

TALFOURD.*From the London Punch.*

Ere the war-clouds, darkly closing,
Shudder to the rending flash,
Ere a world holds breath to listen
To the opening thunder crash:
Hear, from yonder seat of judgment,
Words of peace—the true—the best—
Ah!—the noble words are stifled,
And a noble heart hath rest!

Dead! He should have died hereafter,
Time had come for such a word,
When the day of fight was over,
And the triumph bells were heard
Statesman—Minister of justice—
Friend of all who needed friend,
Poet—might he not have tarried,
Seen our conflict to an end?

Had the Statesman marked his nation
Check and crush invading might;
Had the upright Judge, rejoicing,
Watched the victory of the Right;
Had the oppress'd one's Friend behold us
Raise the weak—dash down the strong.
Then, perchance, the Poet's utterance
Had awaked in glowing song.

Other was the dread decretal,
Life and Death obey their Lord,
And the golden bowl is broken,
And unloosed the silver cord.
In the very hour when Duty
To her dearest task was wed,
Pleading for the poor and needy,
TALFOURD'S gentle spirit fled.

What is left to those who mourn him?
When the last sad rite is paid,
When—but not with hopeless sorrow—
Earth in earth is humbly laid.
Call his image from the marble,
Let the rich memorial tell
How he earned the love we bore him,
That we loved him long and well.

Let it speak of kindest nature,
Of the large, yet subtle mind,
Of a heart all overflowing
With affection for his kind.
Speak of honor—trust—and frankness.
Of a hand preventing need,
And of whisper from the giver
Making bounty rich indeed.

Then record how he, undaunted,
Fought through faction's wild turmoil,
To uphold the Thinker's title
To the earnings of his toil.
How low cant and selfish cunning
Barred his onward course in vain,
Till he felled and chained the plunderers
Of the Labor of the Brain.

Speak of eloquence, beguiling
Foes themselves to own its sway,
Rich with many an ancient jewel
Touched with Art's all-kindling ray.
Then inscribe his Poet-honors—
Nay—that record be his own—
Little reck's true hard of memory
Passing with a sculptured stone.

Ire licet. Battle's signal
Sullen booms o'er sea and plain.
Wake ye at that fatal summons,
Fabled Chooser of the Slain!
Who, beside our cross banner,
Falls, its foremost champion there—
Flinging down a life, and winning
Name that time himself shall spare!

Gallant heart! But happier, nobler,
Hold the doom 'twas his to meet,
Who—declaring Heaven's own message—
Died upon the judgment seat.
On his lip that holy lesson
All his life had taught, he cried,
"Help the humble—help the needy—
HELP WITH LOVE." So TALFOURD died!

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