

CLEAR THE WAY.

CHARLES MACKAY.

Men of thought, be up and stirring
Night and day,
Sow the seed, withdraw the curtain,
Clear the way.
Men of action aid and cheer them
As you may.
There's a fount about to stream;
There's a light about to beam;
There's a warmth about to glow;
There's a flower about to blow;
There's a midnight blackness changing
Into grey.
Men of thought, and men of action,
Clear the way.

Once the welcome light has broken,
Who shall say
What the unimagined glories
Of the day?
What the evil that shall perish
In its ray?
Aid the dawning, tongue and pen;
Aid it, hopes of honest men;
Aid it, paper, aid it, type;
Aid it, for the hour is ripe,
And our earnest must not slacken
Into play.
Men of thought, and men of action,
Clear the way!

Lo, a cloud's about to vanish
From the day;
Lo, the right's about to conquer—
Clear the way!
And a brazen wrong to crumble
Into clay.
With that right shall many more
Enter smiling at the door;
With the giant wrong shall fall
Many others great and small,
That for ages long have held us
For their prey.
Men of thought, and men of action,
Clear the way!

THE SHABBY SURTOUT.

I had taken a place on the top of one of the coaches which run between Edinburgh and Glasgow, for the purpose of commencing a tour in the highlands of Scotland. It was in the month of June, a season when travellers of various descriptions flock towards the modern Athens, and thence betake themselves to the northern or western counties, as their business or fancy leads. As we rattled along Princes Street I had leisure to survey my fellow travellers. Immediately opposite to me sat two dandies of the first order, dressed in white great-coats and belcher handkerchiefs, and each with a cigar in his mouth, which he puffed away with marvellous self-complacency. Beside me sat a modest and comely young woman in a widow's dress, and with an infant about nine months old in her arms. The appearance of this youthful mourner and her baby indicated that they belonged to the lower classes of society, and though the dandies occasionally cast a rude glance at the mother, the look of calm and settled sorrow which she invariably at such times cast upon her child, seemed to teach even them to disarm their coarseness. On the other side of the young widow sat a young gentleman of plain, yet prepossessing exterior, who seemed especially to attract the notice of the dandies. His surtout was not absolutely threadbare, but it had evidently endured more than one season, and I could see many contemptuous looks thrown upon it by the gentlemen in the belcher handkerchiefs. The young gentleman carried a small portmanteau in his hand, so small indeed, that it could not possibly have contained more than a change of linen; this article also appeared to arrest the eyes of the sprigs of fashion opposite, whose wardrobes, in all probability, were more voluminous—whether they were paid for or not might be another question.

The coach having stopped at the village of Corstorphine for the purpose of taking up an inside passenger, the guard, observing that the young gentleman carried his portmanteau in his hand, asked leave to put it into the boot, to which he

immediately assented. "Put it fairly in the centre, guard," said one of the dandies. "Why so, Tom?" "It may capsize the coach," rejoined the first, a sally at which both indulged in a burst of laughter, but of which the owner of the portmanteau, though the blood mounted slightly into his cheeks, took no notice whatever.

The morning being fine at our first setting out the ride was peculiarly pleasant. The dandies talked of horses and dogs, and fowling-pieces, and percussion caps, every now and then mentioning the names of Lord John and Sir Harry, as if their acquaintance lay among the great ones of the land. Once or twice I thought I saw an expression of contempt in the countenance of the young gentleman in the surtout, but in this I may have been mistaken. His attention was evidently most directed to the mourner beside him, with whom he appeared anxious to get into conversation, but to lack for a time a favorable opportunity.

While we were changing horses at the little village of Uphall, an aged beggar approached, and held out his hat for alms. The dandies looked at him with scorn. I gave him a few half-pence, and the young widow, poor as she seemed, was about to do the same when the young gentleman in the surtout laid his hand gently on her arm, and dropped a half crown into the beggar's hat, and made a sign for him to depart. The dandies looked at one another. "Showing off, Jack," said the one. "Ay, ay. Successful at our last benefit, you know," rejoined the other, and both again burst into a hoarse laugh at this allusion to his supposed profession. The blood again mounted into the young gentleman's cheek, but it was only for a moment, and he continued silent.

We had not left Uphall many miles behind us, when the wind began to rise, and the gathering clouds indicated an approaching shower. The dandies began to prepare their umbrellas, and the young gentleman in the surtout surveying the dress of the widow, and perceiving that she was indifferently provided against a change of weather, inquired of the guard if the coach was full inside. Being answered in the affirmative, he addressed the mourner in a tone of sympathy; told her that there was every appearance of a smart shower, and concluded by offering her the use of his cloak. "It will protect you so far," said he, "and at all events it will protect the baby." The widow thanked him in a modest and respectful manner, and said "that, for the sake of her infant, she should be glad to have the cloak, if he would not suffer from the want of it himself." He assured her that he should not, being accustomed to all kinds of weather.

"His surtout won't spoil," said one of the dandies, in a voice of affected tenderness, "and besides, my dear, the cloak will hold you both." The widow blushed, and the young gentleman, turning quickly round, addressed the speaker in a tone of dignity which I shall never forget. "I am not naturally quarrelsome, sir, but yet it is quite possible you may provoke me too far." Both the exquisites immediately turned as pale as death; shrunk in spite of themselves into their natural insignificance, and scarcely opened their lips, even to each other, during the remainder of the journey. In the meantime the young gentleman, with the same politeness and delicacy as if he had been assisting a lady of quality, proceeded to wrap the widow and her baby in his cloak. He had hardly accomplished this when a smart shower of rain, mingled with hail, commenced. Being myself provided with a cloak, the cape of which was sufficiently large to envelope and protect my head, I offered the young gentleman my umbrella, which he readily accepted,

but held it, as I remember, in a manner better calculated to defend the widow than himself.

