

Christ foretells that they shall both be crucified with Him ; but that he who had mercy shall find pardon in his hour of doom.

It is in the play of the Slaughter of the Innocents that the King of Jewry fairly out-Herods Herod in his cruelty. He summons all his barons, burgesses, and baronets—Sir Lancler, Sir Grimbald and the rest—to destroy the children. There are some rather coarse passages of wit between the soldiers and the women and one cowardly officer is driven off. But the slaughter is completed, and the soldiers toss the dead babes upon their spear points through the town. Then is heard the voice of lamentation :

Out and out ! and wellaway !
That ever I did see this day ;
Out and out ! and woe is me !
Thief, thou shalt hanged be !

In the confusion Herod's own son is slain, and the wretched father, smitten with despair, cries out,

Alas ! my days now are done :
I wot I must die soon :
Bootless it is to make moan,
For damned I must be.

He falls down, writhing with pain and eaten with worms ; hell opens, and devils drag him within its horrid jaws. No more tragic and awful poetical justice is there in any drama of ancient or modern times.

There is a striking incident in the play of the Presentation at the Temple. Old Simeon had been reading the prophecy that Christ should be born of a virgin, which seemed so incredible that he obliterated the expression, but found that it reappeared in red letters ; and having again obliterated it, he was convinced of its divine inspiration by its appearing in letters of gold.

In Christ's twelfth year, the doctors in the temple observing His attention, one of them remarked :

Methinks this child would learn our law,
He taketh great heed to our talking ;

to whom our Lord replies,

You clerks that be of great cunning,
Unto my talking take good heed.