

Nor can devouring time, his rapid jaws
E'er eat away those actions he made laws."

Many examples are to be found of satirical epitaphs. This one from the Grey Friars, Edinburgh, is short and to the point:—

"Here snug in grave my wife doth lie;
Now she's at rest, and so am I."

This epitaph, with scarcely a variation, is also to be found in a small churchyard not far from Whippingham, in the Isle of Wight.

Anna Lovett is thus lovingly commemorated:—

"Beneath this stone, and not above it,
Lie the remains of Anna Lovett;
Be pleased, good reader, not to shove it,
Lest she should come again above it.
For 'twixt you and I, no one does covet
To see again this Hannah Lovett."

Nearly everyone has heard of the epitaph on the man who was doing a very good business as an innkeeper, and was suddenly killed (this being all stated on his gravestone with the name of the inn, and where situated), running thus:—

"Resigned unto the Heavenly will,
His wife keeps on the business still."

That was strictly professional, and there are many examples of a similar sort. One of the best is that close to the great west door in Peterborough Cathedral, on Scarlet the sexton, who had assisted at the interment of Queen Catharine of Arragon and Mary, Queen of Scots; it reads:—

"You see old Scarlet's picture stand on hie,
But at your feet there does his body lie;
His gravestone doth his age and death tyme show,
His office by their tokens ye may know.
Second to none for strength and sturdy limbe,
A scababe*, mighty voice, and visage grim,
Hee had interr'd two queens within this place,
And this towne's householders in his life's space
Twiceover; but at length his one turne came;
What he for others did for him the same
Was done No doubt his soul doth live
for aye
In heaven, tho' his body's clad in clay."

* A scabie row.

Lord Byron wrote an epitaph of a professional kind on one John Adams, a carrier of Southwell, Derbyshire, which runs as follows:—

"John Adams lies here of the parish of Southwell,
A carrier who carried the can to his mouth well;
He carried so much and he carried so fast,
He could carry no more, so was carried at last;
For the liquor he drunk, being too much for one,
He could not carry off, so he's now carrying on."

"September, 1807."

It is by no means an uncommon occurrence to find anagrams in epitaphs. Here is one from Mannington, dated 1631:—

"ON KATHERINE LOIRGHER.
A Lower taken Higher."

"Here lies a lover of the Deitye,
Embalmed with odours of her pietye;
Here lies she, nay; this lower did aspire,
Here lye her ashes; she is taken higher."

Of miscellaneous and purely ridiculous epitaphs, the number is legion. Among the former class, are such examples as these:—

"ON FRANCES SOAME.
Died 1772, age 5 mos and 2 days."

"The cup of life, just with her lips she prest,
Found the taste bitter and declin'd the rest;
Averse, then, turning from the face of day,
She softly sigh'd her little soul away."

Here is another, from Swallowfield churchyard:—

"Here lies a fair blossom mould'ring to dust,
Ascending to heaven to dwell with the just."

Epitaphs on children are oftentimes very painful reading, from the exaggerated praise which parents in their love bestow upon their departed treasures. But there is nothing in this from Hove churchyard, near Brighton, England, on a child, who died at the age of two years, to which exception may be taken. It bears date, 1821:—

"Yes, thou art fled, and saints a welcome sing;
Thine infant spirit soars on angel wing;
Our dark affection might have hop'd thy stay,