When we reached West Craigsison, the second stage from Edinburgh, the rain had ceased, and the young gentleman politely returned me my umbrella; began to relieve the widow of his now dripping cloak, which he shook over the side of the coach, and afterwards hung on the rail to dry; then turning to the widow, he inquired if she would take any refreshment, and upon her answering in the negative, he proceeded to enter into conversation with her by asking: "Do you travel far on this road, ma'am?" "About sixteen miles farther, sir. I leave the coach six miles on the other side of Airdrie."

When we had entered Glasgow and were approaching the Buck's Head, the inn at which our conveyance was to stop, an open travelling carriage drawn by four beautiful grey horses drove up in an opposite direction.

The elegance of this equipage made the dandies spring to their feet.

"What beautiful greys!" cried the one.

"I wonder who they can belong to! he is a happy fellow anyhow," replied the other, "I would give half Yorkshire to call them mine."

The stage coach and travelling carriage stopped at the Buck's Head at the same moment, and a footman in laced livery springing down from behind the latter, looked first inside and then at the top of the former, when he lifted his hat with a smile of respectful recognition.

"Are all well at the castle, Robert?" inquired the young gentleman in the shabby surtout.

"All well, my Lord," replied the footman.

At the sound of that monosyllable the faces of the exquisites became visibly elongated; but without taking the slightest notice of them or of their confusion, the nobleman politely wished me good morning, and descending from the coach caused the footman to place his cloak and the despised portmanteau in the carriage, he then stepped into it himself and the footman getting up behind, the coachman touched the leaders very slightly with his whip, and the equipage and its noble owner were soon out of sight.

"Pray what nobleman is that?" said one of the dandies to the landlord, as we entered the inn.

"The Earl of H., sir," replied the landlord; "one of the best men as well as one of the richest men in Scotland."

"The Earl of H.," repeated the dandy, turning to his companion, "what asses we have been; there's an end to all chance of being allowed to shoot on his estate."

"Oh! yes, we may burn our letters of introduction when we like," and silent and crestfallen, both walked up stairs to their apartments.

"The Earl of H.," repeated I, with somewhat less painful feelings: "does he often travel unattended?"

"Very often," replied the landlord, "especially when he has any public or charitable objects in view; he thinks he gets at the truth more easily as a private gentleman than as a wealthy nobleman."

"I have no doubt of it," said I, and, having ordered dinner, I sat down to muse on the occurrences of the day. This, however, was not the last time that I was destined to hear of that amiable young nobleman, so early lost to his country and mankind. I had scarcely returned home from my tour in the Highlands, when I was waited upon by a friend, a teacher of languages in Edinburgh, who told me that he had been appointed rector to the academy at B—

"Indeed," said I, "how have you been so fortunate?"

"I cannot tell," replied he, "unless it be connected with the circumstances I am about to relate." He then stated that about a month ago he was teaching his classes as usual, when a young man, dressed in a surtout that was not over new, came into his school and politely asked leave to see his method of instruction. Imagining his visitor to be a school teacher from the country, who wished to learn something of the Edinburgh modes of tuition, my friend acceded to his request; the stranger remained two hours, and paid particular attention to every department; when my friend was about to dismiss the school the stranger inquired whether he was not in the habit of commending his pupils to God in prayer before they parted for the day; my friend replied that he was; upon this the stranger begged that he would not depart from his usual and praiseworthy custom on his account. My friend accordingly prayed with the boys, and dismissed them; after which the stranger thanked him for his politeness, and also withdrew, and nothing more occurred. Four or five days afterwards my friend received a letter from the Earl of H., in which that nobleman, after stating that he had satisfied himself as to his piety and ability as a teacher, made him an offer of the rectorship of the academy at B—

"Was your visitor fair haired, and his surtout of a claret color?" said I.

"They were," replied my friend, "but what of that?"

"It was the Earl of H. himself," said I, "there can be no doubt of it," and I gave him the history of my journey to Glasgow.

"Well, he took the best method to test my qualifications," rejoined my friend. "I wish all patrons would do the same, we should have better teachers in our schools and better ministers in our churches."

"All patrons, perhaps, are not equally qualified to judge," said I, "at all events let us rejoice that though not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, still we see one here and one there, distinguished by divine grace, to the praise and the glory of God the Saviour."

FAMILY WORSHIP.

Two men were once travelling in the far West; one was an infidel, the other a Christian. The sceptic was ready on every occasion to denounce religion, and accuse professors as impostors and hypocrites. He said he always suspected Christians, and took especial care of his horse and watch when the saints were around him. They had travelled late one evening and were in the wilderness. At length they came to a solitary hut, and asked for shelter and refreshments. Their request was granted. The family consisted of an elderly man, his wife and two sons; hardy, sunburnt and rough. They welcomed the strangers to such fare as the forest afforded. The house and surroundings looked anything but inviting; and the travellers became seriously apprehensive of danger. It was a lonely spot, well suited to deeds of robbery and blood. They told each other their suspicions, and resolved on retiring to barricade the door, have their weapons ready, and each alternately keep watch while his companion slept. Having made their arrangements they joined the family, partook of the homely meal and spoke of retiring to rest. The old man said it had been his practice in better times, and he continued it still, before his family retired to bow around the family altar and commend them to God; and if they had no objections he would do so now. They both consented, and the old man took down his well-worn Bible and read with emphasis a portion of the Sacred Scriptures. He knelt down and prayed