} See above
- ^{viii} See above
- ^{ix} See above
- ^x See above
- ^{xi} See above
- ^{xii} See above
- ^{xiii} See above
- ^{xiv} SRO/D593/K/1/3/37 In Letters March 1849 Sutherland Collection
- ^{xv} The copy of the letter has faded and it was beyond me to get more than a few words; whether the letter refers to Mulock throughout I cannot say, perhaps not. SRO/D593/K/1/5/59, Sutherland Collection Out Letters Book Jan – Dec 1849.
- ^{xvi} See Pape
- ^{xvii} Staffordshire Advertiser 27th April 1849, page 5 col 3
- ^{xviii} London Gazette 24th April 1849, page 1353.
- ^{xix} Inverness Courier, 25th April, 1850
- ^{xx} WSL Sub p box N/2/3.
- ^{xxi} Freeman's Journal, 26th July, 1849
- ^{xxii} Caledonian Mercury, 2nd August, 1849
- ^{xxiii} Freeman's Journal, 8th August, 1849
- ^{xxiv} Old Newcastle, Pape, Staffordshire Advertiser 26th October 1912.
- ^{xxv} The Elgin and Morayshire Courier, 12th April, 1850
- ^{xxvi} See Pape. But this may have been a rumour founded on a comment by the Duke at a later date when he stated that he would buy several copies as a means of assisting Mulock's financial predicament. See below.
- ^{xxvii} A History of the Highland Clearances, vol. 1, 1746 - 1886, Eric Richards
- ^{xxviii} Inverness Courier 16th May 1850
- ^{xxix} Dumfries and Galloway Standard, 20th November, 1850
- ^{xxx} The Aberdeen Journal 1st October, 1850
- ^{xxxi} The Inverness Courier, 5th December, 1850
- ^{xxxii} John O'Groat Journal, 21st February, 1851
- ^{xxxiii} SRO/D593/K/1/3/37 In Letters 1849; the date of the letter was 10th April, 1851
- ^{xxxiv} The Elgin and Morayshire Courier, 2nd May, 1851
- ^{xxxv} Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, 'Notes and Queries' 1876 OS4 pages 424-438
- ^{xxxvi} Louis Napoleon had been banished from France in 1832 and during riots in London had acted as a special constable! With the proclamation of the French Republic in 1848 Louis was first proposed, then finally adopted, as president. The coup d'état led to his elevation as emperor and he was recognised as such by Queen Victoria amongst other crowned heads.
- ^{xxxvii} SRO D260/M/F/5/27/23 Hatherton Letters
- ^{xxxviii} The Inverness Courier, 8th January, 1852
- ^{xxxix} See John O'Groat Journal, 13th February, 1852
- ^{xl} See Pape.
- ^{xli} John O'Groat Journal, 26th December, 1851
- ^{xlii} SRO/D593/K/1/5/69 folio 469 Sutherland Collection Out Going Letter Book Jan – Feb 1852
- ^{xliii} North Wales Chronicle and Advertiser, 8th January, 1852
- ^{xliv} The Inverness Courier, 4th March, 1852.
- ^{xl v} SRO D260/M/F/5/27/24 Hatherton Letters folio 64
- ^{xlvi} Freeman's Journal, 6th August 1852
- ^{xl vii} Liverpool Mercury, 8th February, 1853
- ^{xl viii} Carlyle Letters.
- ^{xl ix} SRO D260/M/F/5/27/25 Hatherton Letters 1853 folio 99.
- ^l SRO/D260/M/F/5/27/ 25 Hatherton Letters 1853.
- ^{li} SRO/D260/M/F/5/27/25 Hatherton Letters 1853, folio 98.
- ^{lii} SROD260/M/F/5/27/26 folio 2.
- ^{liii} See above.
- ^{liv} SRO D260/M/F/5/27/26, Hatherton Letters July – December 1853.
- ^{lv} Freeman's Journal, 2nd July, 1853; Inverness Courier, 11th August, 1853
- ^{lvi} Freeman's Journal, 6th July, 1853

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- lvii Freeman's Journal, 5th August, 1853
- lviii Freeman's Journal, 26th August, 1853
- lix Freeman's Journal, 22nd August, 1853
- lx Lord John Russell
- lxi SRO D260/M/F/5/27/26 Hatherton Letters
- lxii See above.
- lxiii SRO D260/M/F/5/26/62. (Hatherton Journals)
- lxiv Staffordshire Advertiser 12th November 1853.
- lxv SRO?D
- lxvi SRO/D593/K/1/3/42 Sutherland Collection In Letters August 1854.
- lxvii Gloomy Memories, Donald McCloud..