

choly took possession of him, and gave a dark tinge to all his views of human nature and of human destiny. Such wretchedness as he endured has driven many to shoot themselves or drown themselves. But he was under no temptation to commit suicide. He was sick of life; but he was afraid of death; and he shuddered at every sight or sound which reminded him of the inevitable hour. In religion he found but little comfort during his long and frequent fits of dejection; for his religion partook of his own character. The light from heaven shone on him, indeed, but not in a direct line, or with its own pure splendour. The rays had to struggle through a disturbing medium; they reached him refracted, dulled, and discoloured by the thick gloom which had settled on his soul; and though they might be sufficiently clear to guide him, were too dim to cheer him."

SAVAGE MANNERS OF THE DOCTOR.

"His manners had never been courtly. They now became almost savage. Being frequently under the necessity of wearing shabby coats and dirty shirts, he became a confirmed slob. Being often very hungry when he sat down to his meals, he contracted a habit of eating with ravenous greediness. Even to the end of his life, and even at the table of the great, the sight of food affected him as it affects wild beasts and birds of prey. His taste in cookery, formed in subterranean ordinaries and *alamode* beef-shops, was far from delicate. Whenever he was so fortunate as to have near him a hare that had been kept too long, or a meat-pie made with rancid butter, he gorged himself with such violence that his veins swelled, and the moisture broke out on his forehead. The affronts which his poverty emboldened stupid and low-minded men to offer to him would have broken a mean spirit into sycophancy, but made him rude even to ferocity. Unhappily, the insolence which, while it was defensive, was pardonable, and in some sense respectable, accompanied him into societies where he was treated with courtesy and kindness. He was repeatedly provoked into striking those who had taken liberties with him. All the sufferers, however, were wise enough to abstain from talking about their beatings, except Osborne, the most rapacious and brutal of booksellers, who proclaimed everywhere that he had been knocked down by the huge fellow whom he had hired to puff the Harleian Library."

JOHNSON'S FRIENDS AND COMPANIONS.

"Among Johnson's associates at this time may be mentioned Boyse, who, when his shirts were pledged, scrawled Latin verses sitting up in bed with his arms through two holes in his blanket, who composed very respectable sacred poetry when he was sober, and who was at last run over by a hackney-coach when he was drunk; Hoole, surnamed the metaphysical tailor, who, instead of attending to his measures, used to trace geometrical diagrams on the board where he sat cross-legged; and the penitent imposter, George Psalmanazar, who, after poring all day, in a humble lodging, on the folios of Jewish Rabbis and Christian Fathers, indulged himself at night with literary and theological conversation at an alehouse in the City. But the most remarkable of the persons with whom, at this time, Johnson consorted, was Richard Savage, an earl's son, a shoemaker's apprentice, who had seen life in all its forms, who had feasted among blue ribands in St. James' Square, and had lain with fifty pounds' weight of iron on his legs, in the condemned ward of Newgate. This man had, after many vicissitudes of fortune, sunk at last into abject and hopeless poverty. His pen had

failed him. His patrons had been taken away by death, or estranged by the riotous profusion with which he squandered their bounty, and the ungrateful insolence with which he rejected their advice.

He now lived by begging. He dined on venison and champagne whenever he had been so fortunate as to borrow a guinea. If his questing had been unsuccessful, he appeased the rage of hunger with some scraps of broken meat, and lay down to rest under the Piazza of Covent Garden, in warm weather; and, in cold weather, as near as he could get to the furnace of a glass-house. Yet, in his misery, he was an agreeable companion. He had an inexhaustible store of anecdotes about that gay and brilliant world from which he was now an outcast. He had observed the great men of both parties in hours of careless relaxation, had seen the leaders of opposition without the mask of patriotism, and had heard the Prime Minister roar with laughter and tell stories not over decent. During some months, Savage lived in the closest familiarity with Johnson; and then the friends parted, not without tears. Johnson remained in London to drudge for Cave. Savage went to the West of England, lived there as he had lived everywhere, and, in 1743, died, penniless and broken-hearted, in Bristol gaol. Soon after his death, while the public curiosity was strongly excited about his extraordinary adventures, a life of him appeared widely different from the catch-penny lives of eminent men, which were then a staple article of manufacture in Grub Street. The style was, indeed, deficient in ease and variety; and the writer was evidently too partial to the Latin element of our language. But the little work, with all its faults, was a masterpiece. No finer specimen of literary biography existed in any language, living or dead; and a discerning critic might have confidently predicted that the author was destined to be the founder of a new school of English eloquence.

EMANCIPATION OF THE PRESS.

While the Abbey was hanging with black for the funeral of the Queen, the Commons came to a vote, which, at the time, attracted little attention, which produced no excitement; which has been left unnoticed by voluminous annalists; and of which the history can be but imperfectly traced in the archives of Parliament, but which has done more for liberty and for civilization than the Great Charter, or the Bill of Rights. Early in the session, a select committee had been appointed to ascertain what temporary statutes were about to expire, and to consider which of those statutes it might be expedient to continue. The report was made, and all the recommendations contained in that report were adopted with one exception. Among the laws the committee advised the House to renew, was the law which subjected the press to censorship. The question was put,—*"That the House do agree with the committee in the resolution that the act entitled an act for preventing abuses in printing seditious, treasonable, and unlicensed pamphlets, and for regulating of printing and printing presses, be continued."* The speaker pronounced that the Noes had it, and the Ayes did not think fit to divide. A bill for continuing all the other temporary acts, which, in the opinion of the committee, could not properly be suffered to expire, was brought in, passed, and sent to the Lords. In a short time this bill came back with an important amendment. The Lords inserted in the list of acts to be continued the act which placed the press under the control of the licensers.