

the burial of the corpse, the which, after some painstaking therein, they discover a vault in the middle of the quire, wherein, as is probably conjectured, lyeth the body of King Henry the Eighth and his beloved wife, the Lady Jane Seamor, both in coffins of lead. In this vault—there being room for one more—they resolved to inter the body of the King, the which was accordingly brought to the place, borne by the officers of the garrison, the four corners of the velvet pall borne up by the aforesaid four cords; the pious Bishop of London following next, and other persons of quality, the body was committed to the earth with sighs and tears—especially of the reverend Bishop to be denied to do the last duty and service to his dear and royal master. The velvet pall, being cast into the vault, was laid over the body upon the coffin, with these words set:

“KING CHARLS, 1648.”

It has to be borne in mind throughout that the legal year began on the 25th of March, not, as now (since 1752), on the 1st of January. This sets the date of Charles' death in 1648, instead of 1649, as we are accustomed to fix it. The second part of “England's Black Tribunal,” is, perhaps, more interesting than the first, as it deals with characters of which, with some conspicuous exceptions, grave history takes hardly any notice. The number of the sufferers is twenty-one. Of these, the Earl of Strafford, Archbishop Laud and five others were executed before; the rest, among whom were the Earls of Derby, Holland and Cambridge, and Lord Arthur Capel, after the King. What strikes one as remarkable, is the extreme cheerfulness and even gaiety with which some of these unfortunate gentlemen met their fate. Courageous resignation is intelligible, but exultation and fervor of joy, showing itself in kissing the block

and the axe, are things rather deep for a person whose neck is safe. Such phenomena are, however, by no means unusual. Condemned criminals of the ordinary type, including those who have committed murders of all degrees of heinousness, are often, to all appearance, at least, the happiest of men. Whether their happiness be real, or whether, by some strange provision of nature, their minds are benumbed into apathy or excited into ecstasy during their terrible ordeal is a question for psychologists. Religion, no doubt, is often successful in rousing the penitent to a due sense of his own guilt and of God's mercy, and the difference between the power of divine love which would pardon the greatest crime, and that which would condone the most venial fault, may be theologically infinitesimal, but we naturally shrink from placing much confidence in that saintship which has its origin in the cell and its canonization on the scaffold.

Whatever were his previous faults or crimes, no martyr ever behaved with more dignity on receiving his crown than the Earl of Strafford in submitting to the fulfilment of his sentence; and his words appear so honest and straightforward that one does not willingly pronounce him a hypocrite. His reference to the King, in which he prays “that he may find mercy when he stands most in need of it,” was, no doubt, bitterly recalled by Charles when he did stand in need of mercy. The “God save the King” with which the executioner shewed his head to the people, appears, in the light of subsequent events, grimly ironical.

Immediately following the account of the execution of Strafford is a piece of execrable rhyming, addressed to the citizens of London, and called a “Satyric Elegie,” the unfortunate hero being Master Nathaniel Tom-