

the villainous traitor, circumscribed the bounds of the roving depredator, and afforded an asylum to men of letters.

What a curious chapter in the course of time could the deeds done, the words spoken, the thoughts conceived, the feelings indulged, the hopes entertained, and the scenes witnessed or transpired in the dark dungeon make! Could the stony cry out of the wall, and could the fastening out of the timber answer it, what wonderful tales would be told, and what strange revelations would be made! There Sir Walter Raleigh wrote "Aphorisms" for Prince Henry, and spent eleven years of unwearying, unremitting toil on his "History of the World." There Buchanan composed his Paraphrases of the Psalms of David; and Grotius his "Commentary on St. Matthew"; there Howell penned most of his "Familiar Letters," and John Bunyan his "Pilgrim's Progress"; there the Apostle Paul wrote his Epistles to the Churches, and sent thence his letters of encouragement and confidence to the saints; there Boethius composed his "Consolations of Philosophy," and De Foe began his "Review"; there Selden prepared his "History of Eadmer," and Voltaire drew out the plan of his "Henriade." But the prison is only one of the ways in which the ills of life have come upon men of mind and lovers of letters.

The captive in bonds has bid farewell to melancholy and made all be merry as a marriage bell. Cebrantes fills his volume, though far from his beloved Spain, with

"Quips and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods and becks, and wreathed smiles."

The exile, friendless on a foreign shore, hated at home, unknown abroad, has alleviated his sufferings by the employment which his unfinished manuscripts gave him. Thus it was with Dante, banished from Florence, wandering homeless and destitute from city to city seeking rest, with no kind angel to whisper peace to his soul—nor no companion to light up his loneliness; every earthly stay gone, he sinks in peace on his lengthening Cantos, and finds balm in consolation.

John Locke is suspected of sharing in Monmouth's rebellion, he has thereby excited the rage and incurred the resentment of James II.'s government. To screen himself from the impending danger, he withdraws into concealment, and fills up the measure of the flying hours in the composition of that justly renowned and great work "An Essay on the Human Understanding."

The Church of England has grown hugely great. Differences of opinion begin to obtain. To smite all into one and

preserve the "one faith," the Act of Uniformity becomes law—all entering the National Church, yea, all in it must conform to its requirements. Dissent cannot be tolerated, liberty of conscience is not the right of every man—subscribed articles and standards bind the soul and exclude the very idea of free spontaneous thought—the soul must be still and know that enacted law is master. Thousands not seeing the reasonableness of such enactments, and not finding it according to the word of truth, desired rather for "conscience sake" to keep by the law and by the testimony, and asked with John Milton "the liberty to know, to utter and to argue freely above all liberties," which being denied them they left their homes, their friends, their all, and exiled abroad on the continent—especially in Holland—where they gave themselves up to the closest study of the scriptures—they prayed, they pondered, they preached, they lived and then they wrote their spiritual experiences, their divine illuminations, their heavenly teachings; hence to this misfortune we trace the treasure and deep mine of a Puritan Theology, a mine that shall be longer workable than the mines of Golconda. And what shall we say of others in different straits, misfortunes and perplexities?

Think of the trials of a Cameroo, the sufferings of Lazo, and other blindness of Milton. What did a love of literature do for them? And what has their trials, their sufferings, their blindness done for the world? These were all winter blasts and winter breathings of sleet and snow and hardening frosts. They seemed to carry wide ruin all around—to make the world a waste—nevertheless they treasured strength and made a lovely spring which brought a fruitful autumn.

What a rich harvest we reap from the unfulfilled early expectations of our literary men! Had Thompson entered the pulpit, or Goldsmith gone to India we should probably have lacked their charming productions. They were misfortunes to them but highly advantageous to us. Thus works over the diving law of compensation. "It is an ill wind that blows nobody good." So runs the old proverb, and it speaketh truly. What one loses another gains, so there can be no loss. Pursue these wandering thoughts as we will round a thousand circles, widening a thousand removes, yet we must ever come back to find their centre in the great fundamental truth, that

"There's a divinity that shapes our ends,
Rough-hew as we will."

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