

sider that Brutus' downfall was the occasion of Antony's magnificent panegyric of his dead friend.

Antony's difficulties, we might say, were now but fairly begun. He was authorized to speak over Cæsar's body, but only on conditions the most prejudicial to the part he was to play. Brutus was to precede him in the Rostrum. And what was the result? A vast increase of Antony's difficulties.

Brutus, by hiseloquence, by the manly sentiments and by the patriotic considerations urged in his speech, in justification of his killing Cæsar, won for himself the admiration of the mob, who now looked upon Cæsar as a tyrant and on his death as the greatest of blessings.

Hence, when Mark Antony began to speak, he had to be very guarded in his speech. And how admirably does he begin.

"Friends, Romans, countrymen,
lend me your ears;
I come to bury Cæsar, not to praise him."

And how cleverly does he set about to remove from the minds of the people all the prejudices they entertain for Cæsar. The people were by Brutus taught to consider Cæsar an ambitious man. Note how gradually Antony undermines this fiction and proves its falsity.

"He was my friend, faithful and just to me: . . .
He hath brought many captives home to Rome,
Whose ransoms did the general coffers fill:
Did this in Cæsar seem ambitious?
When that the poor have, Cæsar hath wept:
Ambition should be made of sterner stuff: . . .

You all did see that on the Lupercal
I thrice presented him a kingly crown

Which he did thrice refuse: Was this ambition?"

Antony is now at liberty to proceed with more freedom. Skilful orator that he was, he first applied himself to satisfy the intelligence of his hearers. He proved how unjustly and wrongfully Cæsar had been called ambitious and thus wisely laid a solid foundation for his appeals.

Immediately, he set to work to address their passions and feelings. And how shrewdly does he attain his object. Note with what address he draws their attention to Cæsar's will and then seemingly desires to do away with it.

"Let but the commons hear this testament,—
Which, pardon me, I do not mean to read,—
And they would go and kiss dead wounds,
And dip their napkins in his sacred blood;
Yea, beg a hair of him for memory,
And, dying, mention it within their wills,
Bequeating it as a rich legacy
Unto their issue."

The reader has doubtless remarked in these last lines a tendency to excite not merely the curiosity but also the cupidity of the citizens. Every word the speaker utters, every hint he drops of the nature of the will adds immensely to the eager longing of the crowd. They clamor for the will. How artful is Antony's reply? How cunningly-devised are the motives and reasons he adduces to dissuade them from desiring the reading of Cæsar's testament. For instance: